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SHE KNOWS TRUTH: TOWARD A REDEMPTIVE MODEL
OF WOMEN'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

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SHE KNOWS TRUTH: TOWARD A REDEMPTIVE MODEL
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For the glory of God and His church.

Also, for my parents, who have demonstrated a steadfast faith in Christ for all things.

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PREFACE

This thesis has come about from the Lord's hand of provision. He has pushed me along at every question, doubt, turn, and struggle. I want to give all of the glory to God. Second, I would like to thank my parents, Ed and Rita Shaw. They have prayed for me and supported me through all the twists and turns. They are faithful Christians, and I consider it a privilege to be their daughter. Third, I would like to thank all of my friends and family who have prayed with me and encouraged me through the Scriptures during this season of study. Fourth, I would like to thank Cedarville University along with Mrs. Joy White and President Dr. Thomas White and my colleagues for their great investment in my life. Fifth, I would like to thank my cohort members along with my professors for all of their support, guidance, and encouragement. Specifically, I would like to thank Dr. John David Trentham, who held the door open for me to pursue this degree. It has been an honor to serve the Lord through the writing of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 1:27 describes the starting point for a redemptive view of development. It teaches that both biological sexes, male and female, are a part of God's plan. It also teaches that both men and women are created in the image of God. Thus, there is an inherent and equal value assigned to both sexes. This understanding of both diversity and equality necessitates the equal consideration of the perspectives of both men and women in the process of development.

The theoretical framework for understanding the nature of how undergraduate women develop and mature is well-founded in secular social scientific literature. Carol Gilligan was one of the first to point out that the feminine perspective had been left out of developmental theories. In her work *In a Different Voice*, she calls for a more comprehensive view of human development that takes into account a woman's voice.¹ While Gilligan's work concentrates on the development of morality and identity, Belenky et al. emphasize intellectual development. Mary Field Belenky, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule wrote *Women's Ways of Knowing (WWK)*, a landmark work building on the scheme proposed by William Perry.² Perry had performed a qualitative study that examined how college students developed

¹Gilligan describes the needs for the female voice in developmental theories: "The disparity between women's experience and the representation of human development, noted throughout the psychological literature, has generally been seen to signify a problem in women's development. Instead, the failure of women to fit existing models of human growth may point to a problem in the representation, a limitation in the conception of human condition, an omission of certain truths about life." Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (1982; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1-2.

²Mary Field Belenky et al., *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (1986; repr., New York: Basic Books, 1997), 9-10.

their epistemological priorities.³ He conducted his study mostly on men. Belenky et al. noted this bias. They claim, “Nowhere is the pattern of using male experience to define the human experience seen more clearly than in models of intellectual development.”⁴ In contrast, their study sought to gather information from women and expand Perry’s Scheme to include a woman’s perspective.⁵ Taking the ideas of Gilligan and Belenky et al. even further, Marcia B. Baxter Magolda sought to give specificity to any generalization made in previous studies in her work, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*. She focused more specifically on gender differences in epistemological development.⁶ In moving toward a redemptive model of women’s epistemological development from a biblical, complementarian worldview it is necessary to critically engage the work of these women who have been trailblazers for women’s developmental theory.

Introduction to the Research Problem

The voices of Gilligan, Perry, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda have been some of the loudest to speak about women’s development in past decades, with other researchers then following their work with further studies that sought to confirm and add to their ideas.⁷ The Christian higher education academy has generally accepted or sought

³See W. G. J. Perry, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), and William G. Perry Jr., “Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning,” in *The Modern American College: Responding to the New Realities of Diverse Students and a Changing Society*, ed. Arthur W. Chickering and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981), 76-116.

⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 7.

⁵In *WWK*, the importance of Perry to their work is mentioned: “The Perry scheme was very important in our work as it stimulated our interest in modes of knowing and provided us with our first images of the paths women might take as they developed an understanding of their intellectual potential, as well as providing a description of the routes most often taken by men.” Belenky et al., *WWK*, 10.

⁶Baxter Magolda discusses use of gender: “I specifically planned to reveal gender similarities and differences in order to create a more comprehensive picture of student’s ways of knowing.” Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-Related Patterns in Students’ Intellectual Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 8.

⁷For an overview of the many studies influenced by *WWK* and *In a Different Voice*, see Nancy Goldberger et al., eds., *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing* (New York: Basic Books, 1996). Other notable studies include N. Lyons, “Dilemmas of Knowing: Ethical and Epistemological Dimensions of Teacher’s Work and Development,” *Harvard Educational Review* 60,

to integrate these models of development, which include developmental prescriptions rooted in sub-biblical presuppositions—namely, constructivism, feminism, and egalitarianism. This research articulates a series of competencies for redemptive development among women, one that is rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical-worldview. . . . A redemptive development refers to a person’s growth toward Christlikeness as contrasting a reinforced pattern of anthropocentricity.⁸ This thesis will employ David Powlison’s epistemological priorities as a trajectory for critically considering existing theoretical paradigms.⁹ Specifically, this thesis will examine Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda’s developmental ideas. This thesis will aim to identify a series of epistemological developmental priorities and competencies from a biblical, complementarian perspective.

The Scope of Personal Epistemology

“What is true?” and “How do we know?” are the central questions of a branch of philosophy known as epistemology.¹⁰ Within the branch of epistemology, a field of study emerged in the 1950s that traced epistemic development known as “personal epistemology.” This research considers the existing foundational theoretical paradigms that have specific implications for gender development in this category of epistemology in order to determine their usefulness for a redemptive and complementarian model of development for women.

no. 2 (1990): 159-80; F. A. Maher and M. K. Tetreault, *The Feminist Classroom* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); A. M. Phelan and J. W. Garrison, “Toward a Gender-Sensitive Ideal of Critical Thinking: A Feminist Poetic,” *Curriculum Inquiry* 24, no. 3 (1994): 255-68.

⁸John David Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates: A Cross-Institutional Application of the Perry Scheme” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 121.

⁹David Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads: The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies,” in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 32.

¹⁰George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006), 20.

Barbara K. Hofer and Paul R. Pintrich coined the term for this field as “personal epistemology.” They describe it as “how the individual develops conceptions of knowledge and knowing and utilizes them in developing understanding of the world.”¹¹ Personal epistemology takes the general questions regarding knowledge posed by epistemology and applies them to the individual learner.¹²

This field of personal epistemology is influenced by the ideas of Jean Piaget, Michael Polanyi, and later of William Perry. Piaget was the first to study cognitive development in children.¹³ Polanyi purports the place of personal participation in scientific inquiry.¹⁴ Perry proposed a scheme of development for undergraduate epistemology building off Piaget’s scientific inquiry into cognition and Polanyi ideas about the influence of the scientist in knowing.¹⁵ From these ideas, three different models of conceptual and theoretical research emerge: (1) developmental, (2) epistemological reflection, and (3) reflective judgment.¹⁶ Perry, Gilligan, and Belenky et al. typify the

¹¹Barbara K. Hofer, “Personal Epistemology as a Psychological and Epistemological Construct: An Introduction,” in *Personal Epistemology: The Psychology of Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowing*, ed. Barbara K. Hofer and Paul R. Pintrich (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002), 4.

¹²Hofer, “Personal Epistemology,” 4.

¹³Piaget’s four stages of cognitive development are sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operations, and formal operations. Together his views of cognitive development and epistemology form his genetic epistemology. Jean Piaget, *The Psychology of Intelligence* (London: Routledge and Paul, 1950).

¹⁴Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958).

¹⁵Four major categories sum up the nine positions: Dualism, Multiplicity, Relativism and Commitment in Relativism. Dualism is where the student clings to two realms, such as good versus evil or right versus wrong. In Multiplicity, where things are uncertain, a diversity of opinions and values are valid. In Relativism, knowledge depends on the context. Ideas, opinion, values and the like are weighed by such things as sources, evidence, logic, and systems. There is room for disagreement and rejection of ideas. In Commitment in Relativism, a student acknowledges the reality of Relativism and exercises autonomy in choosing his or her commitments. See William G. Perry, Jr., *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), and William G. Perry Jr., “Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning,” in *The Modern American College: Responding to the New Realities of Diverse Students and a Changing Society*, ed. Arthur W. Chickering (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981).

¹⁶Joanna Soberano, “Epistemology, Personal,” in *Encyclopedia of Christian Education*, ed. George T. Kurian and Mark A. Lamport (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015), 473.

developmental streams, whereas Baxter Magolda represents epistemological reflection. However, this research does not examine the reflective judgment model Karen Kitchener and Patricia King proposed because it does not use gender distinct patterns.¹⁷

Constructivism. Personal epistemology assumes the tenets of constructivism. Constructivism has its roots in postmodernity. Postmodernity offers a corrective to positivism. Positivism assumes truth is arrived at through empirical data and is discovered through the scientific method. In constructivism, learners organize new knowledge or construct “schemes” that continuously build upon prior knowledge of their unique experiences. Constructivists answer the epistemological question, “What is true?” by claiming that truth is subjectively constructed by the individual and does not objectively exist separate from the knower. They answer the question, “How do we know?” by describing process and experience. This leads to their acceptance of many possible meanings and structures with which to perceive the world.¹⁸

Feminism. In addition to their constructivist influences, Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda’s theories hold feminist presuppositions. For example, Gilligan critiques the patriarchal order prevalent in society that neglects the experiences of women.¹⁹ Belenky et al. describes their association with feminism: “Along with other

¹⁷Baxter Magolda describes Kitchener and King’s lack of gender distinctions: “Although the model was constructed using both men and women, gender was not in the forefront of developmental issues when it was developed. Accounting for data from both men and women may have resulted in descriptions that merge gender-related patterns.” Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 373. For more information about the Reflective Judgment model, see K. S. Kitchener and P. M. King, “Reflective Judgment: Concepts of Justification and Their Relationship to Age and Education,” *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* 2 (1981): 89-116. Also not examined in this research is Marlene Schommer’s work. While important to the formation of the field of personal epistemology, Schommer’s work differs from the three major models because it is not developmental. Instead, it includes a set of five independent beliefs. It is not examined in this research also because it is not developmental or gender specific. Hofer and Pintrich, *Personal Epistemology*, 6. See Marlene Schommer, “Effects of Beliefs about the Nature of Knowledge on Comprehension,” *Journal of Educational Psychology* 82 (1990): 498-504; Marlene Schommer, “An Emerging Conceptualization of Epistemological Beliefs and Their Role in Learning,” in *Beliefs about Text and Instruction with Text*, ed. R. Garner and P. A. Alexander (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1994), 25-40.

¹⁸Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 96-97.

¹⁹“A new psychological theory in which girls and women are seen and heard is an inevitable

academic feminists, we believe that conceptions of knowledge and truth that are accepted today have been shaped throughout history by male-dominated majority culture.”²⁰

Baxter Magolda relies on feminist theories and findings to assist in interpreting her findings.²¹ While this research does not affirm the tenets of feminism, the literature review confirms the understanding that prior to the works of Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda, the research surrounding developmental theory was largely androcentric.

These developmental studies highlight tensions within womanhood, including conflicts between selfishness and responsibility,²² between rights and self-sacrifice,²³ and within self-definition.²⁴ The answers that these studies offer to solve such tensions are rooted in human wisdom. Feminism is strongly influenced by Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan, who both pointed to male-and-female relationship dynamics as the origin of women’s discontentment. To overcome the negative influence of patriarchy, feminism encouraged women to name themselves, their world, and God.²⁵ It encouraged women to look toward education and contributing to society as means of solving the problem of patriarchy.²⁶ These tensions, however, point to deeper spiritual problems and questions,

challenge to the patriarchal order that can remain in place only through the continuing eclipse of women’s experience.” Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xxiv.

²⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 5. Belenky et al., like Beauvoir and Friedan, see education as a means of women’s liberation. Belenky et al., *WWK*, 198.

²¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 366-92.

²²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 105.

²³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 149.

²⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 370. Belenky et al., *WWK*, 50.

²⁵Mary Kassian, *The Feminist Mistake: The Radical Impact of Feminism on Church and Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 9.

²⁶Friedan explains the value of education: “The key to the trap is, of course, education. The feminine mystique has made higher education for women seem suspect, unnecessary and even dangerous. But I think that education, and only education, has saved and can continue to save, American woman from the greater dangers of the feminine mystique.” Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963; repr., New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 487. See also, Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans.

not merely empirical ones. Therefore, tensions in womanhood are better addressed and even resolved with biblical truth. Evangelicals have yet to make a robust attempt to critically evaluate or even substantively consider the tensions in womanhood that exist in the context of developmental theory.

Gender. Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda’s developmental theories all make statements about the extent of their research and gender specificity. Though not always explicitly stated, they have an underlying assumption that “gender” is a construct of society.²⁷ Consequently, they do not propose theories of binding absolutes for development along gender-specific ideals, but rather point out observable patterns.²⁸ A redemptive model will assert that gender’s expression and its biology are designed by God and not entirely socially constructed.

Common grace in personal epistemology. These theories bring necessary attention to a woman’s perspective and these developmental theories may display many other points of God’s common grace, but they stem from a flawed root. They may present true empirical data, but they deny the source of objective truth found in God’s Word.²⁹ Ultimately, their interpretations of empirical data liken back to the garden, where the

Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany Chevalier (1949; repr., New York: Vintage Books, 2011).

²⁷A landmark work that discussed sex being biological and gender being socially constructed is Robert J. Stoller, *Sex and Gender: The Development of Masculinity and Femininity* ([New York?]: Science House, 1968).

²⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 15. Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 16-22. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xix, 2.

²⁹Jack Fennema, “Constructivism: A Critique from a Biblical Worldview,” in *Faith-Based Education that Constructs: A Creative Dialogue between Constructivism and Faith-based Education*, ed. Heekap Lee (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 32. John M. Frame gives a helpful analysis of subjectivism, which shares with constructivism a disbelief in objective truth. He says, “Once again the issues are spiritual. The subjectivist seeks to avoid responsibility to anything outside of himself; he seeks to become his own lord, and that is a form of idolatry. As a god, the self is failure. And as he flees inside himself to escape responsibility to facts and to criteria, the subjectivist discovers facts and criteria within his own being, staring him in the face, because the true God reveals himself even in the heart of the subjectivist. Even when we seek to flee within ourselves, God is there. His laws and His facts cannot be avoided.” John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1987), 121.

crafty serpent asks the woman, “Did God actually say . . . ?” (Gen 3:1). The woman follows this challenge by constructing her own interpretation of truth, leading to her eventual deception and separation from God (Gen 3:3, 6, 8-9; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14). Their interpretations are anthropocentric and are in need of evaluation and reinterpretation from a Christocentric worldview. After this reorientation, there may be ideas to be learned from them. Additionally, the paradigm of womanhood displayed in these theories is different from one in a complementarian paradigm. At this time, there is no comprehensive female epistemological development model that reflects complementarian tenets. The developmental models already proposed may contribute to this end after critical evaluation. This research proposes competencies toward a redemptive model of women’s epistemological development utilizing common grace truths displayed in personal epistemological models.

Christian Higher Education and Its Adaptations of Developmental Theory

Christian higher education has sought to integrate these developmental theories. There are two tensions in these adaptations. First of all, to what degree can these secular theories be integrated into a Christian developmental theory? Second, within integrated Christian developmental theories, what is the theological paradigm of biblical womanhood that influences their model?

Degree of Integration between Scripture and Social Science

James R. Estep, a prominent author and scholar in the field of Christian Education, has summarized the scope of integration between social science and theology into five categories.³⁰ The initial pole on the spectrum is a nonintegrationist view known

³⁰James R. Estep, “Developmental Theories: Foe, Friend, or Folly? The Role of Developmental Theories in Christian Formation,” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010), 42-51.

as “social science exclusivity.” It forms its theories based solely on social science. Theological insights have no place and are, at times, seen as having a negative effect on proposed ideas.³¹ On the opposite pole is the nonintegrationist view known as “scriptural exclusivity.” From this perspective, social science is rejected in favor of the use of Scripture only to form ideas about the world.³² The middle three points on the spectrum represent various emphases within an integrationist approach. In the “social science primacy” view, both social science and Scripture are considered, but Scripture is used as a support for the social sciences.³³ From the “scriptural primacy” viewpoint, both social science and theology are considered, but Scripture is given the primary voice.³⁴ Finally, the “paradigmatic” view is one that simultaneously considers both social science and theology, bringing them into dialogue with each other.³⁵ They are given equal weight. Estep favors the paradigmatic view.³⁶

In this research, three epistemological priorities posed in David Powlison’s article, “Cure of Souls,” are employed to evaluate social science development theories.³⁷ While using this trajectory, this research affirms the possibility of common grace truth that secular theories may have revealed. On Estep’s spectrum, Powlison’s priorities are more closely aligned with Estep’s scriptural primacy view, but at times they will support the scriptural exclusivity view.³⁸ The other views will not be used in this research. Social science sufficiency and social science primacy will not be utilized because they do not

³¹Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 42.

³²Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 43.

³³Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 45-48.

³⁴Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 45-48.

³⁵Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 48.

³⁶Estep, “Developmental Theories,” 48.

³⁷Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads,” 32.

³⁸See the “Methodology” section of this thesis for a summary of Powlison’s points.

give Scripture its proper authority, nor claim its sufficiency. The paradigmatic model will not be used because of lack of clarity. Estep's explains, "we must integrate the truth of Scripture with that from within creation."³⁹ He conflates common grace and general revelation in order to allow truth from creation to bear greater weight on Scripture. Consequently, the answer to research will change based on what the question being asked values more, science or theology.⁴⁰ Christian development models that accept more of an integrationist approach, vacillating between paradigmatic view and social science primary, are more common. A Christian development model is needed that will affirm biblical truth, while critically viewing the social sciences. Currently, neither a comprehensive model nor a domain-specific model exists that acknowledges the female pattern of formation and is thoroughly rooted in Scripture.

The Paradigm of Womanhood Presented by Christian Developmental Theories

The most common paradigm of womanhood that is implemented by Christian developmental theories is that of "Egalitarianism." Egalitarianism is summarized in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*.⁴¹ The egalitarian position asserts that gender roles did not exist before the fall. After the fall, God established gender-based roles for men and women through the judgments and as the result of sin.⁴² In redemption in Christ, no gender-based functional roles exist for men

³⁹Estep, "Developmental Theories," 51.

⁴⁰Estep, "Developmental Theories," 47. The possibility of a vacillating answer is illustrated in the basic assumptions under which Estep's book *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* was written. The editors state that Scripture will only "typically" be given the primary voice. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim, eds., *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010), 5.

⁴¹Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee, eds., *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

⁴²Richard S. Hess, "Quality With and Without Innocence: Genesis 1-3," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 79-95.

and women in the home or church. Egalitarians assert that a hierarchy of roles would assume an inferior position of one gender over the other.⁴³ Additionally, they assert that Galatians 3:28 teaches distinct gender roles in the home and church do not exist for men and women. Subsequently, they use Galatians 3:28 as the key for interpreting scriptural passages pertaining to gender.⁴⁴

A notable instance of egalitarianism being used in Christian developmental theory is in Catherine Stonehouse's chapter, "Learning from Gender Differences," in the *Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*. She correctly identifies differences between men and women in a Christian understanding of development. However, her conclusion is informed by an egalitarian worldview. She says,

Some interpretations of what the Bible teaches about the role of women would keep women as received knowers dependent on male authorities and demand self-sacrificing submission. When women living under these teachings begin to hear the inner voice, which is the natural process of development, and begin to question the rightness of their lot, they are in trouble. Society tells them their questions and thoughts are selfish, and the church tells them they are sinful. Under the load of their guilt, development stops for many Christian women. Not only are they deprived of the joy of becoming all God intended them to be, but what they have to offer for doing God's work in the world is limited.⁴⁵

Stonehouse maintains that "male authorities" and "self-sacrificing submission" are hindering women in their "natural process of development." By contrast, complementarians consider male authority in the church and home, along with a

⁴³Rebecca Groothuis criticizes patriarchy or complementarity by saying, "Patriarchalists consign women to a permanently inferior status in a hierarchy of spiritual authority, calling, responsibility and privilege, all the while insisting that women are not spiritually inferior to men but that women and men stand on equal ground before God. This position is logically incoherent and so cannot be true. Women do not stand on equal ground before God if God has permanently denied them spiritual opportunities and privileges to which every man has access." Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, "'Equal in Being Unequal in Role': Exploring the Logic of Women's Subordination," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 314.

⁴⁴Gordon D. Fee, "Male and Female in the New Creation: Galatians 3:26-29," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 172-85.

⁴⁵Catherine M. Stonehouse, "Learning from Gender Differences," in *Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, ed. Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 115.

woman's willing submission to her own husband's leadership, as a positive means of development for women.

Egalitarianism leads one to question if any gender distinctions exist at all. In *Nurture That Is Christian*, Richard E. Butman and David R. Moore discuss the usefulness of Perry and Belenky et al. in Christian education.⁴⁶ They quickly apply the concepts Belenky et al. describes as being applicable to both genders.⁴⁷ While Belenky et al. admits that "similar categories can be identified in men's thinking," Belenky et al. still acknowledges a pattern for women.⁴⁸ Butman and Moore do not discuss gender patterns in their assessment of the usefulness of Perry and Belenky et al. to a Christian understanding of development.

Both egalitarians and complementarians agree on the *telos* of development being directed to conformity to Christ (2 Cor 3:18). However, their ideologies lead them to different understandings of the significance that gender differences may hold. From a complementarian perspective, ignoring these gender patterns leads to an anemic view of development, resulting in anemic applications in Christian education. To properly assess the usefulness of Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda, it will be necessary in the development of a complementarian model to consider these gender distinct patterns.

Theological Foundations

This research is rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical worldview. To make a valid assertion of redemptive development among women, ideas about knowledge, common grace, the image of God, gender, and complementarianism will be articulated.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Richard E. Butman and David R. Moore, "The Power of Perry and Belenky," in *Nurture That Is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*, ed. James C. Wilhoit and John M. Dettoni (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995), 114-20.

⁴⁷Butman and Moore, "The Power of Perry and Belenky," 114-20.

⁴⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 15.

⁴⁹The use of "redemptive model" is not to be confused with William Webb's "Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic," which claims, "the need to engage the redemptive spirit of the text in a way that

Knowledge

This research utilizes a biblical epistemology in identifying components for a redemptive model. Both of the common epistemological questions, “What is true?” and “How do we know?” have their answers in the Bible. In *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, author John M. Frame describes the usefulness of a biblical epistemology. He states, “It reminds us never to seek out ultimate epistemological security in either the abstraction or the concreteness of our own thinking but to seek it in the infallible certainty of God’s own Word.”⁵⁰ This research assumes that the Word is indeed infallible, and that it is inerrant and authoritative. The authority of Scripture can be defined as the conviction that “all of the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.”⁵¹ God’s Word, which does not shift with culture or subjective interpretation, is a firm foundation on which to build a consistent model. In considering the usefulness of other developmental models, it is vital to note that no objective truth exists outside of the Scripture; however, “no truth exists outside the metaphysical framework of the Bible.”⁵² Additionally, this research uses Frame’s tri-perspectival paradigm of knowledge. Three perspectives of knowing are the normative (the law), situational (the world), and existential (the self).⁵³ Each perspective bears upon another in the process of knowing. The Bible informs and constrains each perspective.

moves the contemporary appropriation of the text beyond its original-application framing.” William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 30. This trajectory hermeneutic will eventually move the reader beyond the bounds of Scripture along the lines of Scripture’s redemptive spirit. This thesis seeks to stay in the bounds of Scripture. “Redemptive” is used here as a general description that includes redeeming worldly ideas to conformity to biblical ones.

⁵⁰Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 190-91.

⁵¹Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 73.

⁵²Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 226.

⁵³Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74-75.

General Revelation and Common Grace

Social sciences are capable of observing and describing truth outside of Scripture. However, because of the authority of Scripture over all of life, all discoveries made by social science must be interpreted from the metaphysical framework of Scripture. Truth revealed outside of Scripture can be classified as either general revelation or common grace. While these terms are similar, they are not synonymous. Theologian Russell D. Moore describes the sources of general revelation being found in “the natural creation and through the makeup of the human creature.”⁵⁴ General revelation, as observed in nature, is described in Romans 1:20 as revealing God’s “divine nature.” This observation of divine nature includes God’s goodness, care, and mercy. Common grace is God’s grace that he makes available to all of mankind.⁵⁵ This is often seen in discoveries that help fulfill the creation mandate of subduing the earth. Social scientists follow the example of Adam in the Garden when he was given the scientific task to observe the world and name the animals (Gen. 2:19). This research analyzes discoveries made by Gilligan, Belenky et. al, and Baxter Magolda for evidences of God’s common grace.

The Image of God and Gender

This model assumes a biblical perspective of humanity. Men and women are unique from the rest of creation because they are made in the image of God.⁵⁶ This is most clearly evidenced in Genesis 1:27: “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” It should be noted that humanity was created male and female. Both genders uniquely express the image of

⁵⁴Russell D. Moore, “Natural Revelation,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 67.

⁵⁵Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 657.

⁵⁶How this image is expressed is not clear in Scripture, though there are clues throughout. John S. Hammett, “Human Nature,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014), 294.

the Lord with equal dignity, but how Christlikeness is expressed may look different.⁵⁷

This difference is, in part, expressed in their various functions or roles. For example, in the context of marriage, men are given authority (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9), whereas women are created as corresponding helpers (Gen 2:18).⁵⁸

During the fall, the image of God in mankind was distorted by sin, and the curses were set to work against the original natural expressions of gender (Gen 3). Men and women can be redeemed from their fallen state, and the image of God can be progressively restored through the gospel: “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18). Christ is the “image of the invisible God,” and men and women are being made to be like him (Rom 8:29).⁵⁹

The image of God was not completely lost in humanity.⁶⁰ Evidence of the image is seen in that men and women were created with a design that can be observed even by secular developmental theories; however, their interpretation lacks theological precision. Theologian Denny Burke well describes the task that is ahead: “To understand human gender, we have to look beyond what we observe in fallen creation, for fallen creation is just that—fallen. ‘Born this way’ does not equal ‘Ought to be this way.’ What defines our humanity is the binary sexual ideal that existed in the garden and that is to be

⁵⁷Hammett, “Human Nature,” 295.

⁵⁸Wayne Grudem gives nine evidences of difference in roles before the fall: (1) “Adam was created first, then Eve,” (2) “Eve was created as helper for Adam,” (3) “Adam named Eve,” (4) “God named the Human Race ‘Man,’ not ‘Woman,’” (5) “The serpent came to Eve first,” (6) “God spoke to Adam first after the Fall,” (7) “Adam, not Eve, represented the human race,” (8) “The curse brought a distortion of previous roles, not the introduction of new roles,” (9) “Redemption in Christ reaffirms the creation order. Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 460-65.

⁵⁹Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 445. Hammett, “Human Nature,” 294.

⁶⁰Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 444. Calvin affirms the view that the image distorted human nature itself, the fall did not simply take away something else humans originally possessed as espoused by Irenaeus and Aquinas. Hammett, “Human Nature,” 310. See also, Daniel L. Akin, “The Person of Christ,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2014), 294.

restored in the new creation.”⁶¹ Utilizing the sexual ideals set in the garden will create a strong foundation for a model of women’s development.

Complementarianism

Complementarianism stems from an evangelical viewpoint that seeks to engage culture with biblical truths. Complementarians’ core beliefs can be found in the book, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*; “The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood”; and, most recently, “The Nashville Statement.”⁶² These works present theological beliefs based on scriptural passages about gender.

Complementarians use the first three chapters of Genesis to construct a case for the creation of gender and gender roles before the fall. Specifically, complementarians understand Genesis 1:27 to be the theological basis for gender distinction. They do not perceive of gender as a social construct. Complementarians believe that the curses given after the fall and the effects of the fall work against the established roles. New roles were not created in the curses given, nor were they established as a result of the fall. Men and women’s roles are part of God’s original design.⁶³

Complementarians affirm the following particular understandings of gender-related passages. First Corinthians 11:2-16 reaffirms man’s role as head over the woman and presents this headship as representative of the Trinity.⁶⁴ First Corinthians 11, as well

⁶¹Denny Burke, *What’s the Meaning of Sex?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 180.

⁶²John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991); “Danvers Statement,” Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, accessed September 9, 2016, <http://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/>; “Nashville Statement,” Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, accessed October 21, 2017, <https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement/>.

⁶³Raymond C. Ortlund Jr., “Male-Female Equality and Male Headship: Genesis 1-3,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 95-123.

⁶⁴Thomas R. Schreiner, “Head Coverings, Prophecies and the Trinity: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 124-39.

as 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36, and 1 Timothy 2:11-15, discuss men and women's roles within the church structure, in which males lead the church.⁶⁵ Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; and 1 Peter 3:1-7 discuss the relationship between men and women in the home, in which the husband is seen as being a servant leader like Christ and the wife is seen as submitting to his leadership.⁶⁶ Galatians 3:28 affirms that salvation is offered to people regardless of their ethnicity, socioeconomic class, or gender. Galatians 3:28 does not eliminate gender differences.⁶⁷ Additionally, Titus 2:1-8 describes the need for and value of gender-specific ministries.⁶⁸ Following these scripturally designed gender patterns is the best soil to promote human flourishing. These understandings are assumed in this research.

A discussion of the application of these understandings has been directed mainly at the home and at the church. Subsequently, a robust complementarian interaction with social science has been limited. As part of his landmark work, *Man and Woman in Christ*, Stephen B. Clark analyzed current findings in social science to determine if empirical evidence would support a complementarian understanding of

⁶⁵D. A. Carson, "'Silent in the Churches': On the Role of Women in 1 Corinthians 14:33b-36," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 140-53; Douglas Moo, "What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11-15," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 179-93.

⁶⁶George W. Knight III, "Husbands and Wives as Analogues of Christ and the Church: Ephesians 5:21-33 and Colossians 3:18-19," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 165-78; Wayne Grudem, "Wives, Like Sarah, and the Husbands Who Honor Them: 1 Peter 3:1-7," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 194-208.

⁶⁷S. Lewis Johnson, "Role Distinctions in the Church: Galatians 3:28," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 154-64.

⁶⁸Susan Hunt explains the need for gender-specific ministries: "Androgyny was not, is not, and will not be God's way. An androgynous approach to ministry in the church is not a biblical approach. It was not good for Adam to be alone in the garden, and a genderless approach to ministry in God's church is not good. God did not give his benediction of 'It is very good' until man and woman stood side by side, equal but different." Susan Hunt, "Women's Ministry in the Local Church: A Covenantal and Complementarian Approach," *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Fall 2006): 37.

Scripture.⁶⁹ He concluded that the sciences support a culturally transcendent differentiation of the sexes in the areas of biology and sociopsychology.⁷⁰ This work came out in 1980 and since then, no other major interaction of between complementarianism, social sciences, and sex differentiation has been offered, especially one that is focused on women's epistemological development. In addition, with regard to understandings about womanhood, the discussion in complementarian theology has concentrated on functions within the home and church, along with character formation. It has stopped short of describing a robust understanding of women's epistemological development.

Significance of Research

In surveying Christian education models, it is clear that a model of development does not exist that makes these assertions concerning complementarianism and that utilizes a similar trajectory to Powlison in evaluation and interaction. Two recent studies call for more research to be conducted on the usefulness of social science to Christian education. First, John David Trentham implemented a reoriented version of the Perry Scheme to compare epistemological positions in undergraduate students. He had reoriented the scheme, employing the principle of inverse consistency to reflect biblical priorities.⁷¹ According to Trentham, there is a need "to develop a [fully comprehensive] biblically-based alternative to Perry's scheme of epistemological development."⁷² If a need exists to create a biblically based alternative to Perry, then a need also exists to

⁶⁹Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1980), 372-73.

⁷⁰Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 447.

⁷¹Trentham, "Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates," 121-29.

⁷²Trentham, "Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates," 221.

create a scripturally based alternative to the studies that build upon his work (e.g., Belenky et al., Baxter Magolda).

Second, Breana Mae Whitley examined the appropriateness of using Erik Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory in Christian discipleship, utilizing Powlison's three epistemological priorities.⁷³ She explains that the social sciences are inherently flawed; they "fall into the realm of sinful human beings looking at the world as sinful human beings only can."⁷⁴ She does not propose that Erikson's theory be integrated in whole or part in Christian discipleship, specifically his ideas on identity and crisis.⁷⁵ But, she explains how Erikson's work can be informative in an apologetic manner: "Specifically pertinent to this dissertation is how Scripture through the epochal events of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration redefine Erikson's ideas such that they may be appropriated though not necessarily used for Christian discipleship in the church."⁷⁶ Whitley was researching the field of psychosocial development, but this research is examining cognitive development. Her analysis, however, does lead to questions about the usefulness of other developmental theories such as those of Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda. This research seeks out points of learning and apologetic with these theories.

This study is a two-fold theological endeavor. First, it will seek out areas of common grace that these secular theories provide. Order is a gift from God in a disordered world. There may be patterns and trajectories presented that are compatible with a biblical worldview. It is important to acknowledge these patterns, thus bringing

⁷³Brenna Mae Whitley, "Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model for the Evaluation of Social-Scientific Research to the Identity Stage of Erik Erikson's Developmental Theory" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009).

⁷⁴Whitley, "Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model," 154.

⁷⁵Whitley, "Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model," 132.

⁷⁶Whitley, "Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model," 132.

glory to God at points of order. Second, it will acknowledge points of departure in these theories from a biblical theological worldview. This study follows the teachings of Scripture: “We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). Due to the secular worldview and contrasting *telos* present in these theories, there will be ideas presented that are contrary to God’s Word. This study will point out ideas contrary to the Scripture and at times reinterpret them from a biblical worldview. Currently, no prominent biblical-theological model exists from a complementarian perspective of female development pertaining to undergraduates. Subsequent studies could further test and possibly expand the new competencies identified. Moreover, this research could serve as an evaluative tool for future studies wanting to analyze or create developmental models considering a woman’s perspective.

Furthermore, this study will be helpful to the Kingdom of God in the evangelism and discipleship areas. These competencies will assist Christian higher education in refining curriculum useful to helping women understand the gospel and other biblical truths. This refined curriculum would benefit churches ministering to women and undergraduates.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to articulate a series of developmental priorities and competencies concerning the epistemological development of female undergraduates, which is both grounded in a thoroughgoing biblical worldview and considers the usefulness of existing paradigms after they have been critically evaluated.

Research Questions

1. What is a biblical framework for a redemptive model of women’s epistemological development from a complementarian perspective?

2. To what extent are the existing theoretical paradigms of women's epistemological development beneficial in order to inform a redemptive model of women's epistemological development from a complementarian perspective?
3. What essential priorities and competencies for redemptive epistemological development among female undergraduates may be identified in light of an established biblical framework and insights from theoretical paradigms?

Delimitations of Proposed Research

First, this study identifies a series of competencies for redemptive development among women, one that is rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical-worldview, specifically from a complementarian perspective that pertains to female undergraduates. This study will not focus on women's development at all life stages, though some inferences may be made.

Second, this study critically considers the existing theoretical paradigms presented by Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda to assess their usefulness to developmental theory for Christian higher education. It will avoid making substantive claims about the appropriateness of other women's developmental theories, though some inferences may be made.

Limitations of Generalization of Findings

This study's scope is limited to developmental theories pertaining to the female gender and therefore, cannot be generalized to developmental theories pertaining to the male gender or developmental theories that pertain to both genders.

Research Population

For the purposes of this study, the research population is described as literature that discusses developmental theories of female undergraduates and undergraduates in general. This study will additionally focus on literature that informs a Christian developmental theory, specifically literature that speaks to theology, philosophy, and gender.

Research Sampling Method

The research sampling is purposive. This sampling concentrates on developmental theories of female undergraduates. In addition, it will focus on literature from an evangelical, complementarian perspective. Other literature may be referenced in part but will not be emphasized.

Terminology and Definitions

For clarity and uniformity, several terms used throughout this thesis require definition.

Complementarianism. A theological understanding of gender defined in both the book, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, and in the Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood.⁷⁷ It is a belief that gender-specific roles for men and women are a part of God’s original design based on Genesis 1-3.

Constructivism. Individual learners organize new knowledge into “schemes” that continuously build upon prior knowledge of their unique experiences.⁷⁸

Egalitarianism. A theological understanding of gender defined in the book *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*.⁷⁹ It is a belief that gender-specific roles for men and women are not a part of God’s original design based on Genesis 1-3. Gender roles are introduced at the fall.

Epistemology. Epistemology is the study of knowledge. It examines questions like: What is true? What is knowledge? How is knowledge justified? What are the sources of knowledge?⁸⁰

⁷⁷John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 469-72.

⁷⁸Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 96-97.

⁷⁹Ronald W. Pierce, Rebecca Merrill Groothuis, and Gordon D. Fee, eds., *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004).

⁸⁰Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 20.

Inverse Consistency Principle. Christian developmental theories and secular developmental theories will have inverse consistencies as they mature toward their different *telos*—Christlikeness and self, respectively.⁸¹ A redemptive progression trends toward righteousness and Christocentricity and reorients fallen patterns in development away from sin and anthropocentricity.⁸²

Feminism. The concept that women have a right to define themselves, their world, and God in order to overcome the negative influence of patriarchy.⁸³

Tri-Perspectival Epistemology. A process of knowing proposed by John M. Frame.⁸⁴ There are three perspectives that bear upon each other in the process of knowing: normative (the law), situational (the world), and existential (the self). Each of these are constrained by Scripture.

Methodological Design and Instrumentation

The methodology in this thesis is two-fold employing both evaluation of existing ideas and the construction of new competencies.⁸⁵ This research evaluates the existing developmental paradigms pertaining to female undergraduate epistemology, specifically the ideas put forth by Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda. These theoretical paradigms were analyzed utilizing the trajectory provided by Powlison’s three epistemological priorities. These priorities are (1) “to articulate positive biblical truth, a systematic practical theology of those things that our culture labels [developmental] issues,” (2) “to expose, debunk and reinterpret alternative models,” and (3) “to learn what

⁸¹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 19.

⁸²Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 15, 28.

⁸³Kassian, *The Feminist Mistake*, 9.

⁸⁴Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74-75.

⁸⁵This methodology closely resembles the methods used by Brenna Mae Whitley. Whitley, “Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model,” 36-39.

we can from defective models."⁸⁶ However, this research used a modified version of these priorities proposed by Trentham in order to reflect the principle of inverse consistency: “(1) articulate positive biblical truth; (2) interact the model/theory from a critically-reflective posture; (3) interact with the model/theory from a charitably-reflective posture; (4) synthesize any available wisdom into a sharpened perspective.”⁸⁷ In evaluating philosophical ideas, this research uses Frame’s tri-perspectival epistemology.⁸⁸ It also utilized and built upon Trentham’s taxonomy of ten epistemological priorities and competencies when evaluating the alternative models.⁸⁹ This research sought out common grace truth available in these models for their applications in Christian education. It constructed a series of developmental priorities and competencies concerning the epistemological development of female undergraduates. The next chapter begins the analysis by giving articulations of biblical principles.

⁸⁶David Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads,” 32.

⁸⁷John David Trentham, personal e-mail, March 2, 2018.

⁸⁸Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74-75.

⁸⁹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 138.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE CONCERNING WOMEN'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

The scope of developmental studies is a vast and comprehensive field. This literature review covers the alternative models of female undergraduate development. First, it will offer a brief overview of developmental theories. Specifically, it will discuss the progression of developmental theories as they pertain to women. Second, it will discuss women's developmental theory, particularly studies by Gilligan and Belenky et al. that strongly influence modern epistemological development theories. Third, it will discuss student developmental theory. Specifically, it will discuss Baxter Magolda's work as the main force in female undergraduate epistemological-developmental theories.

An Overview of the Field of Developmental Theories

Development can be defined "as a progressive series of changes that occurs in a predictable pattern as the result of interactions between biological and environmental factors."¹ In most theories, stages exist in which a human progresses in growth to an idealized self. These theories cover a diversity of such areas as psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, biological, and religious categories. Developmental theories are heavily influenced by the eighteenth-century British and French Enlightenment, which holds "individualism, opposition to authority, centrality of the mind, natural religion, and universalism" to be idyllic.²

¹Neil J. Salkind, *An Introduction to Theories of Human Development* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), 5.

²Brett Webb-Mitchell, "Leaving Development Behind and Beginning Our Pilgrimage," in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 83.

Grand Theories of Development

Three theories are considered to be comprehensive and grand in the area of developmental theory. The grand theories include those of Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, and Jean Piaget. All three of these theories fail to provide a comprehensive understanding of a woman's experience. Further, they are not entirely compatible with Christian ideals. Other subsequent theories have grown out of these weaknesses.

Freud. In the realm of psychosexual theories, Sigmund Freud was the forerunner. He presents a comprehensive theory of child personality development. He views children as being driven along in their development by their psychosexual energy (libido). Each stage is characterized by a different fixation of the libido on different erogenous areas to the satisfaction of the id.³

Two critiques of Freud emerge that typify the weaknesses in his theory relating to women and then relating to Christianity. First, Freud's study focuses primarily on male development. Feminists often accuse Freud of being sexist for this reason. As Freud asserts, in the Phallic Stage (from three to six years old), children are more aware of their genitals. Freud explains this as a stage in which girls can become fixated because they develop "penis envy." Neo-Freudian psychologist Karen Horney disputes this accusation and, instead, describes boys as having "womb envy" because they realize they cannot give birth.⁴ She calls for psychoanalysis that takes into account a woman's experience in her book, *Feminine Psychology*.⁵ Second, a basic biblical critique of Freud's theory is

³Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strachey (1905; repr. New York: Basic Books, 1962).

⁴Karen Horney, *Feminine Psychology* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967).

⁵Horney says, "Psychoanalysis is the creation of a male genius, and almost all of those who have developed his ideas have been men. It is only right and reasonable that they should evolve more easily a masculine psychology and understand more of the development of men than of women." Horney, *Feminine Psychology*, 15. Furthermore she gives this critique: "Nevertheless, the conclusion so far drawn from investigations—amounting as it does to an assertion that one half of the human race is discontented with the sex assigned to it and can overcome this discontent only in favorable circumstances—is decidedly unsatisfying, not only to the feminine narcissism but also to biological science." Horney, *Feminine Psychology*, 38.

that his modernist worldview is antithetical to theism. Christian psychologist Michael Mangis describes this opposition:

The goal of maturity, and particularly the goal of psychoanalysis, is to strip away illusions and to see both the inner and the outer world clearly. The greatest antagonism from the church was mostly in response to the psychoanalytic assumption that the process of dis-illusionment must necessarily involve stripping away lingering myths about or beliefs in a reality outside of the natural and observable world. Maturity, to Freud and his followers, is completely incompatible with a religious worldview. Religion, in fact, is seen as the organized culture protector of immature illusions without which the enlightened adult should learn to live.⁶

These weaknesses of Freud, a failure to properly understand women, and a worldview that opposes Christianity demonstrate the need for an original articulation of redemptive development among women—one that *is* rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical worldview. Both the strengths and weaknesses in Freud’s theories continue to influence modern discussions in developmental theory.

Erikson. In the realm of psychosocial development, Erik Erikson takes into account personality development through eight stages across the entire life span.⁷ Erikson expands Freud’s ideas and considers social interaction and how it shapes the self or ego identity. At each stage, ego strength is built by mastering a competency. Conflict serves as a turning point for a person that helps to progress an individual forward to each stage. Erikson’s work has been thoroughly discussed since its publication.

Two critiques typify these discussions in the area of women and in the area of Christianity. First, while valuing Erikson’s expanded view of personality development, Gilligan found fault with his interpretation because it showed male bias. Erikson’s theory utilized Freud’s conception of adolescence as a turning point for development, but both

⁶Michael Mangis, “The Integration of Psychoanalytic Psychology and Contemplative Theology,” in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 188.

⁷Erik Erikson, *Identity, Youth, and Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968).

theorists failed to take into account that a woman experiences adolescence in a different way than a man does. She points out the following: “Yet despite Erikson’s observation of sex differences, his chart of life-cycle stages remains unchanged: identity continues to precede intimacy as male experience continues to define his life-cycle conception.”⁸

Second, in biblical theological critique, Whitley describes the overall weakness in Erikson’s worldview that makes his theory unacceptable as a whole to Christianity:

Ultimately, overcoming death is the highest goal of Erikson's worldview. Therefore, overcoming death is the ultimate goal of his eight-stage theory of psychosocial development. It follows then, that overcoming death, devoid of Christ, is the goal of his ideas regarding identity as well as the resolution of tension in the identity crisis. Scripture clearly affirms that the identity of the believer cannot be functionally understood devoid of community. However, according to Scripture a person's salvation is into a living community, that is the body of Christ. Contrary to Erikson, death will not be overcome by technological advances or evolutionary adaptation. . . . individual questions of human identity are not primarily answered individually or psychosocially, rather in the corporate cosmic relation of the bride of Christ to Jesus of Nazareth.⁹

Despite these critiques, Erikson continues to influence modern developmental theories, including ideas in Christian education.

Piaget. In the realm of cognitive development, Jean Piaget’s theory with respect to the four stages of child development has been previously discussed in this thesis.¹⁰ Furthermore, Piaget proposed a moral development theory, which was later expounded upon by Kohlberg and then Gilligan.¹¹ All three represent the cognitive-moral reasoning approach to understanding the development of morality. This approach in

⁸Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (1982; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 12.

⁹Brenna Mae Whitley, “Applying a Comprehensive Internal Model for the Evaluation of Social-Scientific Research to the Identity Stage of Erik Erikson’s Developmental Theory” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2009), 152-53.

¹⁰See chap. 1.

¹¹Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgement of the Child* (New York: Free Press, 1965).

cognitive development is considering how morality is formed.¹² In Piaget's theory, a child moves from heteronomy (moral realism) to moral autonomy.

Regarding Piaget's consideration of women, Gilligan critiques Piaget for considering only the male child as the primary subject of his study. Regarding his moral development theory, she states, "While in Piaget's account (1932) of the moral judgement of the child, girls are an aside, a curiosity to whom he devotes four brief entries in an index that omits 'boys' altogether because 'the child' is assumed to be male."¹³ Again, this is an example of how early developmental theories neglected the experiences of women when conducting research and formulating conclusions. However, Piaget's ideas are not totally incompatible with a woman's cognitive development. Later, Piaget's cognitive approach is compared to the results in *WWK*. Tarule notes that Piaget's theory is more closely related to separate knowing because both ideas consider "how knowledge develops through interaction with the objective world."¹⁴

In the area of Christianity, Piaget's cognitive theory offers an analytical approach to faith, which if followed neglects the more complex journey of faith development in a believer's life. Christian Professor Jonathan H. Kim comments, "Under the Piagetian perspective, faith becomes a mechanistic output of one's schema; and so called, the individual's analytic competency turns into an autonomous force that informs, shapes, and controls faith unidirectionally (i.e., unidirectional determinism)."¹⁵

Additionally, in Piaget's moral theory, he is perceived as having a one-dimensional

¹²James R. Estep, "Moral Development and Christian Formation," in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Academics, 2010), 125.

¹³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 18.

¹⁴Jill Mattuck Tarule, "Voices in Dialogue: Collaborative Ways of Knowing," in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women's Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 277.

¹⁵Jonathan H. Kim, "Intellectual Development and Christian Formation," in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Academics, 2010), 83.

understanding of morality because he only considers reason. He neglects moral affect and behavior, which are also recognized as significant features in a Christian understanding of morality.¹⁶

Despite these critiques of Piaget, he has influenced Christian education. Piaget's work has served to remind the church that "the purpose of education is developmental," "learning is a social activity," and "learning is a disequilibrating and re-equilibrating process."¹⁷ Piaget's influence in the developmental theory, education, and Christian education continues to be pervasive.

Emerging and Domain-Specific Developmental Theories

Aside from the three grand schemes of developmental theory, there are domain-specific theories that look at very specific aspects of formation, but do not attempt to describe the whole of human growth. These domain-specific theories can be emergent or quality specific. Emergent theories, such as the sociocultural one by Lev Vygotsky, utilize a compilation of domain-specific theories. Quality specific theories consider the formation of a specific quality. These include theories such as faith development theory by James K. Fowler and moral development theory by Lawrence Kohlberg. This research discusses Vygotsky and Kohlberg because they most directly influence women's developmental theory.

Vygotsky. In Vygotsky's theory, social interaction is a key component in the development of cognitive skills.¹⁸ He describes the place where development in a learner

¹⁶Estep, "Moral Development and Christian Formation," 136-37.

¹⁷James E. Plueddemann, "The Power of Piaget," in *Nurture That Is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*, ed. James C. Wilhoit and John M. Dettoni (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995), 59.

¹⁸Lev S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Process*, ed. M. Cole et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

happens as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The zone is marked by the actual developmental level and the level of potential growth in a learner. The learner is pushed to grow through problem-solving, along with the collaboration with peers or adult guidance.¹⁹ This dialogic experience promotes critical-thinking skills.

Vygotsky is often contrasted with Piaget. Their differing theories are reflections of their sociocultural backgrounds.²⁰ Being Russian, Vygotsky was influenced by communism and its emphasis on shared responsibility. Being Swiss, Piaget was influenced by the Enlightenment and its emphasis on individualism. These influences are evident in their theories. Vygotsky's theory represents a relational epistemology or the *thema*, whereas Piaget's theory represents a rational epistemology or the *schema*. Piaget sees development as preceding learning, and Vygotsky views learning as preceding development. Vygotsky's theory has no stages and growth is nonlinear, whereas Piaget has stages and is unidirectional.

In the area of women's cognitive development, there is not the strong critique against Vygotsky that there has been against Piaget. More room exists for understanding a woman's experience in Vygotsky's theory because of his consideration of culture as an influence in development. Additionally, feminist epistemologies overlap with Vygotsky's theory due to their shared relational emphasis.²¹ They both understand cognitive skills to be developed through social interactions. Demonstrating this compatibility with a woman's experience, Vygotsky's theory is used as a foundation in *WWK*. Tarule attests,

¹⁹Specifically, Vygotsky defines a ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*, 86.

²⁰Tarule, "Voices in Dialogue," 277.

²¹Sue V. Rosser and Patricia H. Miller, "Implications for Developmental Psychology," in *Toward a Feminist Developmental Psychology*, ed. Patricia H. Miller and Ellin Kofsky Scholnick (New York: Routledge, 2000), 21.

“We alluded to Vygotsky’s theory that speech develops in social interactions.”²²

Moreover, Tarule closely links Vygotsky’s theory to connected knowing because, in both ideas, “thinking and knowledge are mediated through interaction with others.”²³

In the area of Christianity, Vygotsky and Piaget represent two poles. Piaget represents the pole of “autonomy/analytic rationality,” and Vygotsky is the pole of “interdependence/praxis-rationality.”²⁴ In other words, Piaget highlights Christian growth as an intellectual pursuit, and Vygotsky emphasizes growth as an experiential pursuit.

Kim explains the tension in Christian education:

Being swayed by these two perspectives, Christian educators proposed two opposing views of Christian formation: one group asserting the human as the object of thinking who is capable of formulating faith analytically, while the other asserting that the human as the subject of thinking who is under the influence of praxis-consciousness. Although both contentions seem to offer clear systematic bases of the interface between intellect and faith, neither perspective offers a complete picture of Christian formation.²⁵

Kim suggests that a dual knowledge theory offers a more holistic approach and needs to be adopted in Christian education. This incorporates both poles in dialogue with one another.²⁶ Vygotsky’s theory, which has led to numerous ideas about assisted learning, are often incorporated into education in the form of scaffolding.

Kohlberg. Kohlberg’s theory on moral development is the theory that most directly influences Gilligan’s study. They were contemporaries at Harvard. Kohlberg’s theory does not determine the content of morality but, rather, the cognitive process that helps one arrive at the conclusion of what is moral. His theory proposes three levels of

²²Tarule, “Voices in Dialogue,” 277.

²³Tarule, “Voices in Dialogue,” 277.

²⁴Kim, “Intellectual Development and Christian Formation,” 89.

²⁵Kim, “Intellectual Development and Christian Formation,” 89.

²⁶Kim, “Intellectual Development and Christian Formation,” 89.

morality, each with two stages: preconventional, conventional, and postconventional.²⁷ At the preconventional level, morality is determined by personal criteria. At the conventional level, morality is informed by outside authority. At the postconventional level, morality is autonomous. Kohlberg later added a seventh stage, Transcendental Morality, which utilized a connection to religion. This stage remained theoretical because it was not empirically proven.

Gilligan critiqued Kohlberg for not including women in his studies. He had studied eighty-four males over the course of twenty years. While he attempted to universalize his findings, Gilligan pointed out that his findings did not accurately measure women.²⁸ Women did not consistently progress to the higher stages where justice was emphasized, but rather thrived at the third stage where goodness and care of others was emphasized.²⁹ Gilligan points to a different construction of the moral problem for women versus men and claims that this different construction is the reason women fail in his system. In his system, moral problems pertain to “competing rights” and are solved through thinking that is “formal and abstract.”³⁰ Gilligan points out the moral problem for women has more to do with “conflicting responsibilities” and is solved with “contextual and narrative” thinking.³¹ Gilligan demonstrates the highest ethic for women is care in contrast to men, who perceive justice as ultimate.

Some Christians have critically accepted Kohlberg’s theory. Stonehouse points to Kohlberg’s theory as providing necessary pattern for creating Christian education

²⁷Lawrence Kohlberg, “The Development of Modes of Thinking and Choices in Years 10 to 16” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1958); Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Philosophy of Moral Development* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).

²⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 18.

²⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 18.

³⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 19.

³¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 19.

curriculum.³² Dennis H. Dirks, a professor of Christian Education, claims there are uses for Kohlberg in Christian education: “Parallels between Kohlberg’s theory and biblical principles suggest that cognitive structural concepts may assist in facilitating student spiritual, as well as moral, development.”³³ Furthermore, he points to Kohlberg’s ideas of autonomy and justice as being scriptural concepts.³⁴

Other Christians have been more critical of his theory’s acceptance. Estep summarized these criticisms. First, Estep explains, “Kohlberg’s severe limitation imposed on his definition of moral development is a concern.”³⁵ Second, Estep explains there are two main philosophical concerns. Kohlberg makes an ideological, not an empirical, rejection of religion’s influence on moral development.³⁶ In addition, Kohlberg does not take into account how sin’s limiting effects make moral development more of a formative process, rather than a unidirectional one.³⁷ Third, Estep notes Kohlberg’s own criticism of his theory as being impractical.³⁸ Kohlberg describes this impracticality: “It is not a sufficient guide to the moral educator who deals with the moral concrete in a school world in which value content as well as structure, behavior as well as reasoning, must be dealt with.”³⁹ While debated, Kohlberg’s influence still influences Christian education and modern moral development theories.

³²Catherine Stonehouse, “The Power of Kohlberg,” in *Christian Educator’s Handbook on Adult Education*, ed. Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993), 73.

³³Dennis H. Dirks, “Moral Development in Christian Higher Education,” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 16, no. 4 (1988): 326.

³⁴Dirks, “Moral Development in Christian Higher Education,” 326.

³⁵Estep, “Moral Development and Christian Formation,” 134.

³⁶Estep, “Moral Development and Christian Formation,” 134.

³⁷Estep, “Moral Development and Christian Formation,” 134.

³⁸Estep, “Moral Development and Christian Formation,” 134.

³⁹Estep uses a longer portion of this quote in his critique of Kohlberg. Lawrence Kohlberg, “Moral Education Reappraised,” *The Humanist* 3 (November/December): 14.

Theories about Women's Development

Studies about women specific psychologies and intellectual abilities began with the first wave of female psychologists. Helen Thompson Woolley was one of the first to research gender differences in psychology. In her dissertation, "Psychological Norms and in Men and Women," she studied men and women undergraduate students at the University of Chicago.⁴⁰ She points out that there are differences, but it is not due to variant capacities, but rather to the nurture of those capacities:

The point to be emphasized as the outcome of this study, is that, according to our present light, the psychological differences of sex seem to be largely due, not to difference of average capacity, nor to difference in type of mental capacity, but to differences in the social influences brought to bear on the developing individual from early infancy to adult years. The question of the future development of the intellectual life of women is one of social necessities and ideals, rather than of inborn psychological characteristics of sex.⁴¹

Another early female psychologist was Leta Stetter Hollingworth, who researched gender differences. Specifically, Hollingworth sought to disprove the common idea that menstruation hindered women's intellectual abilities.⁴² These women, among others—including Horney—served as early advocates for women's inclusion in psychology.

With the second wave of feminism came a new emphasis on women's issues in psychology. Janet Lever and Nancy Chodorow studied gender differences in development, and Gilligan references that work. Lever, using Piaget's ideas, considered how young children of different genders play various games. She concluded that boys played games that prepared them for "work settings in modern society," whereas girls played games that prepared them for "the private sphere of the home."⁴³ Gilligan accuses

⁴⁰Helen Bradford Thompson, "Psychological Norms in Men and Women" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1903), 3. Woolley is her married name.

⁴¹Thompson, "Psychological Norms and in Men and Women," 182.

⁴²Leta Hollingworth, "Variability as related to sex differences in achievement," *American Journal of Sociology* 19 (1914): 510-30.

⁴³Janet Lever, "Sex Differences in Children's Games," in *Feminist Foundations: Toward Transforming Sociology*, ed. Kristen A. Myers, Cynthia D. Anderson, and Barbara J. Risman (1976; repr., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 108.

Lever of assuming Piaget's gender bias when she implies the male roles are the more successful roles.⁴⁴ Gilligan utilized this critique to further emphasize the conclusion that a woman's perspective needs to be considered in psychology. Gilligan had taught alongside Erickson and Kohlberg, using Freud and Piaget as the foundation for her understandings about psychology.⁴⁵ While her work utilizes their methodologies and philosophical leanings at times, she is also critical of them.

Gilligan observes that psychoanalytic theory, at the time, had male bias, which is displayed in its claims that a woman's orientation toward relationship—instead of toward individuation—is a failure to develop.⁴⁶ Gilligan uses Chodorow as an example of one who writes against this androcentric interpretation.⁴⁷ Chodorow points to a natural development of girls being one that leans toward building connections.⁴⁸ Gilligan then furthers Chodorow's ideas through exposing the positive orientation toward care that women express.

Gilligan. It has already been noted in this research that Gilligan was one of the first to incorporate a woman's perspective in developmental theory through her work, *In a Different Voice*. She traced this "voice" in three different studies: the college student study; the abortion study; and the rights and responsibilities study. The college student study sampled students who had chosen to take a particular course on moral and political choice. This study related "self and thinking about morality to experiences of moral conflict and making life choices."⁴⁹ The study on abortion, which sampled twenty-nine

⁴⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 10.

⁴⁵Gilligan, *In A Different Voice*, xiv.

⁴⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 7-8.

⁴⁷Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 8.

⁴⁸Nancy Chodorow, "Family Structure and Feminine Personality," in *Woman, Culture and Society*, ed. M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974).

⁴⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

women, examined “the relation between experience and thought and the role of conflict in development.”⁵⁰ Gilligan describes how these studies were significant because they “expanded the usual design of research on moral judgement by asking how people defined moral problems and what experiences they construed as moral conflicts in their lives, rather than by focusing on their thinking about problems presented to them for resolution.”⁵¹ These two studies were expanded to the study on rights and responsibilities. In this study, she examined 144 men and women at nine points across the life cycle.⁵²

From these studies, she proposed a sequence of three stages of moral reasoning with two periods of transition. In the first stage—preconventional—there is an orientation to individual survival. The transition period out of this stage centers on moving from an orientation from self to an orientation of responsibility to others. The second stage—conventional—continues the trajectory toward others, in which goodness is viewed as caring for others and care manifests in self-sacrifice. The second transition centers on the woman starting to acknowledge her own rights again and not just the rights of others. She no longer views a consideration of self as selfish. Goodness is now not only caring for others, but an embrace of one’s own needs. One’s own needs is the equivalent of one’s own truth. The third stage—postconventional—is the morality of nonviolence. Avoiding exploration and hurt through an ethic of care becomes the highest priority in moral reasoning.⁵³

The results of her study illustrate a variety of nuanced differences between men and women. The most prominent one Gilligan identified is in the transition from childhood to adulthood. In this stage, both men and women experience a dilemma

⁵⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 3.

⁵¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 3.

⁵²She looked at men and women in ages: 6-9, 11, 15, 19, 22, 25-27, 35, 45, and 60. There were 8 males and 8 females examined at each point. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 3.

⁵³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 74.

between “integrity and care.”⁵⁴ Men and women solve this issue through two different approaches due to their different starting points. Women perceive identity and intimacy as being fused.⁵⁵ Women tend to define themselves by their relationships. Women transform by “choice” in opting for responsibility and truth over relationship. For men’s development, identity precedes intimacy.⁵⁶ They have an individual conception of identity versus women’s connected one. Men transform through “intimacy,” where they are forced to care for others. Gilligan also points out issues in communication between men and women’s development: “My research suggests that men and women may speak different languages that they assume are the same, using similar words to encode disparate experiences of self and social relationships.”⁵⁷ This observation illuminates the need to define the vocabulary between the ethic of justice for men and the ethic of care for women, and to seek ongoing dialogue in order to understand points of convergence or divergence. Despite these differences, Gilligan indicates points of agreement on maturity:

In the representation of maturity, both perspectives converge in the realization that just as inequality adversely affects both parties in an unequal relationship, so too violence is destructive for everyone involved. This dialogue between fairness and care not only provides a better understanding of relations between the sexes but also gives rise to a more comprehensive portrayal of adult work and family relationships.⁵⁸

Gilligan’s work displays her desire to showcase a more comprehensive view of human development.

In her study, Gilligan does not seek to present absolutes or generalizations between men and women’s development.⁵⁹ She claims the “voice” she describes is

⁵⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 164.

⁵⁵Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 159.

⁵⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 163.

⁵⁷Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

⁵⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 174.

⁵⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

actually a “theme” and not a “gender,” though it is traced through a woman’s voice.⁶⁰ She states, “No claims are made about the origins of the differences described or their distribution in a wider population, across cultures, or through time.”⁶¹ Despite this claim, her two main criticisms from other feminists have been that she is an essentialist and that she did not take into account other times, races, and socioeconomic realities for women.⁶² In response to this claim, Gilligan coauthored *Between Voice and Silence: Women and Girls, Race and Relationship*.⁶³ This study listened to the voices of twenty-six culturally and racially diverse girls. Some third-wave feminists have found Gilligan’s work to be useful for its “political value” and research “nuance” despite the criticism.⁶⁴ In her latest work, *Joining the Resistance*, Gilligan revisits major themes in her studies, mainly concentrating on her research from *In A Different Voice*.⁶⁵ Here she associates herself with the progressive feminist vision, which has moved from “liberating women to freeing everyone by liberating democracy from patriarchy.”⁶⁶ For those critics who would describe her as being an essentialist, she denies gender binary.⁶⁷ Moreover, she further explains the reason she originally classified the different voice as feminine: “In the culture of patriarchy (whether overt or hidden), the different voice with its ethic of care

⁶⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

⁶¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

⁶²Jane Roland Martin, “Methodological Essentialism, False Difference, and Other Dangerous Traps,” *Signs* 3 (1994): 652.

⁶³Jill McLean Taylor, Carol Gilligan, and Amy M. Sullivan, *Between Voice and Silence: Women and Girls, Race and Relationship* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁶⁴Cressida J. Heyes, “Anti-Essentialism in Practice: Carol Gilligan and Feminist Philosophy,” *Hypatia* 12, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 143.

⁶⁵Carol Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 12.

⁶⁶Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance*, 77.

⁶⁷Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance*, 42. Gilligan also says, “It is not that women are essentially different than men or are all the same, or that men and women are socialized to play different roles, which is often the case. Instead, like a healthy body, a healthy psyche resists disease. There is an inherent tension between our human nature and the structure of patriarchy, leading the healthy psyche to resist an initiation that mandates a loss of voice and a sacrifice of relationship.” Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance*, 32.

sounds feminine. Heard in its own right and on its own terms, it is a human voice.”⁶⁸

While living in patriarchy, she calls for a resistance to injustice and self-silencing.⁶⁹

Despite disparate views concerning Scripture and biblical anthropology, can Christian educators still find value in her work? Her advocacy for women has spawned countless works devoted to women’s development. Consequently, the possibility of common grace truth in her work must be considered in creating a holistic understanding of development. For example, one of Gilligan’s themes—that development occurs in relationship—is echoed in a more recent study, *The First Year Out*.⁷⁰ This study, concerning teenagers and their first year out of high school, concluded, “In sum, learning to successfully navigate relationships and manage gratifications is the common task, primary focus, and major accomplishment of culturally mainstream American teens during their first year out.”⁷¹ The theme of relationship is also affirmed in the study, *What Matters in College?*, conducted by Alexander W. Astin.⁷² He concludes: “In many ways the philosophy underlying a liberal education is a testimony to the value of the peer group.”⁷³ Gilligan’s work to include relationship as a mark of maturity has value for women and for men. Another work—*College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be*—examined the purpose of colleges in America.⁷⁴ Its findings resonate with Gilligan’s theme of dialogue and the ethic of nonviolence: “A college should not be a haven from

⁶⁸Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance*, 25.

⁶⁹Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance*, 174.

⁷⁰Tim Clydesdale, *The First Year Out: Understanding American Teens After High School* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007).

⁷¹Clydesdale, *The First Year Out*, 108.

⁷²Alexander W. Astin, *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993).

⁷³Astin, *What Matters in College?*, 437.

⁷⁴Andrew Delbanco, *College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

worldly contention, but a place where young people fight out among and within themselves contending ideas of the meaning of life, and where they discover that self-interest need not be at odds with concern for one another.”⁷⁵ In Joann Wolski Conn’s *Spirituality and Personal Maturity*, she compares spiritual growth and psychological development.⁷⁶ Conn does not fully integrate all of Gilligan’s views because Conn perceives Gilligan’s model to lack a comprehensive view of both men’s and women’s experiences.⁷⁷ She does pick up on Gilligan’s theme of relationship and understands this to be useful for both sexes at each stage in spiritual development.⁷⁸ Conn is representative of later feminist critics of Gilligan that reject allusions to essentialism, but retain her notion of care. In the summative work, *Student Development in College*, the authors describe a need for more research surrounding the moral development of women in college and Gilligan’s contribution to this fact: “Gilligan was the first to open the door to a unique way to examine moral development void of universalism. New gender-related moral models will help us better serve the majority of our students: women.”⁷⁹ A need exists in Christian circles to explore this area of development for women.

Belenky et al. Belenky et al., in *Women’s Ways of Knowing (WWK)*, built upon Gilligan’s work and further developed her metaphor of voice.⁸⁰ Belenky et al. also

⁷⁵Delbanco, *College*, 177.

⁷⁶Joann Wolski Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989).

⁷⁷Conn says, “Gilligan concentrates on attachment only as it appears in women’s lives and does not yet give equal attention to the way attachment functions in men’s experiences. Neither does she sufficiently connect the developmental issue of attachment in women to the opposite desire for independence and autonomy. Gilligan’s own theory, therefore, cannot yet account adequately for the full range of women’s and men’s experiences.” She also lists several other reasons. See Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity*, 47.

⁷⁸Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity*, 50. Conn uses Robert Kegan’s work because she views it a more comprehensive model. See Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity*, 50-65.

⁷⁹Nancy J. Evans et al., *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 117.

⁸⁰Belenky et al. *WWK*, 6, 16. Mary Field Belenky and Gilligan had previously collaborated on another study that highlights women’s developmental process of thought in making decisions about abortion. Carol Gilligan and Mary F. Belenky, “A Naturalistic Study of Abortion Decisions,” in *Clinical-*

utilized the example of William Perry's intellectual development scheme.⁸¹ After studying 135 women, the authors summarized five perspectives that women displayed in terms of their cognitive understanding. These perspectives are silence, received knowing, subjective knowing, procedural knowing, and constructed knowing. In the perspective of silence, women have an "extreme denial of self and a dependence on external authority for direction."⁸² Received knowing is characterized by a dependency on external authority for knowledge about the world and themselves. Truth is black and white.⁸³ In subjective knowing, which is similar to received knowing, truth is dualistic. However, received knowers look outside themselves for truth, while subjective knowers will look to themselves as a source of truth. Subjective knowers can have a different truth than the one the world provides. In other words, "women become their own authorities."⁸⁴ In procedural knowing, "techniques and procedures for acquiring, validating, and evaluating knowledge claims are developed and honored."⁸⁵ Separate and connected knowing are subcategories of procedural knowing.⁸⁶ Separate knowers deviate from subjective knowers because they distrust knowledge from outside and within, leading to critical thinking. They have a dispassionate acquisition of knowledge.⁸⁷ In connected knowing, personal experience is highly valued like that in the subjectivist position. They exercise

Developmental Psychology, ed. R. Selman and R. Yando (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980).

⁸¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 9-10.

⁸²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 24.

⁸³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 51.

⁸⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 54.

⁸⁵Nancy Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women's Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 5.

⁸⁶These are terms adapted from Gilligan. Belenky et al., *WWK*, 101.

⁸⁷Separate knowers are noted for not fitting into a female stereotype: "Separate knowers refuse to play the conventional female role, choosing instead to play a game that has belonged traditionally to boys—the game of impersonal reason, (104)." In other sense, they follow traditional conventions of academia. Belenky et al., *WWK*, 103-4.

empathy, hoping to understand others' experiences. In other words, separate knowers "reason against" the object, and connected knowers "reason with."⁸⁸ Constructed knowers integrate the different modes of comprehension. In this position, "truth is understood to be contextual; knowledge is recognized as tentative, not absolute; and it is understood that the knower is part of (constructs) the known."⁸⁹

Ten years after *WWK* was released, the authors and additional contributors published a collection of essays on the impact of their study: *Knowledge, Difference, and Power*. In it, they address various critiques that have arisen since *WWK* first came out.⁹⁰ One such critique is the idea that their work holds an essentialist position. This is similar to the critiques Gilligan received. Goldberger reinforces the idea that *WWK*'s positions are not distinctly female, but that these were hidden voices that needed to be exposed. She realizes that certain similar themes emerged in a woman's experiences:

Such themes suggested to us that there are hidden agendas of power in the way societies define and validate and ultimately genderize knowledge; the stories of women told depicted a variety of different ways women understand, accommodate, and resist definitions of authority and truth.⁹¹

Goldberger emphasizes that these themes have emerged in women because they have been socialized to think in this way.

Another critique concerns whether or not *WWK* is actually developmental. Many assume that the five positions of development were sequential, with silent women being the least developed and constructed knowers being the most mature.⁹² This assumes that being a constructed knower is a superior position.⁹³ This idea is disputed

⁸⁸Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 5.

⁸⁹Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 5.

⁹⁰Nancy Goldberger et al., eds., *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women's Ways of Knowing* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

⁹¹Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 7.

⁹²Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 12.

⁹³Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 6.

among the authors in *Knowledge Difference, and Power*. Goldberger asserts that from *WWK* it could be inferred that “Constructed Knower” was superior, but that this did not take into account the various cultural influences of women, which may call for other types of knowing. Goldberger recommends that the perspectives should be viewed as “strategies.”⁹⁴ Sara Ruddick similarly rejects the idea of *WWK* being developmental. She values a woman’s adherence to a certain stage and claims that “cognitive capacities are not inherently at odds.”⁹⁵ Ruddick, like Goldberger, does not always recognize a need for a person to move to a different category. Instead, she encourages “development within its modality.”⁹⁶ For example, she explains this thought when applied to received knowers: “To know receptively and more adequately—with a nuanced and flexible relation to authorities, for example, or with a clearer sense of the dangers of projection—it is not necessary for a received knower to move on to another ‘position.’ She receives differently.”⁹⁷ Additionally, Elizabeth Debold, Deborah Tolman, and Lyn Mikel Brown disagree that there is a set progression of stages because women may not follow along the designated path of a “normal” progression.⁹⁸ However, Belenky is not as quick to dismiss it as development. She has written about women’s ability to develop out of the silent knowing stage in the context of community.⁹⁹ Furthermore, Belenky and others still view

⁹⁴Nancy Goldberger, “Cultural Imperatives and Diversity in Ways of Knowing,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 363.

⁹⁵Sara Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity’: A Case for Connected Knowing,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 253.

⁹⁶Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 255.

⁹⁷Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 255.

⁹⁸Elizabeth Debold, Deborah Tolman, and Lyn Mikel Brown, “Embodying Knowledge, Knowing Desire,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 96.

⁹⁹Mary F. Belenky, “Public Homeplaces,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 395; M. F. Belenky, L. A. Bond, and J. S. Weinstock, *A Tradition That Has No Name: Nurturing the Development of People, Families and Communities* (New York: Basic Books, 1997).

the position of being a received knower as less developed and that it is something that needs to be overcome.¹⁰⁰

Many in education have assumed *Women's Ways of Knowing* to be a progression of stages and adopted the framework as developmental.¹⁰¹ Two such popular studies—one by Nona Lyons and the other by Mayer and Tetrault—examined the progression of the epistemology of teachers.¹⁰² While Clinchy does not assign higher values to the stages, she does see the limitations of being a received and subjective knower and desires her students to move to separate and connected knowing.¹⁰³ Most of these educational frameworks have reduced the five epistemologies, as they are presented in *WWK*, as a discussion between separate and connected knowing. Galotti and Clinchy conducted one such study (1999). They considered the differences of separate and connected knowing between the genders and found that women are more connected knowers.¹⁰⁴ Educational frameworks generally seek to move the person out of the position of received knower until the individual becomes a constructed knower.

Stonehouse proposes the usage of *Women's Ways of Knowing* in Christian education. She recognizes *Women's Ways of Knowing* as a trajectory of development, and affirms that a received knower is a less developed position.¹⁰⁵ She proposes the value of

¹⁰⁰Belenky et al. explain why being a received knower is not ideal: "Reliance on authority for a single view of truth is clearly maladaptive for meeting the requirements of a complex, rapidly changing, pluralistic, egalitarian society and for meeting the requirements of educational institutions, which prepare students for such a world." Belenky et al., *WWK*, 43.

¹⁰¹Goldberger, "Looking Backward, Looking Forward," 12.

¹⁰²Nancy Lyons, "Dilemmas of Knowing: Ethical and Epistemological Dimensions of Teacher's Work and Development," *Harvard Educational Review* 60, no. 2 (1990): 159-80; M. A. Maher and M. K. Tetrault, *The Feminist Classroom* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

¹⁰³Blythe McVicker Clinchy, "On Critical Thinking and Connected Knowing," *Liberal Education* 75 (1989):15, 17; B. M. Clinchy, "Issues of gender in teaching and learning," *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching* 1 (1990): 52-67.

¹⁰⁴K. M. Galotti et al., "A New Way of Assessing Ways of Knowing: The Attitudes Toward Thinking and Learning Survey (ATTLS)," *Sex Roles* 40 (1999): 745-66.

¹⁰⁵Catherine M. Stonehouse, "Learning from Gender Differences," in *Christian Educator's Handbook on Adult Education*, ed. Kenneth O. Gangel and James C. Wilhoit (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books,

each stage of growth, but affirms that development is necessary.¹⁰⁶ Her hope, like that of Belenky, is that women would move past being a received knower.¹⁰⁷ This research views *WWK* as still a major study in the area of development to be considered due to its continuing impact on the study of psychology, identity, self, and education.

Educators have considered Belenky et al.'s work as filling gaps in the Perry Scheme and as bringing valuable insights into epistemological development. Like Gilligan, they offer ideas that are different than those in biblical anthropology. How then should the Christian educator use their epistemological positions? What common grace can be deciphered after a biblical critique?

Theories about Student Development

The three main theorists who helped shape modern student developmental ideas are Kohlberg, Perry, and Arthur Chickering. Kohlberg's work has been previously discussed. Chickering used Erikson's ideas about identity development and focused specifically on college students in his work, *Education and Identity*.¹⁰⁸ He put forth seven vectors of identity development. Regarding women, Chickering's work had not fully taken into account a woman's experience. Several studies have added to his findings with a particular emphasis on women.¹⁰⁹ These studies mention that, in college, women become autonomous later than men and that forming healthy relationships precedes

1993), 112.

¹⁰⁶Stonehouse, "Learning from Gender Differences," 113.

¹⁰⁷Stonehouse sees the value of using *Women's Ways of Knowing* as a way of understanding women in the church. Stonehouse, "Learning from Gender Differences," 112-13.

¹⁰⁸Arthur Chickering, *Education and Identity* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1969).

¹⁰⁹D. J. Taub and M. K. McEwen, "Patterns of Development of Autonomy and Interpersonal Relationships in Black and White Undergraduate Women," *Journal of College Student Development* 32 (1991): 502-8. D. J. Taub and M. K. McEwen, "The Relationship of Racial Identity Attitudes to Autonomy and Mature Interpersonal Relationships in Black and White Undergraduate Women," *Journal of College Student Development* 33 (1992): 439-46. D. J. Taub, "Autonomy and Parental Attachment in Traditional-Age Undergraduate Women," *Journal of College Student Development* 38 (1997): 645-54.

autonomy. This association with relationships also echoes Gilligan's findings. More major studies can be conducted to extend his work specifically to women.

Perry. Perry's work, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in College*, remains the foundational work in student developmental theories. Belenky et al. and Baxter Magolda build upon his work in their own theories. Perry proposed a scheme concerning undergraduate epistemological development. His scheme consists of nine positions on a continuum. The four major groupings are Dualism, Multiplicity, Contextual Relativism, and Commitment within Relativism.

Belenky et al. gave thoughtful interaction with Perry's Scheme. These interactions are included here in order to demonstrate the different perspectives that are prevalent in women's developmental theory. Dualism is characterized by Perry as the "Garden of Eden."¹¹⁰ Knowledge is right and wrong, good and bad. Right answers exist and are given by authorities. Belenky et al. likened their received knower perspective to this position, although they say women are not as connected to authority as men are because most authorities they know are not women.¹¹¹ Multiplicity is a position in which everyone's opinion is important and considered. Judgment is withheld from those opinions. Belenky et al. likened this to their subjectivist perspective.¹¹² Men in this stage celebrate their opinion, and "it becomes a tool in the process of his separation and differentiation."¹¹³ Whereas women, wanting to remain connected, offer modest opinions for fear of hurting the relationships that have been established.¹¹⁴ In Contextual

¹¹⁰William G. Perry Jr., "Cognitive and Ethical Growth: The Making of Meaning," in *The Modern American College: Responding to the New Realities of Diverse Students and a Changing Society*, ed. Arthur W. Chickering (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981), 80.

¹¹¹Belenky et al. *WWK*, 43-44.

¹¹²Belenky et al. *WWK*, 62.

¹¹³Belenky et al. *WWK*, 64.

¹¹⁴Belenky et al. *WWK*, 65-66.

Relativism, the student becomes the “maker of meaning,” rather than the “holder of meaning.”¹¹⁵ The student begins to understand thought structures and weigh varying ideas and opinion. “Meta-thinking” is introduced, whereby the student can start to realize how they themselves think.¹¹⁶ Within this position, the procedural knowledge of Belenky et al. is similar to the Relative Subordinate position.¹¹⁷ The constructed knowledge of Belenky et al is related to Relativism on the whole. Comprehension through structures for a woman is not motivated by the desire to live up to the demands of external authorities; her desire is to understand others’ opinions.¹¹⁸ The final goal of maturity in Perry’s Scheme is Commitment. This is an “affirmation, choice or decision,” and “agency is experiences as within the individual.”¹¹⁹ In forming “Commitments” the student finds identity and their worldview is created.¹²⁰

As previously mentioned, Trentham’s recent dissertation has reoriented Perry’s Scheme.¹²¹ He points out that the goal of human development in Perry’s understanding is “self-focused and centered in naturalistic life (bios) rather than eternal life (zoê).”¹²² Consequently, Perry’s Scheme must be evaluated critically before it can be utilized in Christian education. Utilizing this example, alternative models to female undergraduate epistemological development will be used.

¹¹⁵Perry, “Cognitive and Ethical Growth,” 87.

¹¹⁶Perry, “Cognitive and Ethical Growth,” 88.

¹¹⁷A. Brockbank and I. McGill, *Facilitating Reflective Learning in Higher Education* (Maidenhead, England: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 50-51.

¹¹⁸Belenky et al. *WWK*, 65-66.

¹¹⁹Perry, “Cognitive and Ethical Growth,” 80.

¹²⁰Perry, “Cognitive and Ethical Growth,” 97.

¹²¹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121-29.

¹²²Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121-29.

In a recent collaborative article, Trentham and Estep compare the work of Perry to neuroscientist Kurt Fischer.¹²³ Trentham and Estep identify Perry as Neo-Piagetian. Perry furthered Piaget's work because of his emphasis that development continues to progress after early adolescence. Trentham and Estep furthered Perry's work by using his Scheme as a "framework for considering neurological development."¹²⁴ In their analysis, they found that both Perry and Fischer's work point to "the significance of the college and young adult years as paradigmatically influential and formative within God's pattern for lifespan development."¹²⁵ This demonstrates the further need to study undergraduate development and pertinent to this research, female undergraduates.

Theories about Female Undergraduate Student Development: Baxter Magolda

In discussing cognitive theories, it is important to acknowledge the impact of the undergraduate years. *How College Affects Students* is a comprehensive analysis of higher educational practices.¹²⁶ It affirms consistent evidence that "participation in higher education promotes cognitive growth."¹²⁷ Baxter Magolda's study is situated in higher education and explores cognitive growth during these significant years. In her work, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, Baxter Magolda presented the results of her five-year longitudinal study, during which she looked at fifty-one female and fifty male students from the University of Miami. Her contribution to developmental theory is discussed in *Student Development in College*. It states that her strength "lies in her

¹²³John David Trentham and James Riley Estep, "Early Adult Discipleship at the Intersection of Neurological and Phenomenological Research," *The Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministries: Equipping the Generations for Gospel-Centered Living* 5, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2016): 7-32.

¹²⁴Trentham and Estep, "Early Adult Discipleship," 9.

¹²⁵Trentham and Estep, "Early Adult Discipleship," 22.

¹²⁶Matthew J. Mayhew et al., *How College Affects Students: 21st Century Evidence That High Education Works*, vol. 3 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016).

¹²⁷Mayhew et al., *How College Affects Students*, 145.

longitudinal approach, depth of analysis, and careful attention to application of theory practice.”¹²⁸

The resulting epistemological reflection model had four stages: absolute knowing, transitional knowing, independent knowing, and mastering knowing. The first three stages display gender-specific patterns. In *absolute knowing*, knowledge is certain.¹²⁹ There are real facts, and the authorities have those facts, therefore the learner listens to authorities.¹³⁰ Disagreement with authorities is attributed to varying degrees of understanding.¹³¹ In *transitional knowing*, “some knowledge is uncertain,” while some knowledge remains absolute.¹³² If authorities disagree, it is attributed to knowledge that is unknown or uncertain. Students want authorities to provide more than facts; they want to know the methodology behind the answers. How well a student learns “is dependent on their perception of how useful it will be in the future.”¹³³ *Independent knowing* views knowledge as being mostly uncertain.¹³⁴ Authorities’ differences in opinion are attributed to the uncertainty of knowledge.¹³⁵ Students perceive their opinion to be as valid as the opinion of an authority and therefore prefer classes that promote an exchange of ideas.¹³⁶ In *contextual knowing*, knowledge is still uncertain, but not everyone’s ideas will be equally valid.¹³⁷ They are critically regarded. Authorities and learners are expected to

¹²⁸Evans et al., *Student Development in College: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 193.

¹²⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 36.

¹³⁰Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 36.

¹³¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 36.

¹³²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 47.

¹³³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 47.

¹³⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 55.

¹³⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 55.

¹³⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 55.

¹³⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 170.

participate in evaluative dialogue with ideas.¹³⁸ In the process of dialogue, they are considered to be co-learners. Baxter Magolda noted three themes in her work: the emergence of voice, relationship with authority, and relationships with peers.¹³⁹

Two distinct patterns emerge for the different genders within the initial three stages.¹⁴⁰ Baxter Magolda emphasizes that this is not an absolute pattern but it should, rather, be regarded as a continuum.¹⁴¹ This is because there was the possibility for the different genders to hold to these patterns in varying degrees. Both females and males transitioned to the next stage at relatively similar times; however, they arrive at transitions in different ways.

A receiving pattern and mastery pattern merge in the authority stage. Women are more prone to display the receiving pattern, in which learning is private.¹⁴² Men demonstrate the mastery pattern, in which learning is public. In the transitional knowing stage, women were more closely related to the interpersonal pattern, whereby knowledge is gained through collecting others' ideas.¹⁴³ Knowledge is validated by the student's own estimation.¹⁴⁴ Men associate more with the impersonal pattern, whereby their own thinking is cultivated.¹⁴⁵ Knowledge is validated through logic and research.¹⁴⁶ In the independent knowing stage, women are more closely related to the interindividual pattern, whereby they prefer both thinking for themselves and hearing the opinions of

¹³⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 170.

¹³⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 191.

¹⁴⁰Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 70.

¹⁴¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 37.

¹⁴²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 38.

¹⁴³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 48.

¹⁴⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 48.

¹⁴⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 48.

¹⁴⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 48.

others.¹⁴⁷ Men are more related to the individual pattern, whereby independent thinking is a key feature in both themselves and in others.¹⁴⁸ In contextual learning, there was not enough of a sample to determine if there was a gender-related pattern.¹⁴⁹

Baxter Magolda reflected on her work in a later article, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization of Epistemological Reflection.”¹⁵⁰ She shares that when she started her study, she had positivist commitments. She believed in an objective external reality and that there are structures that should be explored that help one obtain reality.¹⁵¹ She admits to having overlooked Perry’s understanding that reality is constructed and because of that she generalized his theory to all students, while ignoring the contextualization that was implied in it.¹⁵² During years four through six of her study, she abandoned her positivism and accepted a constructive view because it more closely resonated with what she was seeing in the study participants.¹⁵³

In a progression of that shift and after more studies, she has changed her view on developmental theories. She no longer sees them as progressive:

Analyzing these dynamics led me to abandon my earlier theoretical assumption that development is a gradual process, naturally unfolding in logical sequence. I now view existing developmental models as descriptions of how contexts have shaped young adults (in interaction with young adults’ current meaning-making) rather than

¹⁴⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 56.

¹⁴⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 56.

¹⁴⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 189.

¹⁵⁰Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization of Epistemological Reflection,” *Educational Psychologist* 39, no. 1 (2004): 31-42.

¹⁵¹Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization,” 32.

¹⁵²Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization,” 32.

¹⁵³Baxter Magolda explains why she changed to constructivism: “I found the assumptions of the constructivist paradigm—realities are multiple, context-bound, and mutually shaped by interaction of the knower and known (Lincoln & Guba, 2000)—a better fit with constructive-developmental theory than were the positivist assumptions (e.g., objective reality, context-free, researcher objectivity) I had superimposed on it. The assumption of multiple realities instead of one objective reality better reflected participants’ gender-related patterns.” Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization,” 35-36.

as descriptions of what is possible in terms of developmental growth.¹⁵⁴

She limits the generalization of her own study to the context of “a group of white young adults who attended a selective liberal arts college.”¹⁵⁵

Later Baxter Magolda also published *Making Their Own Way: Narratives for Transforming Higher Education to Promote Self-Development*.¹⁵⁶ She followed some of the original samples from her work throughout their twenties. In this work, she explores the idea of development leading to self-authorship, which is the process of formulating judgments through gathering information and reflecting on one’s own beliefs.¹⁵⁷ She does not view self-authorship as having the same gender-related patterns. She has produced several subsequent works discussing this process.¹⁵⁸ Baxter Magolda’s work continues to shape modern educational practices.

Christian Interactions with Developmental Theories

Developmental theories have been assessed and integrated into Christian education practices in various ways. Perry Downs, in his work, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, gives one of the more comprehensive treatments in describing how Christian educators should interact with developmental theories. Downs claims that development is the stream of psychology that is most compatible with Christianity. He views ten

¹⁵⁴Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization,” 39.

¹⁵⁵Baxter Magolda, “Evolution of a Constructivist Conceptualization,” 42.

¹⁵⁶Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, *Making Their Own Way: Narratives for Transforming Higher Education to Promote Self-Development* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2001).

¹⁵⁷Baxter Magolda, *Making Their Own Way*, 14. She describes the epistemological dimension of self-authorship: “View knowledge as contextual; develop an internal belief system via constructing, evaluating, and interpreting judgements in light of available evidence and frames of reference.” Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, “Self-Authorship as the Common Goal of 21st Century Education,” in *Learning Partnerships: Theories and Models of Practice to Educate for Self-Authorship*, ed. Marcia Baxter Magolda and Patricia M. King (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2004), 12.

¹⁵⁸Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, “Learning Partnerships Model: A Framework for Promoting Self-Authorship,” in *Learning Partnerships: Theory and Modes of Practice to Educate for Self-Authorship*, ed. Marcia Baxter Magolda and Patricia M. King (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2004); Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, “Three Elements of Self-Authorship,” *Journal of College Student Development* 49 (2008): 269-84.

assumptions being present in developmental psychology that are congruent with a Christian understanding of human nature.¹⁵⁹ These are helpful insights in considering the usefulness of developmental theories, but Downs takes the value of these assumptions too far. His view of integration is what Powlison describes as being vital-external.¹⁶⁰ He perceives the integration of Christian education and psychology as a necessary and vital step in understanding the way God has ordered the world.¹⁶¹ Powlison would contend these assumptions may “stimulate and inform,” but are not necessary in a comprehensive-internal model.¹⁶² Notably missing from Downs’ interactions are gender-specific patterns in his integration of development in Christian education. Downs does mention that Gilligan pointed out Kohlberg’s androcentricity in his sampling, but Downs does not describe cognitive moral development with gendered patterns.¹⁶³

Ted Ward, another Christian educator, also holds a vital-external view. In Ward’s book, *Values Begin at Home*, he describes the contribution of developmental theorists in pointing out a relationship between both environmental and biological

¹⁵⁹Downs’ ten assumptions are (1) “In essential attributes, humans are more similar than dissimilar,” (2) “The essence of humanness is carried in genetic structure and is in every respect inherent,” (3) “The patterns of human development are in the nature of humankind,” (4) “The patterns of development cannot be significantly altered,” (5) “Development can be seen in several interwoven aspects—physical, cognitive, affective, social, and moral,” (6) “Development must be understood holistically,” (7) “Environment facilitates or represses development,” (8) “Development is best understood as a matter of losing limitations,” (9) “Development can be stalemated by adverse conditions,” (10) “Fulfilling the continuing pattern of human development throughout life is a requisite for fulfilling humanness.” Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, 73-77.

¹⁶⁰Powlison describes the vital-external model: “VITEX asserts psychology must make a VITel External contribution to the construction of a wisely Christian model of personality, change and counseling . . . VITEX asserts that while biblical faith and practice give us controls to evaluate outside input, it does not give enough detail to constitute a model. COMPIN [comprehensive-internal] asserts that while psychologies may stimulate and inform, they are unnecessary for the constitution of a robust model.” David Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads: The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies,” in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 31-32.

¹⁶¹Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, 70.

¹⁶²Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads,” 32.

¹⁶³Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth*, 100.

influences on the shaping of a person.¹⁶⁴ Ward uses Kohlberg and Piaget as a framework to assist parents and Christian educators in understanding children's moral cognitive development.¹⁶⁵ Ward, like Downs, does not acknowledge gender-specific patterns in his integration.

In Timothy S. Gibson's article, "Proposed Levels of Christian Maturity," he evaluates Kohlberg's moral reasoning theory for Christian educators' use.¹⁶⁶ He acknowledges that an ethic of care leads to "an enlarged conception of morality."¹⁶⁷ However, he does not seek to integrate this approach into his model. He views Gilligan's work as being largely unsubstantiated.

Christian educator Robert Pazmiño provides a survey of developmental theories in his *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*.¹⁶⁸ In this book, he discusses his view of integration of developmental theory, which aligns with the vital-external understanding. He affirms, like Downs and Ward, the value of developmental theory, the final authority of Scripture, and the vital necessity of interacting with developmental theories in order to propose a model.¹⁶⁹ Pazmiño proposes a model of development, "which seeks to integrate developmental concepts with a Christian anthropology."¹⁷⁰ While his current model does not integrate a gender pattern, he calls for subsequent

¹⁶⁴Ted Ward, *Values Begin at Home*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1989), 11.

¹⁶⁵Ward, *Values Begin at Home*, 11.

¹⁶⁶Timothy S. Gibson, "Proposed Levels of Christian Maturity," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32, no. 4 (2004): 295-304.

¹⁶⁷Gibson, "Proposed Levels of Christian Maturity," 296.

¹⁶⁸Robert W. Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 195-229.

¹⁶⁹Pazmiño describes his view of integration here: "In this approach Christians have the responsibility of careful and critical discernment in drawing upon psychology. This discernment demands that Christians carefully evaluate descriptive psychological insights before suggesting prescriptions for educational practice. Such evaluation allows for the critique and affirmation of psychological findings." Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 197.

¹⁷⁰Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 224.

models to build off of his work.¹⁷¹ He acknowledges the contributions of Gilligan and Belenky et al. in adding the perspective of women.¹⁷² He perceives their perspective as a necessary step toward understanding an individual holistically.¹⁷³ While Pazmiño's model is not a comprehensive-internal one, his acknowledgment of the need for women's perspective in Christian developmental theory is significant.

Other Christian educators and psychologists realize the value of recognizing gender perspectives in developmental theory. As previously mentioned, Stonehouse discussed the value of learning from gender differences.¹⁷⁴ According to her, "We will most clearly see how to live out God's greatest commandments in the home, the church, and the world when we listen carefully to the voices of both men and women. If the voices of women are to be heard, women must be respected as persons worth listening to."¹⁷⁵ However, Stonehouse does not view a complementarian paradigm of womanhood as a positive aspect of women's development.¹⁷⁶ She prefers an egalitarian view. Christian psychologist F. Colleen Zabriskie in "Women and Mid-Life Crisis," she discusses the need for women's midlife stage to be studied.¹⁷⁷ She maintains a woman's tasks and events are different from that of men.¹⁷⁸ She holds that midlife will be less

¹⁷¹Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 228.

¹⁷²Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 228.

¹⁷³Pazmiño, *Foundational Issues in Christian Education*, 228.

¹⁷⁴See chap. 1 under "The Paradigm of Womanhood Presented by Christian Developmental Theories."

¹⁷⁵Stonehouse, "Learning from Gender Differences," 117.

¹⁷⁶See chap. 1 under "The Paradigm of Womanhood Presented by Christian Developmental Theories."

¹⁷⁷F. Colleen Zabriskie, "Women and Mid-Life Crisis," in *Christian Perspectives on Human Development*, ed. Leroy Aden, David G. Benner, and J. Harold Ellens (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992), 201.

¹⁷⁸Zabriskie, "Women and Mid-Life Crisis," 201.

traumatic for a woman if the relationship she is in is mutually submissive.¹⁷⁹ Zabriskie does well to acknowledge gender-development patterns, but her understanding of womanhood has egalitarian leanings. There is a need for a complementarian paradigm of womanhood to be expressed in developmental literature.

As previously mentioned, the major work for complementarians addressing gender patterns in social science is Stephen B. Clark.¹⁸⁰ He asked two questions of the social science data he reviewed: “Does scientific data support the contention in this book that the purpose of God for men and women, as revealed in Scripture, may have been ‘created into’ the human race?”¹⁸¹ and “Does scientific data point to any biologically influenced characteristics in the human species that fit a pattern of role differences between men and women?”¹⁸² Clark’s study of the current psychological literature of his day revealed:

Man and woman differ from one another in their biological and socio-psychological makeup. These differences endure through great cultural diversity. The Christian can express this fact by saying that men and women were created differently by God. Of course, there is a problem when Christians make their faith or their Christian lives dependent on the results of modern science. Their faith is then no longer based on the Lord and on revelation. However, in a time when the scriptural teaching is dismissed as culturally relative and outmoded, it is helpful to observe that God’s purposes indeed seem to have been “created into” the human race.¹⁸³

Clark’s conclusions point out the need for a model of development based on Scripture. This need lines up with Powlison’s first epistemological priority of providing a biblical articulation. Clark also acknowledges created differences in men and women, which highlights the need for a developmental model for women. Finally, Clark’s conclusions assume God-ordained functions and roles for men and women that align with

¹⁷⁹Zabriskie, “Women and Mid-Life Crisis,” 207.

¹⁸⁰See chap. 1 under “Complementarianism.”

¹⁸¹Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 372.

¹⁸²Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 373.

¹⁸³Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*, 447-48.

complementarian tenets. It is time for complementarians to revisit Clark's conclusions and their implications for modern social science.

The principle of inverse consistency. A helpful paradigm for reviewing social science is found in the principle of inverse consistency. Trentham proposed this principle to analyze the Perry Scheme.¹⁸⁴ He first asserts that “the orderly world is so created by God that secular social science research can observe and accurately identify human developmental patterns and behaviors.”¹⁸⁵ While these patterns are observable, the ability to accurately interpret these patterns by secular social scientific research is hindered by a lack of deference to a biblical worldview and because of the noetic effects of the fall.¹⁸⁶ Secular developmental models are anthropocentric in contrast to models in Christian education that are Christocentric. Trentham avers, “This prescriptive directionality guides a theory's preferred trend of development.”¹⁸⁷ Secular developmental models may well describe a natural progression, but ultimately their schemes will need reinterpretation from a biblical worldview.

Conclusion

This literature review has exposed that historically, women's unique perspectives in developmental theory have been largely neglected. Men and women are created equally in the image of God and share the same developmental trajectory (Gen 1:27; 2 Cor 3:18). However, each of the sexes naturally develop with distinct and complementary patterns, which even the non-evangelical world cannot completely ignore. Unfortunately, the subsequent theories produced that acknowledge these patterns

¹⁸⁴Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121.

¹⁸⁵Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121.

¹⁸⁶Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121.

¹⁸⁷Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 121.

are rooted in sub-biblical ideas. A scriptural evaluation of the existing theories and an exploration of a positive biblical articulation of women's development is needed. Additionally, in the area of complementarian theology, there are works that interact with social science and complementarianism.¹⁸⁸ However, there is a need in the complementarian conversation for more dialogue with social science. Could social science studies be redeemed and implemented by the church more readily by using a complementarian paradigm of womanhood versus a feminist one? This question will be further pursued in the area of women's development. This research now focuses on the first epistemological priority of articulating biblical truth.

¹⁸⁸See Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ*; George Alan Rekers, "Psychological Foundations for Rearing Masculine Boys and Feminine Girls," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 299-319; David J. Akers, "The Modern Inevitability of Failure: The Assumptions and Implementations of Modern Feminism," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 320-42.

CHAPTER 3
ARTICULATING A POSTIVE BIBLICAL TRUTH
ABOUT WOMEN’S EPISTEMOLOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT

The doctrine of humanity and the doctrine of knowledge are foundational to articulating a biblical model of female undergraduate intellectual development. In *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin explains how the three concepts of humanity, knowledge, and wisdom connect: “Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves.”¹ Following Calvin’s example, knowledge will be explored first and then humanity. Calvin points out that “it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself.”² Considering knowledge and, specifically, knowledge of God will set the stage for a better understanding of humanity.

To have a proper understanding of biblical truth concerning intellectual development, it will be necessary to first present an articulation of a biblical worldview. Second, it will be necessary to present a philosophical framework for epistemological development from a biblical perspective. Ideas about knowledge, truth, general revelation, common grace, and various epistemological theories will all be discussed. Third, it will be necessary to present a theological framework for epistemological development. This will include examining the doctrine of humanity as it speaks to

¹John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1.1.1. John S. Hammett, in his article “Human Nature,” also uses this quote to highlight the important connection between the knowledge of God and the knowledge of one’s self. See John S. Hammett, “Human Nature,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 285.

²Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 1.1.2.

development. Understandings of humanity through the metanarrative of Scripture tracing knowledge, gender, and the image of God through the stages will be discussed. Then, the biblical-theological themes of life-span development, wisdom, and the self will be considered.

Articulating a Biblical Pre-Theoretical Understanding of Epistemological Development

Underlying philosophy and theology is worldview or pre-theoretical beliefs.

Christian intellectual James W. Sire defines worldview:

A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or a in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.³

Sire goes on to emphasize that a worldview is found in “the self—the central operating chamber of every human being.”⁴ Because a better understanding of the self is the *telos* of numerous developmental theories, it becomes necessary then to reveal the presuppositions of these theories in order to interact with their understanding of self and *telos*.

Other thinkers have made notable contributions in discussing the importance of analyzing worldviews. Cornelius Van Til, who was influential in Frame’s work, brought to the forefront an understanding of presuppositions.⁵ Frame further develops their usefulness. He describes the ultimate presupposition of a Christian being “the content of

³James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 17.

⁴Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 18.

⁵Cornelius Van Til is known primarily for his works *Christian Apologetics* and *The Defense of the Faith*. Cornelius Van Til, *Christian Apologetics*, 2nd ed., ed. William Edgar (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 2003); Cornelius Van Til, *The Defense of the Faith*, 4th ed., ed. K. Scott (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008).

Scripture,”⁶ whereas a non-Christian’s ultimate presupposition is “unbelief.”⁷ Frame makes the point that both Christians and non-Christians have equally biased presuppositions.⁸ One group cannot claim neutrality. Frame’s description of Eve’s non-neutral position is a helpful example of describing a fallen mind: “In the Garden, Eve may have thought that she was playing the role of a ‘neutral’ judge who could choose between God’s word and Satan’s but in fact her very decision to consider those competing revelations on an equal basis came from a fallen mind. She was not ‘neutral’; by that time she hated God.”⁹ When secular developmental theorists hold to a worldview that competes against a theistic one, they are not being more objective by claiming to be secular. Philosopher Michael Polanyi, who was influential in Perry’s work, also supports the use of pre-theoretical commitments or worldviews. He acknowledges the impossibility of total objectivity in scientific inquiry and argues the person must be acknowledged.¹⁰ Further, in *Loving to Know*, Esther Lightcap Meek develops the idea of covenantal epistemology. She uses both Frame and Polanyi to confirm her idea that “a healthy worldview grows seamlessly out of a lived body experience.”¹¹ This situates worldview coming from the knowers’ engagement of the world.

Sire provides seven questions with respect to worldview: (1) “What is prime-reality—the really real?” (2) “What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?” (3) “What is a human being?” (4) “What happens to a person at death?” (5) “Why is it possible to know anything at all?” (6) “How do we know what is right and

⁶Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 45.

⁷Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 126.

⁸Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 126.

⁹Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 126.

¹⁰Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 3.

¹¹Esther Lightcap Meek, *Loving to Know: Covenant Epistemology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 168.

wrong?” (7) “What is the meaning of human history?”¹² This research uses the following framework outlined in table 1 to critically engage the literature:

Table 1. A biblical worldview framework

<i>Worldview Diagnostic Questions</i>	<i>A Biblical Worldview Framework</i>
What is prime-reality—the really real?	God is really real, as revealed by Scripture.
What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?	God has created and designed the world.
What is a human being?	A human is a creation of God, designed uniquely in God’s image, and created as male and female.
What happens to a person at death?	A person either is saved from their sins through Christ’s substitutionary atonement, or they are not saved and are judged for their sins.
Why is it possible to know anything at all?	God has revealed knowledge through both general and special revelation. Three perspectives bear on knowledge: normative, existential, and situational.
How do we know what is right and wrong?	God’s moral standards for mankind are described in His Word.
What is the meaning of human history?	The metanarrative of Scripture is the true story of the whole world. It spans through creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Currently, mankind is seeking redemption through the finished work of Christ.

Toward a Philosophical Framework for Biblical Epistemological Development

In articulating a positive biblical truth, it is necessary to include a discussion about Christian philosophy.¹³ In their article discussing theological method, Bruce Riley Ashford and Keith Whitfield explain the usefulness of philosophy to a theological task:

¹²Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 20.

¹³Bruce Riley Ashford and Keith Whitfield define Christian philosophy as “the attempt to

For example, Christian philosophers can help the theologian articulate the ontology and epistemology that undergird the theological enterprise, giving the theologian a specific vocabulary by which to clearly set forth the doctrines of the faith in unambiguous distinction from those that are unfaithful, sub-Christian, or even heretical.¹⁴

It will be necessary to use philosophical categories defined by biblical truths to interact with the current women's developmental literature. As previously stated, this research discusses a branch of philosophy known as epistemology. Specifically, it will utilize Frame's tri-perspectival epistemology.¹⁵ The answers to the questions, "How can we know?" and "What is true?" will be shaped using the Bible as a foundation. These questions reveal that at the heart of epistemology is a pursuit of knowledge. As Frame explains, a "theistic epistemology, the doctrine of the knowledge of God, implies a general epistemology, a doctrine of the knowledge of everything."¹⁶

What Can We Know? Tri-Perspectival Epistemology

God is the origin of knowledge. He gives it to humanity by His grace. All members of the Trinity are involved in the process of giving knowledge to humanity: "The Father knows all and reveals truth to us by the grace of His Son through the work of the Spirit in our hearts."¹⁷ Humans gain knowledge through obedience to God.¹⁸ Conversely, obedience reveals knowledge of God.¹⁹

describe systematically the structure of creation (the nature of being, of knowledge, of beauty, etc.), drawing from God's self-revelation found in the created order and in the Bible, using the tools of critical thinking and argumentation, that informs and guides the Christian in how he or she ought to behave in order to live faithfully before the Lord." Bruce Riley Ashford and Keith Whitfield, "Theological Method: An Introduction to the Task of Theology," in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 53.

¹⁴Ashford and Whitfield, "Theological Method," 54.

¹⁵Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 75.

¹⁶Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 75.

¹⁷Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 42.

¹⁸Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 43.

¹⁹Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 43

Frame summarizes the question of “What can we know?” in his tri-perspectival epistemology.²⁰ He argues that the law, world, and self are objects of knowledge and, therefore, the process of knowing each is closely related.²¹ Each object represents one of three perspectives on all human knowledge (see figure 1).²² The first perspective is normative (the law), which “focuses on God’s authority as expressed through His Law.” Frame emphasizes that the Law, as representing God’s authority, is self-attesting and is a presupposition for all of life. The second perspective is situational (the facts, the world), which “focuses on the law as revealed both in Scripture and in the creation generally.” Frame emphasizes that the world must be understood before Scripture can be properly applied to it. The third perspective is existential (the person), which “focuses on the law as revealed in man as God’s image.” All of these perspectives bear upon one another.²³

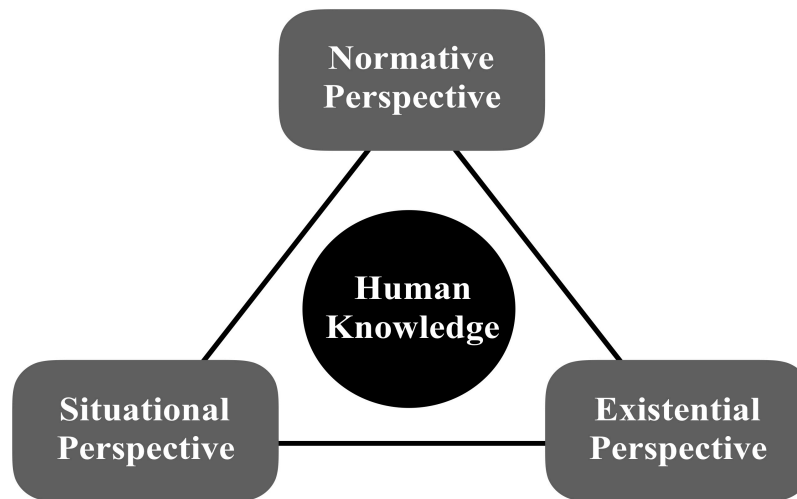


Figure 1. Frame’s tri-perspectival epistemology

²⁰Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 73.

²¹Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 73.

²²Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74.

²³This paragraph represents a summary of his model. For a full description, see Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74.

Tri-perspectivalism²⁴ does not deny that Scripture is the foremost tool in shaping thoughts. Frame explains how Scripture remains primary, while embracing all the perspectives: “We come to know Scripture through our senses and minds (self) and through Scripture’s relations with the rest of the world. But then what we read in Scripture must be allowed to correct the ideas we have formed about these other areas. Then as we understand the other areas better, we understand the Scripture better.”²⁵ A critique of developmental theories by Scripture is required to rightly understand the world. This critical engagement has the potential of leading to a deeper understanding of Scripture. And, as Powlison points out, this research is cautious in allowing alternative models of development to “counterconvert” away from a biblical worldview.²⁶

Knowledge as knowing. Based on Frame’s Tri-perspectivalism, Trentham, develops the concept of Virtuous Christian Knowing.²⁷ Within this idea, knowing is described as dynamic and progressive. This moves past the idea of human knowledge being fixed and static and allows the perspectives to bear upon one another, thus sharpening one another. Virtuous Christian Knowing “entails a personal commitment to Truth in which one (a) recognizes biblical priorities; (b) seeks biblical implications; and (c) engages in biblical commitments and practices.”²⁸ These points correspond to the three perspectives of normative, existential, and situational, respectively. Knowledge is a process of knowing.

²⁴Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 74.

²⁵Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 89.

²⁶David Powlison, “Questions at the Crossroads: The Care of Souls and Modern Psychotherapies,” in *Care for the Soul*, ed. Mark R. McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 37.

²⁷Trentham, “Toward a Taxonomy of Virtuous Christian Learning” (unpublished paper).

²⁸Trentham, “Toward a Taxonomy of Virtuous Christian Learning” (unpublished paper).

Knowing in relationship. In Esther Lightcap Meek’s work about covenant epistemology, the author uses Frame’s triad and further expands his ideas of knowing from being an impersonal one to a more personal exercise.²⁹ She uses Frame’s notion of the influence of the normative perspective and combines this idea with that of another philosopher, Michael D. Williams, and his notions of covenant being an expanding relationship between persons.³⁰ Meek builds on these ideas to include covenant as governing interpersonal relationships. She further describes covenant’s implications on knowing: “Covenant elucidates the reciprocity of the relationship, in particular with respect to descent of God as the primary direction of motion in the relationship, and with respect to the goal of communion.”³¹ Meek explains the value learning with another person because “all knowing is with or in the presence of.”³²

In Meek’s work, *Longing to Know*, she asserts how knowing in community avoids both denying objective truth and the privatization of truth.³³ Meek stresses that reality is complex and, therefore, dialogue with others will provide a “fuller picture.”³⁴ Objective truth is better understood through the consideration of others’ perspectives, including the perspectives that male and female offer. According to Meek,

I can’t imagine a better way not to annul gender differences, but to optimize them, as in mutuality in joint epistemic ventures. Men and women must exercise companionship on the way to knowing, with full expectation that their equal complementarity strategically suits them for perichoretic partnership in knowing.³⁵

²⁹Meek, *Loving to Know*, 216.

³⁰Meek, *Loving to Know*, 194.

³¹Meek, *Loving to Know*, 211.

³²Meek, *Loving to Know*, 265.

³³Esther Lightcap Meek, *Longing to Know: The Philosophy of Knowledge for Ordinary People* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2003), 138.

³⁴Meek, *Longing to Know*, 138.

³⁵Meek, *Loving to Know*, 413.

Therefore, this research affirms the value of knowing in relation to others as a mark of developmental theory from a biblical understanding.

Other theories of knowledge. Naïve realism, nonrealism, critical realism, and covenant realism are concepts that contribute to understanding in the area of objects of knowledge. Naïve realism and nonrealism represent opposite poles. Naïve realism affirms direct access to the real. Access to knowledge is gained through empirical observation and verified by observation in the physical world. Propositions can be objective. Theological ideas, however, are not considered to be objective in naïve realism because they cannot be verified through observation. For this reason, instead of theological concepts representing objective truth, they are considered to be beliefs. Nonrealism is more cautious than is realism. It does not declare objective truths. The knower observes reality through one's own sensory data and can be sure only of what he or she senses. There is no access to the real.³⁶ Furthermore, this view does not allow for verification of theological ideas.

Critical realism is a theory of knowledge that affirms knowers can access the real.³⁷ Theologian N. T. Wright, a proponent of critical realism, defines the process:

This is a way of describing a process of “knowing” that acknowledges the *reality of the thing known, as something other than the knower* (hence, “realism”) while fully acknowledging that the only access we have to this reality lies along the spiralling [sic] path of *appropriate dialogue or conversation between the knower and the thing known* (hence “critical”).³⁸

³⁶Ashford and Whitfield, “Theological Method,” 56.

³⁷Critical realism (CR) was first proposed by philosopher Roy Bhaskar in a *Realist Theory of Science*, where he pushed for ontology to be considered in theories of knowledge. His work, *The Possibility of Naturalism*, also added to the dialogue. CR was also made popular by Margaret S. Archer in *Social Origins of Educational Systems*. Roy Bhaskar, *Realist Theory of Science* (New York: Routledge, 1975); Roy Bhaskar, *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences (Classical Texts in Critical Realism)* (New York: Harvester Press, 1979); Margaret S. Archer, *Social Origins of Educational Systems* (New York: Sage Publication, 1979)ut.

³⁸N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the People of God 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 36-37.

Critical realism acknowledges that there is objective truth, but that there are limits to accessing truth. In critical realism, the knower is not seen as “neutral” as in naïve realism.³⁹ Critical realism acknowledges that a limit to accessing truth is that the knower’s point of view is affected by their particular worldview.⁴⁰ The theologian, in particular, also acknowledges that these limits can be rooted in sin, which is much like the limits of general revelation. The knower can overcome these limits and grow closer to objective truth through dialogue with that truth.

Both naïve realism and nonrealism start with observation of an object and then form a hypothesis based on this observation. Critical realism has a different starting point. It forms a hypothesis with one’s story. This story is an aspect of the knower’s total worldview.⁴¹ Observations are then verified by that story.⁴²

Meek critiques critical realism: “. . . reality responds better and more transformatively not to criticism, but to covenant faithfulness.”⁴³ Instead, she proposes covenant realism. In covenant realism, it is possible to access the real. Knowing the real is a transformative relationship for the knower and therefore is more than just finding certainty of truth. In addition, it is more than just knowing truth; there is a “coming to be known” because we are known by God.⁴⁴ Covenant realism is compatible with the tri-perspectivalism of Frame, in which the person knows God and He knows the person.

³⁹Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 38.

⁴⁰Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 37.

⁴¹Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 43.

⁴²Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 39.

⁴³Meek, *Loving to Know*, 400.

⁴⁴Meek, *Loving to Know*, 401.

What Is True?

Jesus identifies himself as “the way, the *truth*, and the life” (John 14:6). Jesus is the source of all truth. In Graeme Goldsworthy’s work describing biblical theology, he affirms, “Jesus Christ in his life, death and resurrection is the fixed point of reference for the understanding of the whole of reality.”⁴⁵ In John 17:17, Jesus as the source and authority on truth declares “your word is truth.” He affirmed God’s Word is more than a representative of truth, merely truthful, or containing truth. He calls it truth. Based on this observation, Grudem defines truth as “what God says, and we have what God says (accurately but not exhaustively) in the Bible.”⁴⁶ Also, it is important to note that the Bible offers more than just propositional truth—it contains the correct interpretation of the facts.⁴⁷ Since the Bible is truth, then all knowledge must be compared to it in order to assess the truthfulness of knowledge.

Truth is used in other ways in the Bible. Frame describes the multifaceted ways it is utilized: metaphysically, epistemologically, and ethically.⁴⁸ In the metaphysical sense, truth is described as what is “the absolute, the complete, as opposed to the relative, the partial.”⁴⁹ For example, Jesus says, “I am the true vine” (John 15:1). Jesus is the absolute source of life (the vine). In the epistemological sense, truth is described as what

⁴⁵Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: An Introductory Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002), 60. Goldsworthy, along with this research, holds to the position Christian theism in his understanding of acquiring knowledge. He describes Christian theism: “This position recognizes the dependence of man upon God for true knowledge. The Word of God must instruct us in the various details of what God has said and done to rescue us from the consequences of our rebellion. It must also instruct us in the method by which we read and understand the Bible. There is no self-evident logic discernable outside the Bible; no naturally discerned rule as to what is possible or impossible. God as the creator must interpret every event and fact in his universe.” Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 43-44.

⁴⁶Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 83.

⁴⁷David Dockery gives an illustration of the need for interpretation: “For example, it is not enough to know that Jesus died. What is necessary is the interpretation of that event: Jesus Christ died for our sin,” David S. Dockery, “Special Revelation,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 105.

⁴⁸Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 49.

⁴⁹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 48-49.

is “the correct,” or “propositional,” or factual.⁵⁰ For example, Ephesians 4:24 states that in the new self, we are “created after the likeness of God in *true* righteousness and holiness.” There is a fact of real righteousness that is present in believers. In the ethical sense, truth is described as “doing right.”⁵¹ For example, 1 John 1:6 says, “If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.” This verse is a call to practice the commands found in Scripture. When interacting with developmental theories, it is important to recognize that the biblical view is more nuanced than simply being propositional.⁵²

Where Is Truth Found?

After affirming that the Bible is truth, a popular question arises: Is there truth that exists outside of the Bible? The Bible is God’s special revelation, in which the Lord reveals himself to humanity. Second Timothy 3:15-17 explains that Scripture is “able to make you wise for salvation,” and “for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” The Bible’s main focus is the knowledge of God and the way of salvation for man, along with instructions regarding how to live in relation to God. Truth exists outside of these purposes; however, “truths revealed generally are consistent with and supplemental to, not a substitute for, special revelation.”⁵³

In Genesis 2, both special revelation and common grace are valued. As far as special revelation in this chapter, Adam did not gain knowledge about the conditions of his relationship with God through observation. He was instructed by God on how to relate to Him by a specific and special revelatory command “of the tree of the knowledge

⁵⁰Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 49.

⁵¹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 49.

⁵²See section: “Theories about truth.” Philosophers use truth to acknowledge the reality of a proposition as seen in the correspondence theory of truth. This is a much narrower use than is expressed in the Bible.

⁵³Dockery, “Special Revelation,” 104.

of good and evil you shall not eat” (Gen 2:17). As far as truth outside of special revelation in this passage, Adam is being directed by God to observe the world and name the animals (Gen 2:19). In other words, he assumed the job of a scientist.⁵⁴ He was observing true things about the world that God did not explicitly state. However, Adam needed the foundation of God’s words to direct him in his task. The framework God provided is in Genesis 1:26, where men and women were called to have dominion over the earth. Goldsworthy points out Adam was charged to be a “care-taker,” and not a “power-motivated exploiter of the world.”⁵⁵ These observations of the world were supplemental to the special framework God had revealed. Adam’s task in the garden reveals the possibility that secular developmental theories may have discovered true things about the world and, if so, they should be critically evaluated by God’s Word and reinterpreted in light of the Bible’s teachings.

General revelation. Truth about God that is revealed outside of Scripture, and is available for all, is placed in the category of general revelation.⁵⁶ It is the breadth of its availability to all that gives it the term “general,” as opposed to “special.” Moore describes the sources of general revelation being found in “the natural creation and through the makeup of the human creature.”⁵⁷ Christians put the discoveries of developmental theorists often in the category of general revelation in order to affirm their usefulness for the kingdom.⁵⁸

⁵⁴Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 99.

⁵⁵Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 99.

⁵⁶In modern evangelicalism, Carl F. H. Henry, in his work *God, Revelation and Authority*, is noted to have reaffirmed the legitimacy of general revelation, but due to the effects of sin on humanity, did not believe that it would lead to a special knowledge adequate for salvation. Russell D. Moore, “Natural Revelation,” in *A Theology for the Church*, rev. ed., ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 91.

⁵⁷Moore, “Natural Revelation,” 67.

⁵⁸In discussing the relationship between theology and social science, Perry Downs notes, “Properly understood, science is an investigation of God’s created order and can aid in our understanding of general revelation.” Perry Downs, *Teaching for Spiritual Growth: An Introduction to Christian*

First, general revelation is seen in the natural world. As Romans 1:20 affirms, His “eternal power and divine nature” are clearly seen. His “eternal power”—such as His deity, strength, and greatness—is revealed. For example, from Psalm 19:1 we learn that the heavens “declare his glory” and “proclaim his handwork.” The greatness of the heavens are revealing knowledge of the greatness of God (Ps 19:2). Then, His “divine nature”—such as His goodness, care, and mercy—is demonstrated in nature. For example, Jesus describes how God cares for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Matt 6:25-33). Second, general revelation is seen in human beings as they are created in His image. Moore points to “human moral conscience” and “the uniqueness of man” as evidence of general revelation (Rom 2:14-15; Ps 8).⁵⁹ This revelation in humans is especially relevant to developmental theories because true discoveries may be made that point back to worship of the one true God.

There are, however, limits to general revelation that are rooted in sin. These limits affect the Christian’s ability of being able to completely affirm secular developmental theories. Romans 1:18 teaches that humans “suppress truth” about the God. Therefore, secular developmental theories commonly deny the centrality of God to all things. Scripture teaches that humans don’t just deny God, they uphold created things, which leads to a lack of understanding and wisdom (Rom 1:23, 25). When developmental

Education (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 15. In a collection of essays about Christian education and development, Ted Ward notes the connection of general revelation to social science: “the evidence in both the natural revelation (God’s universe, comprehended scientifically) and the special revelation (God’s Word, comprehended theologically through faith) points toward God’s intentions as the source and explanation of the unfolding, developmental, stage-by-stage nature of things. . . . Thus Christians can recognize this same activity of God in the sequence, stages, and patterns of human development. God’s internal consistency can rightly be celebrated in the developmental view of human life.” Ted Ward, foreword to *Nurture That Is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*, ed. James C. Wilhoit and John M. Dettoni (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 11; James Estep in discussing integration proposes the use of both special and general revelation. He says, “God’s first revelation—His creation, which is the subject of the social sciences—must also be heard.” James R. Estep, “Developmental Theories: Foe, Friend, or Folly? The Role of Developmental Theories in Christian Formation,” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010),” 45.

⁵⁹Moore, “Natural Revelation,” 94. More on the image of God in man will be discussed in the section on the Image of God.

theorists make man or reason the central ideas in their theories, it gives an incomplete understanding of the human experience. Additionally, the Bible teaches that humans give up what is “natural” or generally revealed as a result of their idolatry of self (Rom 1:26-27). This anthropocentric trend clouds the ability of the secular developmental theories to comprehend the natural order. The theories are in need of scriptural interpretation.

Common grace. Truth that is revealed outside of Scripture can also be described as common grace.⁶⁰ General revelation and common grace are not synonymous but are often used together. Common grace can be defined as “the grace of God by which he gives people innumerable blessings that are not part of salvation.”⁶¹ General revelation is certainly a blessing that God’s gives. Similar to general revelation, common grace reveals God’s character to be full of goodness, care, and mercy, and brings glory to God. Grudem describes common grace as it relates to truth:

The common grace of God in the intellectual realm also results in an ability to grasp truth and distinguish it from error, and to experience growth in knowledge that can be used in the investigation of the universe and in the task of subduing the earth. This means that all science and technology carried out by non-Christians is a result of common grace.⁶²

Truth that developmental theories discover is a part of God’s common grace to all humanity and is to result in bringing glory to God. Furthermore, Calvin describes the evidences of common grace that are available through secular writers:

Whenever we come upon these matters in secular writers, let that admirable light of truth shining in them teach us that the mind of man, though fallen and perverted from its wholeness, is nevertheless clothed and ornamented with God’s excellent gifts. If we regard the Spirit of God as the sole fountain of truth, we shall neither reject the truth itself, nor despise it wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to dishonor the Spirit of God. . . . Those men whom Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:14) calls “natural men” were, indeed, sharp and penetrating in their investigation of inferior things. Let us, accordingly, learn by their example how many gifts the Lord

⁶⁰This grace is different from saving grace. It does not bring about salvation.

⁶¹Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 657.

⁶²Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 659.

left to human nature even after it was despoiled of its true good.⁶³

This research follows Calvin's affirmation to learn from secular writers and discover the gifts the Lord left to human nature. Like Calvin, this research views science as a gift.⁶⁴

Who Can Know?

Furthering the discussion on truth, there is a question of not just what is truth, but can all people know truth? Such a dilemma divides humans' capacity for knowing truth based on their spiritual state. Frame posits that "we cannot know God without knowing His Word, and we cannot know the Word without knowing God."⁶⁵ What, then, can unbelievers know?

In terms of propositional knowledge, they can know facts, and they can know facts with regard to God. In terms of skill, they can know how to accomplish things. In terms of acquaintance, they are limited in their knowledge of the self and of the Lord. They do know God, but they have suppressed truth about Him (Rom 1:21). They know about the self, but they have denied the reality of the biblical narrative about their lives or have not actually heard the narrative (Rom 10:14).

This denial of God leads to a fight against truth because He is Truth. Frame lists six ways unbelievers fight truth: "simply deny it," "ignore it," "psychologically repress it," "acknowledge the truth with lips but deny it indeed," "put truth into a misleading context," and "use the truth to oppose God."⁶⁶ It is important to be aware of each of these propensities when evaluating secular developmental theories that, in general, claim to articulate a knower's search for truth.

⁶³Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.2.15.

⁶⁴Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.2.15.

⁶⁵Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 62.

⁶⁶Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 58.

How Is Knowledge Justified?

That a belief must be true and justified to qualify as knowledge is a commonly held idea. Within that idea, how knowledge is justified is debated. In reformed epistemology, Alvin Plantinga argues for beliefs to be “warranted” rather than justified.⁶⁷ A belief in God is warranted and offers consistency to epistemological systems. Secular epistemological systems raise one form of the justification of knowledge over another because they lack the centrality of God.⁶⁸ As a result, these systems lack consistency.

Critique of secular systems. Rationalists elevate normative knowledge or knowledge of the law. They refer to the law of human thought to justify knowledge, rather than the law of God. Rationalists seek certainty in knowledge but neglect the Bible as a source of certainty.⁶⁹ A Christian perspective embraces the Bible as a source of certainty. In Grudem’s discussion on the necessity of Scripture, he comments that “the knowledge we attain from Scripture would have the highest degree of certainty,” and that “the Bible is necessary for certain knowledge about anything.”⁷⁰

Meek has added to the conversation concerning justification in recent years. She suggests the term, “confidence,” instead of certainty.⁷¹ Meek claims that this word takes into account both what can, and cannot, be articulated in the epistemic process of knowing. In light of Meek’s understanding, she may say we can possess the highest degree of *confidence* in the Bible for knowledge. Meek’s reasoning is appreciated. However, this research adheres to the more common understanding of certainty in order to have congruous dialogue with the literature.

⁶⁷Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), xi.

⁶⁸Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 110.

⁶⁹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 114.

⁷⁰Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 120.

⁷¹Meek, *Longing to Know*, 137.

Empiricists elevate situational knowledge or knowledge of the world. They justify knowledge through its correspondence of ideas to senses. They value a process of verification. This epistemic system has a variety of weaknesses, including the subjectivity of one's own senses, making them an unreliable verification tool. From a Christian perspective, like rationalism, it fails to seek certainty in God's Word. Additionally, verifying God, who is invisible, may not be possible under this system.⁷²

Subjectivism elevates existential knowledge or knowledge of the self. Truth is verified through individual criteria and experience. There is no objective truth. From a Christian perspective, objective truth is affirmed and, consequently, subjectivism is rejected as a valid epistemic system.

Tri-perspectivalism and justification. Recognizing God as central to justification avoids the weaknesses of the previously mentioned systems. Frame accomplishes this with his tri-perspectival view of justification that mirrors his tri-perspectival view of knowledge. From the normative perspective, knowledge is justified through divine law.⁷³ Frame's normative justification and Plantinga's basic belief are cooperative, if not synonymous. Frame explains, "And the expression, 'properly basic' may also be useful in communicating the point that God's revelation is not subject to attestation by something else more authoritative than itself. The evidential attestation of Scripture is really an application of Scripture's own self-attestation"⁷⁴ Further, Frame wants to affirm that using the Bible as the "foundation" is not the same as classic foundationalism.⁷⁵ In foundationalism, there is a basic belief or set of beliefs that serve as a foundation. Within foundationalism, there is a spectrum of understanding: classical and

⁷²Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 118.

⁷³Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 124.

⁷⁴Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 399.

⁷⁵Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 128.

modest. Classical asserts that there must be absolute certainty about a belief for it to be basic. Classical is typically rejected in contemporary analytic philosophy.⁷⁶ Too few foundational certain ideas exist that could form a body of knowledge. Modest foundationalism allows for degrees of certainty. Modest foundationalism aligns more with biblical beliefs. Additionally, Scripture is coherent or internally consistent.⁷⁷ Other systems of knowledge will lack coherence, such as the systems found in secular social sciences. Coherence is a test of truth.

In the situational perspective, “knowledge is justified by its accord with the facts.”⁷⁸ Further, all facts are subject to interpretation from Scripture. A test for justification in this perspective is the correspondence theory of truth. The coherent theory of truth and the correspondence theory of truth are frequently pitted against each other. According to Frame, due to embracing both the normative and situational perspectives in justification, room for both of these theories does not exist.⁷⁹ In the correspondence theory, “truth is what corresponds with reality.”⁸⁰ There is access to reality through God’s Word in particular, but also it is available through the senses.⁸¹

Christian philosopher Esther Meek suggests that the term “correspondence” does not go quite far enough and, instead, proposes the use of the term “contact.”⁸² For truth to correspond with reality, then the totality of what the thing is should be

⁷⁶Alvin Plantinga offers a critique of classical foundationalism in his work, Alvin Plantinga, “Reason and Belief in God,” in *Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God*, ed. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

⁷⁷Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 133.

⁷⁸Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 140.

⁷⁹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 141.

⁸⁰Ashford and Whitfield, “Theological Method,” 56.

⁸¹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 141.

⁸²Meek, *Longing to Know*, 136.

represented in its description.⁸³ This correspondence is impossible because there are depths of truth that exist that are beyond the scope of the definition.⁸⁴ This impossibility elucidates the limits to correspondence. Instead, Meek explains, “We lay hold of an aspect of the real.”⁸⁵ We are in contact with the real, not merely a representation of the real. Meek’s reasoning is appreciated. However, this research adheres to the more common understanding of correspondence in order to have congruous dialogue with the literature.

In the existential perspective of justification, a third theory of truth, the pragmatist theory is a test of justification.⁸⁶ In this theory, beliefs that lead to action are considered to be true.⁸⁷ Frame describes the ability of the knower to achieve “cognitive rest” in the sense that one can live with a belief.⁸⁸ Beliefs are justified by showing that they are the result of regeneration and sanctification.⁸⁹ Each member of the Trinity gives confirmation.⁹⁰ In addition, existential justification takes into account both the individual knower as a necessity of knowledge and a value in corporate affirmation as a requirement of knowledge.

Frame extends scientific philosopher Michael Polanyi’s ideas.⁹¹ Polanyi rejected scientific detachment and recognized the individual role in knowing.⁹² However,

⁸³Meek, *Longing to Know*, 136.

⁸⁴Meek, *Longing to Know*, 136.

⁸⁵Meek, *Longing to Know*, 136.

⁸⁶Meek, *Longing to Know*, 150.

⁸⁷Ashford and Whitfield, “Theological Method,” 56.

⁸⁸Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 152-53.

⁸⁹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 151.

⁹⁰Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 153.

⁹¹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 159.

⁹²Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (1958; corr. ed., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), vii.

while he values the knower, Polanyi does not affirm subjectivism. He attests that “man can transcend his own subjectivity by striving passionately to fulfill his personal obligations to universal standards.”⁹³ Frame confirms that actions are constrained by the universal standard of Scripture—not the self—thus also avoiding secular subjectivism.⁹⁴

Evidential, reformed, and virtue epistemology. It should be noted that several streams of understandings exist in the philosophical realm around the concept of justification. The discussion centers around the degree and actual awareness that the knower has of the reasons or warrant that justify beliefs. There is also a delineation between the reasons for justifying a belief to either be internal or external to the knower. These streams are known as evidential, reformed, and virtue.

Evidentialists think continuous evidence must be offered for a belief to be true. Furthermore, W. K. Clifford, a leading proponent, emphasized that “it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.”⁹⁵ Clifford is concerned that a belief held apart from sufficient evidence will hinder an individual’s ability to discern truth from lies and, subsequently, this foolishness will lead to a breakdown of society.⁹⁶ Evidentialism falls short because at some point there will be beliefs that are held without evidence or basic beliefs.⁹⁷ Clifford’s argument possesses

⁹³Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 17.

⁹⁴Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 162.

⁹⁵W. K. Clifford, “The Ethics of Belief,” in *Lectures and Essays*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1879), 186.

⁹⁶Clifford writes of his fears in believing unsubstantiated beliefs: “But I cannot help doing this great wrong towards Man that I make myself credulous. The danger to society is not merely that it should believe wrong things, though that is great enough; but that it should become credulous, and lose the habit of testing things and inquiring into them; for then it must sink back into savagery.” Clifford, “The Ethics of Belief,” 185-86.

⁹⁷W. Jay Wood, *Epistemology: Becoming Intellectually Virtuous* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 107.

notable pragmatic merits, but he fails to provide evidence of the validity of his own assertion.⁹⁸

Alvin Plantinga is a main proponent for reformed epistemology. He distinguishes between justification and warrant. He defines warrant as “a name for that property—or better, quantity—enough of which is what makes the difference between knowledge and mere true belief.”⁹⁹ Warrant happens outside of, and does not depend on, the knower’s awareness and leads to knowledge. Plantinga argues that belief in God is a properly basic belief.¹⁰⁰ Even though belief in God is warranted, it is not without justification, though it does not need justification.¹⁰¹ Plantinga affirms that a person can know reasons that confirm their beliefs. This will be important in discussing the progression of beliefs in developmental theory.

Jay Wood is a main proponent of virtue epistemology that encourages the development of intellectual virtues as a pathway to knowledge. He goes further than Plantinga and says that “to function properly in the sense necessary for warrant, we must pay attention to our emotions and other facets of our interior life”¹⁰² While Wood’s push for virtues is a positive thing, virtues will not be considered as necessary to justify or have confidence of knowledge in this research. The virtues of the knowers researched in alternative women’s developmental models have not been thoroughly explored or measured according to this type of epistemology. Therefore, this paradigm would not be a viable one with which to interact for purposes of this research. Table 2 provides a framework for interacting with alternative models.

⁹⁸Wood, *Epistemology*, 107-8.

⁹⁹Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, xi.

¹⁰⁰Plantinga, “Reason and Belief in God,” 78.

¹⁰¹Plantinga, “Reason and Belief in God,” 91.

¹⁰²Wood, *Epistemology*, 174.

Table 2. A framework for Christian philosophical understandings of epistemology

<i>Philosophical Themes</i>	<i>A Framework for Christian Philosophical Understandings of Epistemology</i>
How can we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tri-Perspectival Epistemology: Normative (the law); Situational (the facts, the world); Existential (the person) • Knowledge originates from the Trinity because of God’s grace. • Knowing is accomplished in relationship to others. • Knowledge is gained from obedience to God, and obedience to God brings knowledge.
What is true?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible presents different categories of truth. Truth is metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical. The Bible is truth and contains facts. It also contains a proper interpretation of facts. Truth is objective.
Where is truth found?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth is found in the Bible. It can also exist outside of the Bible. It will be in the categories of general revelation and common grace.
How is knowledge justified?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is justified according to three perspectives of knowledge. • In the normative perspective, truth is justified by divine law. The coherence theory of truth is used. Modest foundationalism is used. • In the situational perspective, truth is justified by facts that are in accord with divine law. The correspondence theory of truth is used. The Bible has the highest correspondence with truth and actually is truth. • In the existential perspective, truth is justified with the pragmatist theory where beliefs that lead to action are considered true. There is cognitive rest and confirmation from God. There is also justification in community. All of these are constrained by God’s Word. • Additionally, there are properly basic beliefs and God is one of those properly basic beliefs.
Who can know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone can know truth, but the types of truth are differentiated in a person due to an individual’s spiritual state. An unbeliever can know propositional truths. Unbelievers are limited in their knowledge about themselves and God. Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to one’s biological sex.

Toward a Biblical-Theological Framework for Epistemological Development

The Heidelberg Catechism describes humanity in this way: “. . . but God created man good, and after his own image, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him and live with him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise him.”¹⁰³ This description is a concise summary of the basis of human development from a biblical standpoint. This summary is vastly different from the ideas presented in secular literature. In order to interact with the current women’s developmental literature, it will be necessary to first articulate biblical truth about development. Understandings of humanity through the metanarrative of Scripture tracing knowledge, gender, and the image of God through the stages will be discussed. Then, the biblical-theological themes of life-span development, wisdom, and self will be considered.

Themes of Development in the Metanarrative of Scripture

The metanarrative of Scripture involves the four basic themes of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. At every stage, humanity lives in both relation to God and to fellow humans. Knowledge, gender, and the image of God will be discussed at each stage of the metanarrative.

Creation. Genesis 1:26-30 describes the creation of men and women. This passage highlights at least three significant truths. First, the Bible acknowledges that both men and women are created in the “image of God” (Gen 1:27). They have a unique relationship with God, being in His image, as opposed to the rest of creation that does not bear the likeness.¹⁰⁴ Second, humanity is made male and female (Gen 1:27). Adam, who

¹⁰³*Heidelberg Catechism*, question 6, accessed on September 17, 2016, <http://www.ccel.org/creeds/heidelberg-cat-ext.txt>.

¹⁰⁴See also the comparison between man and creation in Ps 8:5-6.

was created as the first human, was not androgynous and then made male upon the woman's creation.¹⁰⁵ Third, men and women were both created with dominion over the earth (Gen 1:26).

As the story in Genesis continues, it is observed that men and women were created with the capacity to grow in knowledge. This growth is seen in Adam receiving instruction from the Lord (Gen 2:16-17). In addition, it is seen in Adam observing the world through naming the animals and subsequently realizing there was no "helper fit for him" (Gen 2:20). Adam had the ability to learn.

Gender at Creation. Male and female are the binary terms that describe humanity (Gen 1:27). In Genesis 2, their various roles emerge. Man was created as the head, and woman was made as a helper to man (Gen 2:18). The helper role is a complementary one to that of the man. The woman was made as *ezer kenegdo*, which is a helper either "fit for" (ESV) or "suitable to" (NIV, NASB) (Gen 2:18).¹⁰⁶ This definition demonstrates equality; helper is not from a sense of inferiority. The Lord chooses to act as a helper, while still maintaining divinity.¹⁰⁷ While the woman is not elevated to a divine status, the role of helper is modeled in the divine example.¹⁰⁸

Evidence of male headship is seen in that Adam was created first (Gen 2:7).¹⁰⁹ Adam was also given the authority to name the woman (Gen 2:23). The woman was created from Adam and was created for him (Gen 2:18, 22).

¹⁰⁵Wayne Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2004), 111-13.

¹⁰⁶Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 119.

¹⁰⁷See examples of God as a helper: Exod 18:4; Pss 20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 115:9-11; 121:1-2; 146:5.

¹⁰⁸Andreas J. Köstenberger and Margaret E. Köstenberger, *God's Design for Man and Woman: A Biblical Theological Survey* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 36-37. For additional information, see Grudem's discussion in Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 117-21.

¹⁰⁹For a list of evidences of difference in gender roles, see Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 459-64. Also see Jack Cottrell, *Gender Roles and the Bible: Creation the Fall, and Redemption* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1994), 80-102.

Image of God at Creation. The image of God was given to both men and women. They each image God equally, fully, and separately.¹¹⁰ Based on image-bearing, men and women have equal “dignity” and “value.”¹¹¹ Grudem affirms that “nowhere does the Bible say that men are more in God’s image than women.”¹¹² This equal dignity and value does not mean that males and females are “the same in authority or role.”¹¹³ There are distinctions between men and women and simultaneously, they are spiritually equal.

The fall. The third chapter of Genesis recounts the fall of man into sin and rebellion when Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. A good desire for knowledge escalated into a desire to know good and evil in the same way as the Lord does (Gen 3:6). Goldsworthy describes the results of the fall: “The truth of any proposition would from this point onward would be tested by what was in humans themselves.”¹¹⁴ They denied truth (God’s words to them) and the source of truth (God himself). Adam is now held responsible as the federal head of the human race for bringing sin into the world (Rom 5:12-14). Genesis 3:14-24 describe God’s judgment upon that rebellion. Curses were placed on the Serpent and the ground. Punishments were placed on the woman and the man. Adam and Eve were taken out of the garden (Gen 2:23). In that day, they experienced immediate spiritual death and began to physically die.

Gender at the Fall. Man and woman did not experience tension before the fall. After the Fall, there was disunity. The conversation moved from “we” to “I” (Gen 3:2, 10). The man blamed God and the woman for his actions (Gen 2:12). Grudem attests that

¹¹⁰Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr., “Male-Female Equality and Male Headship: Genesis 1-3,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (1991; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 98.

¹¹¹Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 26.

¹¹²Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 26.

¹¹³Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 104.

¹¹⁴Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 104.

“the curse brought about a distortion of previous roles, not the introduction of new roles.”¹¹⁵ It would be difficult now for men and women to fulfill the roles due to the curses, but they were still responsible to follow them.

Image of God at the fall. Some theologians believe the image of God in a person was not lost at the fall, but it was damaged and distorted.¹¹⁶ Grudem explains that “since man has sinned, he is certainly not as like God as he was before.”¹¹⁷ Evidence in 1 Corinthians 11:7 describes man as currently possessing God’s image. Additionally, Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9 describe fallen man retaining the image.¹¹⁸ Sin has corrupted man’s ability to be like God in his morality, in his ability to think on truth, and in his relationships.¹¹⁹ Other theologians contend that sinful man does not retain God’s image.¹²⁰

Redemption. It is at this point that Jesus died on the cross as the substitute for sinful man and rose again from the dead (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; 10:9-10, 13). Jesus is the mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5). If men and women come to Jesus in faith and repentance, then they will be united to Christ (2 Cor 5:17). In this union is the double grace of justification and sanctification. There is an instant justification and sanctification

¹¹⁵Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 463.

¹¹⁶Calvin sees all men retaining this image and that it brings value to all humans: “We are not to consider that men merit of themselves but to look upon the image of God in all men, to which we owe all honor and love” Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 3.7.6. Thomas Aquinas sees the image of God as being housed in reason. He sees all men possessing an aspect of the image that is “man possesses a natural aptitude for understanding and loving God” Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.93.2.

¹¹⁷Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 444.

¹¹⁸Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 64.

¹¹⁹Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 444.

¹²⁰Gerrit C. Berkouwer believes that the image has not been retained in the reformed broader sense. G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1962), 54. Also, Richard Lints and Robert Letham do not view the image as being retained in the larger sense. See below “Additional Biblical-Theological Understandings of the Image of God” in this thesis.

and also a progressive growing toward Christlikeness (2 Cor 3:18). Men and women can now know truth because “the process of redemption involves the restoration of the right way of thinking. The human mind is as much the object of regeneration as is the body or the soul.”¹²¹ In addition to restoring man’s relationship with God, Jesus’ work on the cross restores the relationship among humans. His work enables forgiveness (Matt 18).

Gender in Redemption. In Christ, gender distinctions are maintained in terms of sexual identity and function. There is an empowerment to fulfill the gender roles established at creation. There is an appeal to the creation order as the reason that there are distinct practices for gender in the home and church (1 Cor 11:7-12; 14:34; Eph 5:31-32; 1 Tim 2:13-14). Authority is given to the man—not because there is an inferior intellect in the woman.¹²² Rather, a distinction in authority represents the distinction of authority within the Trinity (1 Cor 11:7).

Redemption does not progressively eliminate gender distinctions. William Webb designed a “redemptive-movement hermeneutic” that is contrary to this affirmation.¹²³ This hermeneutic is one in which the culture is viewed as moving toward a greater ethic in the area of gender. As it moves toward this greater ethic, then the need for the biblical distinctions between genders lessens because distinctions were put in place as cultural corrections.¹²⁴ However, Grudem asserts that this perspective does not hold up the Bible as being a timeless truth.¹²⁵ Moreover, in an egalitarian understanding of gender, Galatians 3:28 is used to support the notion that gender roles in the home and church are

¹²¹Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 173.

¹²²Thomas R. Schreiner, “A Dialogue with Scholarship,” in *Women in the Church*, 3rd ed., ed. Andreas Kostenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 211.

¹²³William Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 30.

¹²⁴Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals*, 30.

¹²⁵Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*, 602.

not binding under the new covenant following Christ's salvific work. These roles result from the fall.¹²⁶ Galatians 3:28 does not obliterate distinctions between the sexes, though, either biologically or functionally. Instead, it affirms their distinctiveness while maintaining their unity in Christ.¹²⁷

In redemption, there is also the opportunity for peace between genders. The curse worked against this relationship: "Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you" (Gen 3:16). Practicing the biblical ethics for gender will work against the divisiveness that comes naturally to men and women.

Image of God at redemption. At the fall, there is a distortion of the image of God in a person but, in Christ, there is a progressive restoration of it. In his work on union with Christ, J. Todd Billings explains about the restoration of the image: "Since we were not created to be autonomous, self-made people but were created to be in communion with God, when the Spirit leads us back into communion with God in Christ, we do not lose our true selves. We regain them."¹²⁸ Believers are growing toward Christ's image (Rom 8:29). Union with Christ is the vehicle of redemption and restoration.

Consummation. The goal of human development is realized at this stage. Colossians 3:15 describes when this will occur: "When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." There are three stages of fulfillment: "an

¹²⁶Gordon Fee describes adhering to gender roles as being the result of the fall and a failure to embrace the new covenant: "And to give continuing significance to a male-authority viewpoint for men and women, whether at home or in the church, is to reject the new creation in favor of the norms of a fallen world. It gives significance to being male that in the end usurps the work of the Spirit not only in the wife and her relationship to God but also in the church—the expression of the new order and new humanity that is already present, even while it is yet to be." Gordon D. Fee, "Male and Female in the New Creation, Galatians 3:26-29," in *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity without Hierarchy*, ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 185.

¹²⁷S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., "Role Distinctions in the Church: Galatians 3:28," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (1991; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 159.

¹²⁸J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 33.

objective regeneration in Christ, a subjective regeneration in us, and a comprehensive regeneration in the whole universe.”¹²⁹ Final and total reconciliation between God and man, and man and all things will be realized. Men and women will continue to grow in knowledge of the Lord throughout eternity.

Gender at consummation. The new creation that begins in Christ, when one becomes united to Him, will be completed (2 Cor 5:17). There is evidence to suggest gender will continue on in eternity.¹³⁰ We see this modeled in Jesus (1 John 3:2). First, he was bodily resurrected (John 20:27). Men and women will also be bodily resurrected. First Corinthians 15:52 describes the dead as eventually being raised to imperishable bodies. In 2 Corinthians 5:3, Paul discusses the nakedness of our spirit when it is not housed in a body. Having a body is a natural part of creation for men and women. Second, he was bodily resurrected as a man. His disciples recognized him as Jesus, who is a man. Other men and women have appeared after death, having retained their gender (1 Sam 11-15; Matt 17:1-3; Rev 11:1-12). Sexuality has always been a part of the bodily experience.¹³¹ Additionally, sexual identity did not come about due to sin. It existed before the fall (Gen 1:27). Therefore, it is not something from which men and women will be released (Rom 8:20-21). The sexual identity that started at creation will be lived out perfectly in eternity.

Image of God at consummation. After the Fall, Adam failed at fully imaging God. There is a progressive regaining of the image in the stage of redemption. The full

¹²⁹Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 173.

¹³⁰For more discussion on sexuality in heaven, see John Frame, “Men and Women in the Image of God,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (1991; repr., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006), 232.

¹³¹Daniel R. Heimbach, “The Unchangeable Difference: Eternally Fixed Sexual Identity for and Age of Plastic Sexuality,” in *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002), 282.

image will be revealed at Christ's return. As 1 John 3:2 affirms, "But we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is."

Additional Biblical-Theological Understandings of Complementarianism

It is necessary to define a biblical view of gender because the developmental theories in this research are specific to women. Human sexual existence involves biological realities and functional realities. The complementarian position holds that these are two different realities, but both are involved in the person.¹³² However, positions that equate one over another, or fail to distinguish between the two, will lead away from a biblical understanding.¹³³ The complementarian position allows for modifications to both realities, without losing the sexual identity. These modifications generally happen at the different stages of the metanarrative. For example, with regard to biological realities, at consummation, there will be no more childbearing (Luke 20:35). Any modifications have been determined and explained by God in Scripture. Individuals, history, or culture do not alter them.

Functional realities, which are derived from biblical commands, primarily center on how men and women are to function in relation to one another. These commands are largely placed in the context of the home and the church. For example, in Ephesians 5:22 women are commanded to submit to their husbands, and husbands are commanded to love their wives in Ephesians 5:25. At times, gender-specific commands are made that do not directly address the relationship between men and women, but will still have an indirect effect on the relationship. For example, women are instructed to mentor younger women, which does not directly affect a relationship between men and

¹³²Heimbach, "The Unchangeable Difference," 280.

¹³³Heimbach, "The Unchangeable Difference," 280.

women. However, in the context of that relationship, they are to teach younger women to love their husbands (Titus 2:3-5).

The essentialist understanding of gender is most in line with biblical teachings.

Heimbach describes the essentialist position:

It refers to thinking there is some objective reality that establishes a fixed, unchangeable meaning to the difference between men and women. It involves the conviction that while men and women share a common humanity, there is something fundamental about human sexual identity that is not the same when men are compared to women as women. And not only is this difference real, it is also terribly important because it is rooted in the nature or creation or in the will of God.¹³⁴

This is different from the constructivist view, which is most frequently found in developmental literature. Constructivists perceive gender as something constructed by the choices of the person, history, or culture. There is no fixed point with which to anchor sexual identity.

Further, complementarians distinguish among scriptural principles—which guide functional realities—and the application of those realities. The application is always contextualized within culture.¹³⁵ For example, Köstenberger and Jones make a distinction between “traditional marriage” and “biblical marriage.”¹³⁶ Traditional marriage is based on a culturally influenced division of labor between the sexes. Biblical marriage does not dictate specific labors in marriage because the Bible does not dictate particular labors in marriage. There must be awareness between cultural applications and functional realities established in Scripture. The former are transitory, though informed by biblical wisdom; the latter are fixed commandments in the metanarrative of Scripture. The term gender is being utilized in this literature in reference to both biological and functional realities. Subsequently, when one is interacting with women’s developmental

¹³⁴Heimbach, “The Unchangeable Difference,” 276.

¹³⁵Köstenberger and Köstenberger, *God’s Design for Man and Woman*, 263.

¹³⁶Andreas J. Köstenberger and David Jones, *God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012) 62-63.

literature, terms of gender must be defined. Their use could be any combination of biological realities, functional realities, or cultural applications.

Womanhood. Vast differences exist in how gender is viewed across developmental theories. It is necessary to summarize a view of womanhood from a complementarian perspective in order to interact with the literature. The paradigms of womanhood are outlined in table 3.

Table 3. Complementarian paradigm of womanhood

<i>Understandings of Gender</i>	<i>Complementarian Paradigm of Womanhood</i>
Biological Realities	Biological realities are determined by God.
Functional Realities	Functional realities are determined by the Bible. They describe ways men and women relate to one another.
Cultural Applications	Cultural realities are determined by culture, but constrained by biblical commandments and wisdom.

Additional Biblical-Theological Understandings of the Image of God

Numerous theologians consider the image of God to be an essential part of understanding humanity's development because it is what distinguishes man from the rest of creation. It is mentioned in Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-2; 9:6-7; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 15:49; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:4; Colossians 1:15; 3:10; and James 3:9-10. While there are many understandings of what the image of God is, four basic understandings represent the majority views.¹³⁷ The structural view understands the image to be some

¹³⁷See a summary in Bruce Ware, "Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God," in *Biblical Foundations of Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002), 78-79.

part of human nature that one shares in common with God, which the remainder of creation does not share in common with God.¹³⁸ The relational view recognizes the image to be in how humans relate to one another and God, as opposed to the image being something in human nature.¹³⁹ The functional view understands the image to be in the function of human beings as God's ruling representatives on earth.¹⁴⁰ The fourth view is the *imago dei* as identity.¹⁴¹

The first three build to the "functional holistic" view of the image of God utilized in this research.¹⁴² The functional holistic view is summed up as "the structural serves the purpose of the functional being carried out in relationship."¹⁴³ Men and women progress forward in each aspect as they develop.

Human intellect is part of the ways humans image God. It is something given to man that is not given to the rest of creation (structural). For example, humans have the capacity for abstract thoughts, complex thoughts, creativity, and imagination.¹⁴⁴ Human intellect allows for the capacity for relationship with God and with others (relational). Moreover, human intellect assists in the ability to rule and subdue the earth (functional). It is an engine for societal development. To sum it up in terms of the functional holistic view, the intellectual capabilities of humans allows them to rule and subdue the earth all carried out in union with Christ. Human intellect was designed to progress forward as a reflection of the *imago dei*.

¹³⁸This view is held by Irenaeus, Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin.

¹³⁹This view is held by Barth and Brunner.

¹⁴⁰This view is held by Leonard Verduin and D. J. A. Clines.

¹⁴¹This view is held by Richard Lints.

¹⁴²This view is held by Bruce Ware and Andrew Hoekema

¹⁴³Ware, "Male and Female Complementarity and the Image of God," 79.

¹⁴⁴For more on the mind and the image of God, see Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 446-47.

In contrast to the first three understandings, Robert Lints does not support the concept of *imago dei* as holding answers for human nature.¹⁴⁵ Lints describes questions of human nature as concerning “human faculties and capacities.”¹⁴⁶ Notably, he mentions that the *imago dei* does not address the question, “How does human biology relate to human psychology?”¹⁴⁷ Instead, Lints views the *imago dei* as answering questions of human identity. Questions of identity pertain more to the “meaning of life.”¹⁴⁸

Lints understands Genesis 1 to mean that “humankind does not have the image of God, nor is it made in the image of God, but is itself the image of God.”¹⁴⁹ Worship is the key element that connects humans to what they are imaging. It is in this worshipful relationship with the Lord that the *telos* of the image is discovered and the description of human identity is given.¹⁵⁰ While “image” and the themes of reflection are key in Genesis 1-9, the use of “image” is no longer a key motif in the Old Testament after Genesis 9.¹⁵¹ Image is now juxtaposed to idolatry. Humans subvert the created order in idolatry by desiring “to replace their Creator with something in the created order over which they exercise control.”¹⁵² Human beings are made to seek identity and significance in God, not

¹⁴⁵Richard Lints says, “Theologians have every right to be interested in questions of human nature, but the unfortunate consequence is that they have therefore made the construct of *imago dei* bear more conceptual weight than it intended to bear.” Richard Lints, *Identity and Idolatry: The Image of God and Its Inversion*, New Studies in Biblical Theology, ed. D. A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 35.

¹⁴⁶Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 34.

¹⁴⁷Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 34.

¹⁴⁸Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 34.

¹⁴⁹Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 60.

¹⁵⁰Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 61.

¹⁵¹A notable exception to this is in the second commandment, Exod 20:4: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” This is to guard Israel from idol worship. Lints points to God’s covenant with Abraham, as the point where God’s presence now became the main feature of redemption. Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 77.

¹⁵²Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 80.

in a creation of their own making. When humans worship the Lord in relationship to him, they are a reflection of God; when human beings worship idols, they worship a created thing and become a reflection of that created thing (Rom 1:23-25). Christ places worship back in the proper creation order. He “took on our humanity and restored its glory as the reflection of God.”¹⁵³ While the discussion of Lints about the juxtaposition of image and idolatry is appreciated, his perspective does not thoroughly take into account James 3:9 and 1 Corinthians 11:7 as being evidence to fallen man possessing the image of God.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, this research affirms that questions of human nature are a part of God’s image.

The mechanism for imaging God is union with Christ. This fact is highlighted in Robert Letham’s work, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*. Letham additionally discusses whether or not the image is for all people or solely for those who are in Christ.¹⁵⁵ He disagrees with the majority of reformed theologians who affirm that there is a broad and narrow aspect to the image of God in mankind.¹⁵⁶ This dual-aspect view recognizes the image to be experienced by all (broad) and then for it to be experienced by God’s people in a different way (narrow).¹⁵⁷ He reserves the image just for those who are in Christ. He traces the image from Adam—who was made in Christ—to Jesus—the second Adam—and then on to believers who are united in Christ.¹⁵⁸ While

¹⁵³Lints, *Identity and Idolatry*, 122.

¹⁵⁴Hoekema uses Jas 3:9 as evidence that the image of God is not completely lost in sinful man. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, 31-32.

¹⁵⁵Robert Letham, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011), 13-14.

¹⁵⁶Letham, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*, 14.

¹⁵⁷Letham, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*, 14.

¹⁵⁸Letham, *Union with Christ in Scripture, History, and Theology*, 14.

Letham presents a good argument for the narrow view, this does not negate the possibility of the broader view that this research supports.¹⁵⁹

Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemological Development

Scripture values wisdom for a woman as a high virtue. Proverbs 31:10 reads, “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” Does the Bible instruct that there is women-specific intellectual development? There must be an understanding about what the Bible says regarding development in general to answer this question.

Life-span development. The Scriptures speak of progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. This principle appears most evidently in 1 Corinthians 11:3, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.” In Hebrews 5:12-14, there is an encouragement to mature in faith. The encouragement to mature is clear, but the Bible does not offer an exact definition of when a person transitions from youth to adulthood. In Gregory C. Carlson’s chapter with respect to adult development, he describes adulthood from a summation of Scripture to be “the ability to personally affirm and assume responsibility for one’s spiritual and moral life.”¹⁶⁰ For this research, female undergraduates are considered to be emerging adults according to biblical standards. What does the Bible teach about how one emerges from childhood to become an adult?

¹⁵⁹Hoekema presents a more thorough look at the image of God in fallen man. Hoekema, *Created in God’s Image*, 17-21.

¹⁶⁰Gregory C. Carlson, “Adult Development and Christian Formation,” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Academics, 2010), 221. The verses he uses to develop this description of adulthood are Isa 7:16, Num 14:29, Deut 1:39, Rom 14:12, and Jas 4:17).

Wisdom. The “fear of the Lord” is the beginning of wisdom for the knower (Ps 110:10; Prov 1:7, 9:10; 15:33). This fear of the Lord will be the impetus for maturity. Trentham describes the process of acquiring wisdom: “biblical wisdom—rooted in faith-centric knowledge and understanding—is the natural outworking of a God-glorifying character, and evidence of the transformational renewal brought about by redemption (Rom 12:2).”¹⁶¹

Biblical wisdom can be defined as “skill in living according to Yahweh’s orders.”¹⁶² It is the application of knowledge to life. This principle goes further than secular developmental theorists who are seeking propositional truth and reaches into the ethic of knowledge. The implicit truth in fearing the Lord is that there is a basic belief in God. The knower humbly acknowledges that the Lord is sovereign and has designed the world according to God’s ways. Truth about these ways can be generally revealed to all. But as Trentham explains, “Wisdom that is distinctively God-fearing, however, while identical in developmental pattern to that of worldly wisdom, strains toward an opposite *telos* (Phil 3:13-14).”¹⁶³

Using Proverbs 1-9 as a guide, Estes describes the role of the learners (knowers) growing in their skills at applying knowledge. They must “receive wisdom.”¹⁶⁴ Wisdom must be derived through humility and acknowledgment of authority.¹⁶⁵ The knower must “respond to wisdom.”¹⁶⁶ This knowledge is external to the knower.¹⁶⁷ It is

¹⁶¹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 44.

¹⁶²Daniel J. Estes, *Hear My Son: Teaching and Learning in Proverbs 1-9* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 26.

¹⁶³Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 46.

¹⁶⁴Estes, *Hear My Son*, 136.

¹⁶⁵Estes, *Hear My Son*, 136.

¹⁶⁶Estes, *Hear My Son*, 140.

¹⁶⁷Estes, *Hear My Son*, 142.

not a wisdom that comes from listening to self. The knower must also actively respond to the teachings. The knower must “value wisdom.”¹⁶⁸ Wisdom entails an active pursuit; it is not something passively acquired. Lastly, the knower must “assimilate wisdom.”¹⁶⁹ This stage is the last step of progression as the truth is integrated into the whole of the individual’s life. Furthermore, Estes’s biblical pathway to wisdom is comparable to Frame’s tri-perspectivalism. Receiving wisdom complements the normative perspective. Both responding and valuing wisdom complement the situational perspective. Assimilate wisdom complements the existential perspective. Overall, the wisdom of Proverbs 1-9 presents a gender-neutral path to acquiring wisdom.

Biblical-Theological Understandings of Self

Secular psychology is mainly concerned with the development of “self.”¹⁷⁰ The concept can be summarized as “the whole person,” or “the subjective and inner person.”¹⁷¹ This idea is, however, in contrast to the Christian orientation of Christlikeness. Charry describes the “self” being directed toward God: “The task of Christian therapy (care of souls) is to help the individual to identify the proper godly orientation for desire in order to regain control of the emotions and behavior.”¹⁷² This proper orientation will allow the intellect to thrive.

¹⁶⁸Estes, *Hear My Son*, 143.

¹⁶⁹Estes, *Hear My Son*, 135-49.

¹⁷⁰Charry explains the origins of “the autonomous secular self” as being “a product of Enlightenment philosophy and popularized post-Freudian psychology.” She explains it originated with Rene Descarte’s *Meditations* (1641). It was further shaped by John Locke, Daniel Defoe, David Hume, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Ellen T. Charry, “Theology After Psychology,” in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology and Theology*, ed. Mark McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2001), 119.

¹⁷¹Jeffrey H. Boyd, “Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul,” in *Care for the Soul: Exploring the Intersection of Psychology and Theology*, ed. Mark McMinn and Timothy R. Phillips (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2001), 104. Boyd encourages the use of the theological term “soul” to replace the use of the secular term “self.”

¹⁷²Charry, “Theology After Psychology,” 125.

In their work regarding human development, *The Reciprocating Self*, Jack O. Baswick, Pamela Ebstyn King, and Kevin S. Reimer further explain the Christian understanding of self. They note, “In mutually reciprocating relationships we encounter the other and ourselves most fully.”¹⁷³ The Christian will develop into the self that is “sharing and receiving with others.”¹⁷⁴ The self grows in relationship with God and others, and its maturity will be fully realized in the eschaton.¹⁷⁵

Self-denial. When the Bible mentions the self, it uses terms of self-sacrifice and self-denial. Secular theories discuss self-denial on two levels. First, self-denial is negative if it harms the self in some way—whether physically or psychologically.¹⁷⁶ For the secular person, the self is the highest value, and in theological terms, idolatrous. Denying this thing of great value for a secular individual would be ethically wrong. A Christian would hold God as the highest value (Phil 3:8). To come into proper relationship with God, Jesus said that one “must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt 16:24). This self-denial will lead to the ultimate intellectual goal—knowing the Lord.

Second, modest self-denial is acceptable if it effects a more positive orientation toward the self.¹⁷⁷ In other words, modest self-denial is denying the self with the motivation to please the self. For the Christian, the Bible upholds denying the self without the possibility of reward of a greater self. The aim is to please the Lord (Col 3:17). There may be times, however, in which self-denial leads to greater rewards for the

¹⁷³Jack O. Baswick, Pamela Ebstyn King, and Kevin S. Reimer, *The Reciprocating Self: Human Development in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 49.

¹⁷⁴Baswick, King, and Reimer, *The Reciprocating Self*, 49.

¹⁷⁵Baswick, King, and Reimer, *The Reciprocating Self*, 49.

¹⁷⁶Boyd, “Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul,” 105.

¹⁷⁷Boyd, “Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul,” 105.

self, but a greater reward for the self is ultimately for God's glory. It is not for more glory for the self. Christians act in union with Christ. Billings affirms the new orientation away from the self toward Christ: "But this is where the gospel as union with Christ is so radical. It says, do not look to yourself, but look to Jesus Christ for your new identity."¹⁷⁸ Christ is the goal for the believer, and Jesus enables self-denial in the safest way.

Dependency. When the Scripture speaks about the self, it discusses humbling oneself under authority (Phil 2:3-11). Christian psychologist Jeffrey H. Boyd points out the Bible's emphasis on "obedience" when it comes to authority.¹⁷⁹ He explains that for the Christian, "obedience means subjecting oneself to a higher power."¹⁸⁰ For the secular world, obedience is not to an authority, but to "one's own needs and aspirations."¹⁸¹ The self is autonomous and individualistic. Conversely, a biblical view of the self involves one that is humbly submitted to an external authority—namely, Christ.

Salvation through Christ offers the only proper interpretation of the self.

Billings explains,

A theology of union with Christ centers Christian identity in Jesus Christ himself, and in the claim of the Triune God upon the Christian. Salvation is not self-centered but it is a renewal and restoration of the self precisely through orientating the self toward God, toward the church as the body of Christ, and toward the neighbor. Individual believers discover their true identity in communion rather than in pragmatic, individualistic approach to salvation, and tinkering is replaced by a posture of humble gratitude before God.¹⁸²

When one is interacting with secular developmental theories, it is necessary to discuss their view of the self as it serves as their teleological goal. The teleological goal will be Christ for the Christian.

¹⁷⁸Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry*, 46-47.

¹⁷⁹Boyd, "Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul," 104.

¹⁸⁰Boyd, "Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul," 104.

¹⁸¹Boyd, "Self-Concept: In Defense of the Word Soul," 104.

¹⁸²Billings, *Union with Christ: Reframing Theology and Ministry*, 9.

An understanding of biblical-theological themes provides the framework for interacting with alternative models. Table 4 summarizes this framework:

Table 4. Framework of a biblical-theological understanding of epistemology

<i>Biblical-Theological Themes</i>	<i>Framework of a Biblical-Theological Understanding of Epistemology</i>
Understandings of Life-Span Development	Life-span development occurs as progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. One moves from child to adult through the mechanism of wisdom.
Understandings of Self	Self is to be oriented toward Christlikeness to grow in intellect. The self is reciprocating and grows to maturity in relationship with God and others. Self-denial leads to Christlikeness. Self submits to the authority of Christ.
Understandings of Gender	Human sexual existence involves biological realities, functional realities, or cultural applications. Biological realities are the sex with which one is born. Scripture dictates functional realities are dictated by Scripture. Cultural applications are varied but are constrained by biblical commands and wisdom. Both genders have equal worth and dignity because they are both made in the image of God.
Understandings of Knowledge	Knowledge is gained through the study of Scripture. Wisdom, or the application of knowledge, is gained through a fear of the Lord.
Understandings of <i>Telos</i>	The goal is to perfectly image God through union with Christ.

Toward Assessment of Epistemological Priorities and Competencies

In order to critically evaluate the developmental theories presented by Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda, this research compares the content of their theories to the developmental competencies presented by Trentham. From the literature review in his study, Trentham based these competencies on “epistemological priorities and values

synthesized from biblical-theological sources and Perry-related sources.”¹⁸³ Table 5 presents Trentham’s assessment chart.

Table 5. Trentham’s categorical chart for assessing epistemological priorities and competencies

<i>I. Biblically -founded presuppositions for knowledge and development</i>	<i>II. Metacognition, critical reflection, and contextualistic orientation</i>	<i>III. Personal responsibility for knowledge acquisition and maintenance—within community</i>
A recognition of the God of the Bible as metaphysically ultimate, and of revelation as the source and most basic component for knowledge and development	A preference for higher-level forms of thinking according to Bloom’s taxonomy	A pursuit of personal development that results from mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one’s relationships with authority figures and peers
A clear articulation of the Knowledge relationship between faith and rationality	A prioritization of wisdom oriented modes of learning and Living	A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in A clear articulation of the Knowledge
	A reflective criteria of assessing one’s own beliefs and values, as well as divergent beliefs and values	A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process
	A recognition of social-environmental influences on one’s learning and maturation	A convictional commitment to one’s own worldview— maintained with critical awareness of personal contexts, ways of thinking, and challenges brought to bear by alternative worldviews— through testing and discernment

¹⁸³Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 128n8.

Trentham used these competencies in his study to evaluate and categorize answers given by undergraduate students. This research uses the competencies outlined in table 5 to evaluate and categorize ideas from Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda.¹⁸⁴

Conclusion

In articulating a biblical truth, this research discussed a pre-theoretical understanding, a philosophical framework, and a biblical-theological framework for women's epistemological development. In the philosophical framework of epistemological development from a biblical perspective, ideas about knowledge were presented. It was affirmed that Jesus is truth, and that the Bible is the source of truth. Truths exist outside of the Scriptures through general revelation and as a means of bestowing common grace. Any truth must be tested according to biblical standards.

In the theological framework for epistemological development, the doctrine of humanity was examined. Understandings of knowledge—through the metanarrative of Scripture—demonstrated the encouragement of humanity to grow in knowledge of the Lord and of the world. Understandings of gender—through the metanarrative of Scripture—explained the equality of men and women in terms of spirituality and intellect. Moreover, it showed biological realities and functional realities. Understandings of the image of God—through the metanarrative of Scripture—discussed a progressive regaining of the image, which encourages a progressive growth of intellect. Additionally, the biblical-theological theme of epistemological development discussed a gender-neutral path for growth based on the fear of the Lord. The biblical-theological theme of the “self” evinced reciprocating relationships with God and others, selfless, dependent, and oriented toward Christ. These findings will serve as interaction points with female undergraduate developmental literature. The next chapter will critically evaluate alternative models.

¹⁸⁴For this table, see Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 128.

CHAPTER 4
EVALUATING MODELS OF WOMEN'S
EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 3 discussed an articulation of biblical truth that serves as a framework for interacting with Trentham's second and third epistemological priorities: "(2) interact the model/theory from a critically-reflective posture; (3) interact with the model/theory from a charitably-reflective posture."¹ It is necessary to exhaustively consider these systems in light of biblical truth and—as a result—if they have discovered elements of common grace, they can be clearly brought to light. Likewise, if any ideas diverge from biblical truth, these can be identified. The *telos* of the system as well as the entire system will be critically evaluated with the biblical model presented in the previous chapter. In order to identify helpful points of interaction with Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda, their pre-theoretical, philosophical, and biblical theological understandings will be examined.

**Evaluating *In a Different Voice* for Its Use
in Women's Developmental Theory**

The Bible describes various patterns of sinfulness as well as examples of sinful acts that people practice. For example, James 1:14–15 describe a pattern of thought that leads to sin: "But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death." Gilligan's psychological moral reasoning model illuminates not maturity, but rather a pattern of sinful thought similar to the one laid out in James 1. Yet, while this

¹See "Methodological Design and Instrumentation" in chap. 1.

reasoning system is flawed, it still offers valuable understandings for Christian education with regard to patterns of thought. This section will first discuss the pre-theoretical, philosophical, and biblical theological understandings displayed in *In a Different Voice*. Finally, it will compare the findings to Trentham’s epistemological competencies.

Gilligan’s Pre-Theoretical Understandings

Gilligan’s worldview stands in contrast to a purely theistic one. Gilligan describes her leanings: “I had approached the study of morality as a naturalist.”² Gilligan also describes herself as a Reconstructionist Jew, which influences her view of the Scripture and philosophy.³ Reconstructionist Judaism is a naturalistic approach to God, whereby God is not supernatural. Another Reconstructionist Jew, Jack Cohen, provides clarity to a Reconstructionist understanding of God: “However, descriptions of God can only be statements of the believer’s conception of reality to which he assigns the word ‘God.’”⁴ Additionally, existentialism, which is an extension of naturalism, is present in her work through her feminist leanings. While not considered to be fully postmodern, there are times when the postmodern ideals begin to take shape in her work.

What is prime reality? The first question of “What is prime reality—the really real?” is not addressed outright in her work. What is clear is that she does not hold God, as described in Scripture, to be the really real. She refers to God in her writings, but

²Carol Gilligan, *Joining the Resistance* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 176.

³Reconstructionist Judaism was first proposed by Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan in his book *Judaism as a Civilization* (1934). In order to adapt to a changing world, he sought to unite Jews through culture rather than religious doctrines. Gilligan has an honorary PhD from the University of Ben-Gurion of the Negev awarded on May 15, 2015. “Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Bestows Honorary Doctorates on Ground Breaking Scientists and Supporters,” accessed on December 30, 2017, http://in.bgu.ac.il/en/Pages/news/hondocs_2015post.aspx. Additional information on her Jewish identity is explained at Andra Medea, “Carol Gilligan,” *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, accessed on December 30, 2017, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/gilligan-carol>; Andra Medea, “Gilligan, Carol,” in *Jewish Women in America*, vol. 1, ed. Paula E. Hyman and Deborah D. Moore (New York: Routledge, 1997), 512–14.

⁴Jack Cohen, *Democratizing Judaism*, (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2010), 290.

He does not appear to be a transcendent God that anchors reality.⁵ At one point, she gives a brief illustration describing how arguments about the existence of God are flawed and circular and that, likewise, arguments about the nature of gender are flawed and circular.⁶ The fact that His existence is debatable in her understanding illustrates His lack of authority in Gilligan's worldview.

But what is relevant to Gilligan's prime reality? For the existentialist, prime reality is made of matter; in other words, there is a material world and an immaterial world.⁷ She makes the case that research in development starts with these assumptions. As the woman's voice is considered, though, it will need to move "from the Greek ideal of knowledge as correspondence between mind and form" to accept "the Biblical conception of knowing as a process of human relationships."⁸ This consideration demonstrates her push for a shift from existentialism to postmodern thought. A postmodern worldview will not "ask what is true about reality, but how notions of being and knowing and ethics arise and function in society."⁹ It is connectedness to society that Gilligan values. Gilligan's affirmation of knowing as a process of human relationships is compatible with a biblical worldview and will be discussed later in this research.

⁵For example, in her abortion study, one subject considers God's forgiveness, but Gilligan makes no mention of God's requirements of forgiveness according to Scripture. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (1982; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 85.

⁶Gilligan describes the circular nature of the argument on the existence of God, she uses this to illustrate how the debate surrounding the origin of gender, whether it is a product of biology or society, to be circular and flawed because it leaves out psychology: "Where I find myself troubled by the current arguments about difference is where I find them unvoiced and hauntingly familiar—where it is not clear who is speaking, where those spoken have no voice, where the conversation heads toward the endless circle of objectivism and relativism, veering off into the oldest philosophical or ontological question as to whether there is or is not a God. A friend, quoting Stendhal, remarked that 'God's only excuse is that he doesn't exist,' and even this conversation in contemporary circles leads back to gender and difference, dominance and power." Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xix.

⁷Sire defines the existential prime reality: "the cosmos is composed solely of matter, but to human beings reality appears in two forms—subjective and objective." James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 4th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 114.

⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

⁹Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 214.

As she moves into postmodern thought, the prime reality question is no longer first in forming a worldview. Rather, a postmodern worldview initially inquires “not what is there or how we know what is there but how language functions to construct meaning.”¹⁰ Gilligan reflects on the importance of language in her basic research assumptions: “the way people talk about their lives is of significance, that the language they use and the connections they make reveal the world that they see and in which they act.”¹¹ This approach contradicts a theistic understanding, which attributes meaning to God and His narrative of all of life through Scripture. Therefore, Gilligan may offer accurate observations about behavior, but the language she uses to construct meaning will require interpretation in light of biblical conceptions.

What is the nature of external reality? In exploring Gilligan’s view of “What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?” both existentialist thought and postmodern thought become evident. Instead of God creating and designing the world, the external world is shaped by experiences and shaped by voice. Existentialists believe that “people make themselves who they are.”¹² Gilligan points out how women define themselves or make themselves who they are as follows: “Thus women define themselves in a context of human relationship but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care. Women’s place in a man’s life cycle has been that of nurturer, caretaker, and helpmate, the weaver of those networks of relationships on which she in turn relies.”¹³ Gilligan’s idea fails to acknowledge that God is the designer of external reality, whereby He is the one who gives definition to women. Women do not

¹⁰Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 214.

¹¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

¹²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 116.

¹³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 17.

define themselves. Her idea closely reflects a woman's design by God as *ezer kenegdo*, but she leaves out a woman's primary identity as being gifted through union in Christ.

Gilligan combines this existentialist understanding with a postmodern understanding that "the truth about the reality itself is forever hidden from us. All we can do is tell stories."¹⁴ Gilligan ascribes great value to stories: "My interest lies in the interaction of experience and thought, in different voices and the dialogues to which they give rise, in the way we listen to ourselves and to others, in the stories we tell about ourselves."¹⁵ It is unclear, though, whether she believes that truth about all of reality is truly hidden. She acknowledges certain truths can be revealed. For example, she describes women's stories told through their voices as revealing truth about the ethic of care.¹⁶ In another one of her works, *The Birth of Pleasure*, she uses stories to reveal truths about love.¹⁷

In a biblical worldview, stories are indeed an important part of one's worldview.¹⁸ However, only one story provides a controlling narrative, and that narrative is non-negotiable. It is a narrative of the true story of the whole world as revealed in Scripture. Even though Gilligan does not consider Scripture as offering a controlling

¹⁴Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 219.

¹⁵Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 2.

¹⁶Gilligan describes the usefulness of women's stories: "As we have listened for centuries to the voices of men and the theories of development that their experience informs, so we have come more recently to notice not only the silence of women but the difficulty of hearing what they say when they speak. Yet in the different voice of women lies the truth of an ethic of care, the tie between relationship and responsibility, and the origins of aggression in the failure of connection." Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

¹⁷Here Gilligan describes the truth of all of love as being hidden, but yet, still one can know parts of truth: "The mystery of love will never be unraveled. It's one of the great mysteries of life. But by uncovering truths about love in an ancient story, by exposing a long-standing social and literary history that leaves a knot in the psyche and exploring this knotted place in our souls, I found a path leading to pleasure and discovered it is also a road to freedom." Carol Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure: A New Map of Love* (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), 11.

¹⁸N. T. Wright describes the importance of stories: "The stories which characterize worldview itself are thus located, on the map of human knowing, at a more fundamental level than explicitly formulated beliefs, including theological beliefs." N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God, Christian Origins and the People of God 1* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 38.

narrative, she has a narrative that brings her ideas together. N. T. Wright gives an assessment of a relativist's point of view that closely aligns with her description:

Even the relativist who believes that everybody's point of view on everything is equally valid even though apparently incompatible, is obedient to an underlying story about reality which comes into explicit conflict with most other stories, which speak of reality as in the last analysis a seamless web, open in principle to experience, observation and discussion.¹⁹

In this context, Gilligan adds a woman's viewpoint to the prevalent story of patriarchy in developmental theory. In this clash of stories, she is confronted with the two extremes of either abandoning the original story for a story that is more in-line with reality, or maintaining the original story and describing the new perspective as being "deceptive."²⁰ She opts to describe a new story; this one is open to accepting two different points of view on development—one of justice and one of care.²¹ Throughout her work, she presents stories that either affirm an ethic of care or support the idea of two views of development. She does not attempt to resolve conflicting stories utilizing a controlling idea of a biblical worldview.

What is a human being? Existentialism teaches that "each person is totally free as regards their nature and destiny."²² Human beings are autonomous and not limited by the objective world, thus creating their own values. Postmodern thought takes this concept a step further by asserting that not only do humans create their own values, but they "make themselves who they are by the languages they construct about themselves."²³ Her discussion of "voice" contains the most revealing evidence of her understanding of humanity. According to her, "To have a voice is to be human. To have

¹⁹Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 41.

²⁰Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 42.

²¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

²²Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 117.

²³Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 225.

something to say is to be a person.”²⁴ When Gilligan equates “voice” with humanity she is embracing postmodern notions of humanity. Moreover, Gilligan challenges the idea that human autonomy is the end of moral maturity. Rather, she emphasizes the connectedness and relatedness of others.

Gilligan does not acknowledge the theistic understanding that humans are created by God or in the image of God. Instead, she identifies a problem in social sciences, which was that women are had been portrayed in the image of man, and they need to be portrayed in their own way.²⁵ In an anecdote, she comments on the biblical story of creation: “It all goes back, of course, to Adam and Eve—a story which shows, among other things, that if you make a woman out of a man, you are bound to get into trouble.”²⁶ Even though the Bible portrays Eve as being created from Adam’s rib, this is after it is made known that both men and women are primarily made in the image of God (Gen 1:27; 2:22). Trouble within their interdependency arises only after sin is introduced (Gen 2:25; 3:16). When Gilligan mentions the “image of man,” she is referring to a man’s point of view. If the full weight of a postmodern understanding is given to a man’s point of view, then women have been constructed from the language of men. She is making a plea for them to be made in their own image—to construct themselves with their own voice. But the real problem is that women are not being portrayed as being created in the image of God.

Gilligan does acknowledge the reality of male and female, but she wants to be clear that the purpose of her study was not to concentrate on what makes them different from each other. She says, “When I hear my work being cast in terms of whether women and men are really (essentially) different or who is better than whom, I know I have lost

²⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xvi.

²⁵Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

²⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

my voice, because these are not my questions.”²⁷ To acknowledge male and female is in-line with a biblical worldview; however, further differences between Gilligan and the biblical understanding of gender will be discussed in a later section.

What happens to a person at death? This is a question that Gilligan does not explicitly address, however, some inferences can be made. Her ethic of care is firmly rooted in the experiences of those who are alive. She examined two studies in which the subjects considered death as an outcome of their moral reasoning. In the Heinz dilemma, the subjects considered whether or not a husband should steal lifesaving cancer drugs for his wife. In the abortion study, women considered ending the life of their child. Neither crisis included information about—or a request to consider—the eternal destiny of the one who may be killed.

A biblical worldview, which considers a person’s eternal destiny, will use this as a factor in moral reasoning, especially in matters of life and death. Consequences exist in this life for moral choices and in life after death. The idea of eternal reward is an apologetic for Christians to be able to endure suffering in the present life. Great is their reward in heaven and therefore, they are able to suffer with the hope set before them (Matt 5:12). This principle is in keeping with Christ’s example of suffering (Matt 5:12; Heb 6:18; 12:2). This apologetic would allow a Christian to uphold another’s well-being at the sacrifice of self.

Why is it possible to know anything at all? Gilligan views knowledge as constructed by humans through language. Purely objective knowledge is elusive. Gilligan says it becomes obvious that knowledge is constructed, and subsequently distorted, once scientific methods and language have been revealed to possess male bias.²⁸ The difficulty

²⁷Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xiii.

²⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

in the social sciences she was addressing for women was that women “have a hard time distinguishing the created or socially constructed feminine voice from a voice which they hear as their own.”²⁹ She was pointing out that the socially constructed voice was one males designed, and that women must learn to know their own voice. Feminist epistemologies recognize knowledge to be “situated,” or that “a view is always from somewhere.”³⁰ Gilligan points out that in order for knowledge to be truer, it must take into account a woman’s point of view.³¹

A biblical worldview maintains that God has allowed humans to know, and knowledge is not merely constructed by language. A theistic worldview would affirm that there is knowledge beyond what one can sense, for example, God. Simultaneously, it acknowledges that the knower is involved in knowing.³² A knower, as Gilligan rightly acknowledges, is not neutral. Therefore, the knower’s worldview must be aligned with truth from Scripture as its primary bias because the Bible is truth. Gilligan is concerned primarily with the knower taking into account both the male and female perspective. Knowledge is not broken down in terms of gender perspectives, but rather the first concern is that knowledge would be informed from a biblical worldview.

How do we know what is right and wrong? Gilligan’s ideas emphasize moral *reasoning* behind the decision and not the rightness or wrongness of the decisions being made. In Gilligan’s moral reasoning, morality is confirmed in connectedness to others or affirmed by society. This idea falls in-line with a postmodern understanding that “ethics, like knowledge, is a linguistic construct. Social good is whatever society takes it

²⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xvii.

³⁰Patricia H. Miller, “The Development of Interconnected Thinking,” in *Toward a Feminist Developmental Psychology*, ed. Patricia H. Miller and Ellin Kofsky Scholnick (New York: Routledge, 2000), 47.

³¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xvii.

³²Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 45.

to be.”³³ She proposes that the ultimate moral principle is care for women, whereas it is justice for men. This is not determined by gender. She does, however, observe these central moral principles in the respective genders. Gilligan does not think that gender determines how one views what is right or wrong. Additionally, Gilligan moves away from a hierarchal order of principles inherent in the justice view, instead she proposes moral problems are about a conflict in equal responsibilities between self and others—not a rightness or wrongness.³⁴

A biblical worldview has a standard of right and wrong, which is absolute and transcendent of society. This standard is dictated by God through Scripture. Therefore, moral reasoning is an effort to integrate these principles into life. That is not to say that all situations appear to be right or wrong. Moral reasoning is the process of the applying the wisdom of the Lord’s transcendent standards. Gilligan’s pattern is based on the transitioning target of individuals and society; essentially, her pattern of right and wrong is formless.³⁵

What is the meaning of human history? A postmodern understanding of the meaning of human history is devoid of an overall metanarrative. This is because metanarratives lead to oppression of the stories of others. Gilligan points to the weaknesses of the metanarrative of patriarchy, which she views as dominating the social sciences. She wanted to challenge theories in which “men’s experience stands for all of human experience.”³⁶ Gilligan encourages women’s voices to be heard in order to broaden an understanding of human development.

³³Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 226.

³⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 101, 105.

³⁵James R. Estep, “Moral Development and Christian Formation,” in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development*, ed. James R. Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B&H Academics, 2010), 145.

³⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xiii.

Gilligan does not recognize a biblical understanding of human history. She does not take into account the impact of sin on human reasoning. She does not view the solution to sin as redemption in Christ. Additionally, there is no acknowledgement of the influence of the Holy Spirit on the mind and reasoning of an individual. Gilligan also does not acknowledge the *telos* of Christlikeness for the moral reasoner. Gilligan instead perceives moral maturity as the ability to view both the self and the other as interdependent, sustained by nonviolence or care. See table 6 for a comparison of the biblical framework and the worldview presented in *In a Different Voice*.

Philosophical Understandings in *In a Different Voice*

Gilligan's philosophical leanings are multifaceted. In her work, *What Can She Know?* feminist philosopher Lorraine Code indirectly explains the complexity and difficulties of Gilligan's philosophical leanings:

So a philosopher who finds truth in Kantian ethics but believes better guidance to real people if it were tempered with consequentialist, situational, and care-oriented considerations will have difficulty claiming the credentials of a bona fide moral philosopher. To occupy a utilitarian position for some situations, a Kantian one in others, is to occupy a middle ground where the malestream assumes that no debate can take place and that only inferior philosophy, therefore, can be done.³⁷

Code helps to legitimize Gilligan's position as a bona fide moral philosopher in the face of the more common androcentric ways of debating philosophical thought. She has taken the works of Gilligan and Belenky et al. and codified their understanding of feminist philosophy. Code describes a middle-ground position, as opposed to an adversarial one. A middle-ground position allows for discourse between otherwise separated philosophical ideas, rather than a staunch commitment to one system of thought.³⁸

³⁷Lorraine Code, *What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 321.

³⁸Code, *What Can She Know?*, 323.

Table 6. A biblical worldview framework compared to *In a Different Voice*

<i>Worldview Diagnostic Questions</i>	<i>A Framework of a Biblical Worldview</i>	<i>Worldview Presented in "In a Different Voice"</i>
What is prime-reality—the really real?	God is really real, as revealed by Scripture.	Language constructs meaning. Being and knowing are functions of connectedness in society.
What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?	God has created and designed the world.	Experiences and voice shape the external world. Narratives create reality.
What is a human being?	A human is a creation of God, designed uniquely in God's image, and created as male and female.	Humans construct who they are through their voice.
What happens to a person at death?	A person either is saved from their sins through Christ's substitutionary atonement or they are not saved and are judged for their sins.	There is an emphasis on the present, without regard for what happens after death.
Why is it possible to know anything at all?	God has revealed knowledge through both general and special revelation. Three perspectives bear on knowledge: normative, existential, and situational.	Knowledge is constructed by humans through language. Purely objective knowledge is elusive.
How do we know what is right and wrong?	God's moral standards for mankind are described in His Word.	Morality is confirmed in connectedness to others. Gilligan does not think that gender determines how one views what is right or what is wrong. There is no hierarchal set of moral principles. Moral problems are seen as a competition of equal responsibilities.
What is the meaning of human history?	The metanarrative of Scripture is the true story of the whole world. It spans creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Humanity needs redemption through Christ's work.	There is no metanarrative. Metanarratives suppress other stories or voices.

Code summarizes her epistemic position as one of “mitigated relativism.”³⁹ This position does not recognize the absolute positions in objectivism or relativism. Gilligan indeed recognized that arguments about objectivism and relativism were circular.⁴⁰ This position recognizes that various relevant perspectives exist, yet these perspectives are mitigated by the objective world.⁴¹ Methods of evaluation of perspectives and the objective world are utilized.⁴² Gilligan’s middle position and mitigated relativistic version of feminist philosophy are evident throughout her work.

How can we know? Gilligan’s work is most aligned with the idea of knowing in relationship. She posits that “the inclusion of women’s experience brings to developmental understanding a new perspective on relationships that changes the basic constructs of interpretation.”⁴³ Gilligan even acknowledges that knowing in relationship is a biblical concept.⁴⁴ Also, a positive contribution is that it acknowledges a woman’s perspective. As Meek has expressed, male and female perspectives sharpen the other.⁴⁵ Gilligan correctly pointed out that knowing in relationship with others is not simply a female mark of development, but it is one for both sexes.⁴⁶ Developmental theories that attribute relationships as a mark of maturity solely to women or leave out the necessity of relationship in general are not presenting a complete concept.

³⁹Code, *What Can She Know?*, 320.

⁴⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xix.

⁴¹Code, *What Can She Know?*, 320.

⁴²Code, *What Can She Know?*, 320.

⁴³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

⁴⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

⁴⁵Meek, *Loving to Know*, 413

⁴⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

Gilligan's three stages have points of both compatibility with Frame's tri-perspectivalism and points of divergence. In Gilligan's first stage, there is an orientation to individual survival. As Frame and Calvin recognize, knowledge of self and God—which are both essential for knowledge—are interrelated.⁴⁷ While Gilligan describes self-awareness or existential knowledge being present at this stage, she neglects to acknowledge her subject's relationship with God outright. Instead, the self is the primary focus and interpreter of the world (the situational perspective). Additionally, at this stage, the normative perspective is imposed on the knower by society: "Morality is a matter of sanctions imposed by a society of which one is more subject than citizen"⁴⁸ The self and society have taken the place of God and His Word. Gilligan explains the condition of a knower dependent on self: "In this mode of understanding, the self, which is the sole object of concern, is constrained by the lack of power that stems from being disconnected and thus, all alone." Not only is the knower separated from society, but the knower is separated from God. After Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God's first question to Adam was "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9). Adam and Eve both experienced a separation from God and each other; in a sense, they were alone for the first time.

Gilligan's initial transition stage involves moving from an orientation of the self to an orientation of responsibility to others. This transition correctly reflects a circularity of the tri-perspectives. Frame describes the interaction between the self and the world that "we come to know ourselves as we interact with other persons and things, especially with God and His Word but also with other creatures."⁴⁹ In this transition, knowledge of self (the existential perspective) is changing due to interactions with others (the situational perspective). The self is changing and, therefore, the normative

⁴⁷Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 64.

⁴⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 79.

⁴⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 69.

perspective is changing. Responsibility is now being valued. There is a divergence with Frame in that the self and society still determine the law (normative perspective), without the constraints of God or His Word. The definition of responsibility can change with societies' collective values. In addition, in Frame's epistemology, the interaction with others is not the sole impetus for growth. The key impetus in growing in knowledge is obedience to the Lord—not simply interaction with the world or “adoption of social values.”⁵⁰

In Gilligan's second stage, goodness is caring for others, and care manifests in self-sacrifice. Gilligan describes the existential perspective at this stage: “Here the conventional feminine voice emerges with great clarity, defining the self and proclaiming its worth on the basis of its ability to care for and protect others.”⁵¹ The self is defining the self and the world (the situational perspective). The normative perspective is still determined by society, but, as the person has evolved, morals and values are now shared, instead of being imposed upon.⁵² This stage rightly acknowledges two biblical concepts of caring for others and self-sacrifice. However, these concepts are not given ethical development dictated by God's Word. Rather, they are determined by self and society.

The second transition moves from goodness to truth, where the person considers her own needs, as well as those of others. In the transition, the impetus for growth stems from problems in relationships when the person fails to acknowledge their own needs in order to care for others.⁵³ Again, this impetus for growth is in contrast to growing in knowledge through obedience to Christ.⁵⁴ There is a biblical need to care for

⁵⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 43.

⁵¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 79.

⁵²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 79.

⁵³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 74.

⁵⁴Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 43.

one's self while still acknowledging the equally valid biblical concept of self-sacrifice. Again, there is a need for God's Word to inform these topics—not merely the self.

In Gilligan's third stage, a morality of nonviolence is developed. In this stage, the normative perspective is influenced equally by the self and others. This perspective, like that of Frame, demonstrates an interconnectedness of the self and others. However, it leaves out a connectedness to God. In the situational perspective, nonviolence is adopted as "a principle governing all moral judgment and action."⁵⁵ This reductionist interpretation of nonviolence lacks the rich nuance that God's Word brings to protection and care. In the existential perspective, the self is now seen as a creator of truth. This view creates a subjective paradigm of morality. Gilligan's moral development illustrates the progression of a person whose prime perspective is oriented around the self.

What is true? Gilligan claims her questions center on the "*perception of reality and truth*" and not what is real or what is true.⁵⁶ Gilligan is primarily concerned with the stories of the women because she views truth as being hidden and relative. Stories reveal parts of truth. Truths are open to being evaluated in dialogue with others.

Gilligan's view is in contention with Christian philosophical understandings that describe the Bible as truth and as having the correct interpretation of reality. Code describes a feminist perspective about the elusiveness of truth and its contrast with a Christian perspective: "The main assumption to be countered is that there can be a single monolithic philosophy that yields access to the Truth, and that all rival discourses should be dismissed or suppressed as diversions from the true path."⁵⁷ There is an intentional

⁵⁵Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 90.

⁵⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xiii.

⁵⁷Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 305-6.

rejection of the biblical interpretation of reality, which is manifest in a different understanding of truth.

The Bible presents three categories of truth: metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical. In the metaphysical sense, Gilligan affirms with Erikson that truth is relative or contextual.⁵⁸ Epistemologically, the Bible describes truth as being the factual or correct. Ethically, the Bible describes truth in the sense of doing what is right. Gilligan's highest ethic is care in her described version of moral maturity. Gilligan uses the ethic of care as a lens to interpret both epistemological and metaphysical truths. This is seen in her veneration of the woman who consulted with King Solomon to save the life of the baby. Gilligan describes it this way: "the woman who comes before Solomon verifies her motherhood by relinquishing truth in order to save the life of her child."⁵⁹ Gilligan's understanding of the ethic of care colors her interpretation of this event. In the Scriptural text, the baby's mother never lied. The mother accurately portrayed the facts about the situation. The mother did give up her claims to the baby, so that her son could live (1 Kgs 3:16-28). In Gilligan's understanding, truth for the woman contains an acknowledgement of self-care and connectedness to others. Therefore, when Gilligan is describing the woman as giving up her truth, it is not an epistemological truth representing factual accuracy she is giving up, but rather an ethical truth that is relative to her. The woman sacrificed her own care, risking emotional pain, for the care of the baby. When Gilligan refers to truth, it is an ethical principle of care that is specific to the person. Moral integrity, therefore, is a call to be true to oneself.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 104, 166.

⁵⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 104-5.

⁶⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 165.

Because truth is contextual, there is a variety of different truths represented in the patterns of men and women.⁶¹ In contrast to care, men's description of truth is typically informed by an ethic of justice. Gilligan points out a dilemma concerning abortion, in which the truths informed by care and justice are competing.⁶² This still places ethical truth above metaphysical or epistemological as Gilligan calls for a reframing of the dilemma in order to resolve the issue, rather than a search for the facts about the situation.⁶³ This is not to say that Gilligan never acknowledges propositional truths or their usefulness. There is an ownership of people in her study concerning their actions and feelings in a situation.⁶⁴ However, in these cases, truth is also perceived as being synonymous with a person's story. Because a person creates reality with their stories, they create what is true for them. Primarily, when truth is mentioned, it is referring to one's own ethical truth.

The Bible does not place ethical truth as being the key to understanding all other types of truth. Instead, knowing God through a covenant relationship with Him is the key to understanding all types of truth properly. Frame brings awareness of possible missteps of denying this relationship: "In rejecting the law, the unbeliever inevitably misinterprets facts."⁶⁵ Therefore, close attention must be paid to Gilligan's usage of "truth." It must be determined to what type of truth she is referring, along with the accuracy of the content of the truth claim. These aspects must be assessed in order to ascertain whether or not they are consistent with Scripture.

⁶¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 156.

⁶²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 164.

⁶³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 167.

⁶⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 122, 126.

⁶⁵Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 66.

Where is truth found? For Gilligan, truth is constructed within one's story in its context and in the stories of others in their respective contexts. Gilligan does not view Scripture as authoritative for all of life. For example, in *The Birth of Pleasure*, she places the Bible in the category of "foundational stories we tell about Western civilization."⁶⁶ Even though she does not view it as authoritative, she views it as useful and containing some truth. For example, she refers to Scriptures in an anecdotal way throughout *In a Different Voice*.⁶⁷ She also concludes that the biblical framework of narrative illustrates the concept of voice and relationships better than Greek conceptions.⁶⁸ Gilligan rightly points out the value of narratives. They are useful for observations and ethical teachings, however, are not creators of reality. Furthermore, because the Bible is not authoritative, it will not inform her interpretations of the moral reasoning patterns for her subjects. There is a need to critically examine her work in light of biblical truth.

How is truth justified? In Gilligan's work, the existential perspective is raised above other forms of knowledge. Both the self and community are seen as justifiers of knowledge. Gilligan offers the voice, as the representative of the self, as a test for reality and truth: "voice is a new key for understanding the psychological, social, and cultural order—a litmus test of relationships and a measure of psychological health."⁶⁹ She also describes community being the tool for justifying the ethic of responsibility and care.⁷⁰ Frame's tri-perspectival justification is much more nuanced.

⁶⁶Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure*, 20.

⁶⁷Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure*, 6, 104-5.

⁶⁸Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure*, xviii, 173.

⁶⁹Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure*, xvi.

⁷⁰Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure*, 173.

Who can know? In Gilligan’s perspective, anyone possesses access to knowledge. She does not consider one’s spiritual state as a reflection of what quality of knowledge is available to them. Additionally, she does not consider biological sex as a factor in determining who can have access to knowledge. While the Bible gives nuance as to the type of knowledge given to those with different spiritual status, it does not have varying degrees of knowledge that are available only to one sex or the other. Table 7 provides a summary of the research on the philosophical understandings in *In a Different Voice* compared with Christian philosophical understandings.

Table 7. A framework for a Christian philosophical understanding of epistemology compared with *In a Different Voice*

<i>Christian Philosophical Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Philosophical Understandings of “In a Different Voice”</i>
Philosophical Theme #1: How can we know?	
<p>Tri-Perspectival Epistemology:</p> <p>Knowledge originates from the Trinity because of God’s grace.</p> <p>Knowing is accomplished in relationship to others.</p> <p>Knowledge is gained from obedience to God and obedience to God brings knowledge.</p> <p>Normative (the law), Situational (the facts, the world), Existential (the person).</p>	<p>Moral Reasoning Progression—Gilligan:</p> <p>Knowledge originates from the voice. Knowing is accomplished in relationship to others.</p> <p><i>Stage 1: Preconventional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative—Morality is imposed on the knower from society. • Situational—Self is the primary object of concern. • Existential—Starts with an awareness of self. <p><i>Stage 2: Conventional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative—Knower adopts judgments and claims from society. • Situational—Self interprets the world, using societal claims of responsibility and care. • Existential—Defines self in terms of ability to care for others. <p><i>Stage 3: Postconventional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative—The self and society give equal input. • Situational—Self interprets the world equally with society, using the moral code of nonviolence. • Existential—The self creates truth.

Table 7. continued

Philosophical Theme #2: What is true?	
<p>The Bible presents different categories of truth. Truth is metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical. The Bible is truth and contains facts. It also contains a proper interpretation of facts. Truth is objective.</p>	<p>Truth is hidden and relative. Stories reveal parts of truth. Truths are open to being evaluated in dialogue with others. The ethic of care is a lens for interpreting both epistemological and metaphysical truths.</p>
Philosophical Theme #3: Where is truth found?	
<p>Truth is found in the Bible. It can also exist outside of the Bible.</p> <p>It will be in the categories of general revelation and common grace.</p>	<p>Truth is constructed within one's story in their context and in the stories of others in their respective contexts. The Bible may be useful, but it is not authoritative for all of life.</p>
Philosophical Theme #4: How is knowledge justified?	
<p>Knowledge is justified according to three perspectives of knowledge.</p> <p>In the normative perspective, truth is justified by divine law. The coherence theory of truth and modest foundationalism are used.</p> <p>In the situational perspective, truth is justified by facts that are in accord with divine law. The correspondence theory of truth is used. The Bible has the highest correspondence with truth and actually is truth.</p> <p>In the existential perspective, truth is justified with the pragmatist theory where beliefs that lead to action are considered true. There is cognitive rest and confirmation from God. There is also justification in community. All are constrained by God's Word.</p> <p>Additionally, there are properly basic beliefs, and God is one of those properly basic beliefs.</p>	<p>The self (voice) and community (ethic of responsibility and care) are seen as justifiers of knowledge.</p>

Table 7. continued

Philosophical Theme #5: Who can know?	
Everyone can know truth, but the types of truth are differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state. An unbeliever can know propositional truths. An unbeliever is limited in their knowledge about their self and God. Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.	Anyone has the capacity to know truth. The types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state. Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.

Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood in *In a Different Voice*

One of the most significant aspects of Gilligan’s work is describing the “feminine” voice in developmental theory. But how does she define femininity and gender? How are her ideas about womanhood comparable to a complementarian understanding? Concerning biological differences, she describes social sciences in her time as rediscovering the differences in the sexes.⁷¹ Gilligan does acknowledge biologically differentiated sexes. She does not shy away from using the terms “men” and “women,” and “male” and “female.” Gilligan uses the term “sex” or the “sexes” to discuss areas of biological differences. In her work, because Gilligan does not acknowledge God as the Creator of human life, it may be assumed that she views nature alone as the creator of biological realities. Throughout the years, many have classified Gilligan’s work as essentialist, implying that she perceives biology as determining the main differences in development between men and women. While she acknowledges throughout her work that a biological category of male and a biological category of female exist, Gilligan does not explicitly claim that biology alone determines the type of voice in which men or women will speak. Instead, she points to the different experiences

⁷¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

of men and women in the areas of social status, power, *and* reproductive biology as influencing the creation of the voices.⁷² Further, Gilligan rejects the false dichotomy of socialization or biology as solely creating gender differences. She adds the voice, or the inner person, as representing a third category in psychological differences.⁷³ The three areas—society, biology, and psychology—construct gender differences. Gilligan does acknowledge that the various patterns of developmental voice are more closely associated with biological male or biological female. However, the disparate voices could be used by either sex because there is no “absolute” association.⁷⁴

Gilligan views both functional realities and cultural applications as being determined by society. Any constraints on functional realities or cultural applications are based on societal expectations of gender-assigned behaviors. In addition, empirical evidences and experiences offer validity of these behaviors. Developmental differences occur because society treats men and women differently, and men and women learn these differences early. She uses Nancy Chodorow’s studies on personality development to demonstrate society’s influence on the different sexes before the age of three.⁷⁵ In developmental literature, Gilligan points out that women’s strengths in creating and sustaining relationship are often deemed to be immature because they are compared to a man’s life cycle of development.⁷⁶ Without a fixed point that anchors functional realities, “a woman’s place in a man’s life cycle” will change because society will change and has changed since the writing of Gilligan’s book.⁷⁷ These changes in society and the failure of

⁷²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

⁷³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xix.

⁷⁴Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 6.

⁷⁵Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 7.

⁷⁶Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 18.

⁷⁷Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 5.

her study to generalize to this change are criticisms that third-wave feminists often cite concerning Gilligan. Cressida J. Heyes summarizes this criticism: “To the extent that the ethic of care is coextensive with ‘women’s moral voice,’ that voice is most typical of a white, heterosexual, middle-class woman in the United States in the 1980s, and furthermore is perhaps heard only in certain limited moral situations.”⁷⁸ Societal-based functional realities are hardly a sufficient anchor with which to secure women’s developmental theory. A woman’s place in society is a fluid point, which will lead to the fluidity of voice throughout time and cultures. This factor is a key point in realizing that Gilligan’s work cannot be simply integrated into a Christian theory of development.

Additionally, Gilligan claims to avoid placing one sex above the other.⁷⁹ However, after her process of deconstructing developmental theory to reveal male bias and then reconstructing it to include the feminine voice, Gilligan reveals that she thinks women’s voices hold central truths for both sexes.⁸⁰ At this point, she is not positioning women to be equal with men, but to be superior to men because a woman’s voice holds the key for understanding adulthood. It can be agreed that both sexes should endeavor to understand and support each other’s respective functional realities and cultural applications. Gilligan wants a woman’s point of view to be considered, and it should be. However, a Christian conception of development will not point to one sex over the other and claim that it holds the key to understanding both of them. Rather, it will consider both sexes equally because they are equally made in God’s image and are equally charged to subdue the earth. Table 8 provides a comparison of the paradigm of womanhood in complementarianism and in *In a Different Voice*.

⁷⁸Cressida J. Heyes, “Anti-Essentialism in Practice: Carol Gilligan and Feminist Philosophy,” *Hypatia* 12, no. 3 (Summer 1997): 148.

⁷⁹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xiii.

⁸⁰Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 172.

Table 8. Complementarian paradigm of womanhood compared with *In a Different Voice*

<i>Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood</i>	<i>Complementarian Paradigm of Womanhood</i>	<i>“In a Different Voice’s” Paradigm of Womanhood</i>
Biological Realities	Biological realities are determined by God.	Biological realities are determined by nature.
Functional Realities	Functional realities are determined by the Bible. They describe how men and women relate to one another.	Functional realities are socially constructed.
Cultural Applications	Cultural applications are determined by culture but constrained by biblical commandments and wisdom.	Cultural applications are determined by culture, constrained by societal expectations of gender-assigned behaviors.

Biblical and Theological Themes, Compared with Themes in *In a Different Voice*

This section will compare biblical and theological understandings with Gilligan’s conceptions of moral development to assess its usability in Christian developmental theories pertaining to women. Knowledge and gender have been previously discussed in these sections, respectively: “Philosophical Understandings in *In a Different Voice*” and “Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood in *In a Different Voice*.” The inferences from these sections will be added in table 9 below. This section will focus on life-span development, the self, and *telos*.

Understandings of life-span development. Gilligan’s moral reasoning pattern is developmental, progressing from one stage to another. This progress is not reliant on age, but instead on movement through stages in response to crisis. In Gilligan’s study of women considering abortion, she interviewed women ages fifteen to thirty-three during the course of a year. This is a broad range. It would be insufficient to say that it

represents growth from childhood to adulthood when some subjects are already starting off as adults. Moreover, it is a short amount of time to properly track maturity. Absent from this understanding is the mechanism for growth as described in the Bible, which is the fear of the Lord. There is validity in that increased knowledge of self and the world add to development, but absent of the fear of the Lord this progression will be limited.

Understandings of the self. Gilligan expresses her understanding of self, mainly through the voice. She notes that “I say that by voice I mean something like what people mean when they speak of the core of the self.”⁸¹ Gilligan’s understanding that the self grows in connectedness to others is compatible with a reciprocating self. Where it diverges, is that a relationship with Christ is not expressed as the main relationship required for growth. The self is viewed as the highest value—not Christ. This leads to a flawed understanding of self-sacrifice. In Gilligan’s stage, she views the transition out of self-sacrifice as progressing toward maturity.⁸² In her understanding, self-sacrifice does violence to the self. Scriptural teaching describes self-sacrifice as leading to Christlikeness, which is the goal of development. Additionally, Gilligan presents the disparate ways men and women describe identity or self. The woman perceives identity in relationship: “In response to the request to describe themselves, all of the women describe relationship, depicting their identity in the connection of future mother, present wife, adopted child, or past lover.” For man, relationship is largely left out. “Although the world of the self that men describe at times includes ‘people’ and ‘deep attachments,’ no particular person or relationship is mentioned, nor is the activity of relationship portrayed in the context of self-description.”⁸³ Bringing in the concept of identifying self in context

⁸¹Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, xvi.

⁸²Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 90.

⁸³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 161.

of relationship to developmental theory is a positive one. However, the Bible specifically describes the self in terms of one primary relationship, and that is to Christ. Union with Christ grants primary identity to both men and women, thus equalizing the way men and women speak about themselves.

Understandings of *telos*. In Gilligan's final stage of moral maturity, the goal is the ruling ethic of nonviolence. Avoiding harm to others rules all other ethics; this includes harm to both the self and others. While it is positive to move from self-focus to consideration of others, it is problematic to elevate one ethic over all others. The Bible teaches about nonviolence with more nuance. While Scripture condemns certain types of violence (e.g., murder, rape, slander), there are types of harm that are useful for the development of Christlikeness. Namely, suffering is used to conform more fully to the image of Christ by removing idols of the heart (John 15:2; Phil 3:10). When the ethic of nonviolence is left unconstrained by biblical standards, it can allow for sinful violence toward another for the sake of self-protection. The Christian's goal is losing the self to gain Christ: "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it'" (Matt 16:24-25). The self is the idol that must be pruned into Christlikeness. Table 9 provides a summary of previously mentioned research in this section on biblical-theological themes.

Table 9. A Framework of Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemology Compared with *In a Different Voice*

<i>Biblical-Theological Themes</i>	<i>A Framework of Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Understandings of “In a Different Voice” Compared with Biblical-Theological Themes</i>
Understandings of Life-Span Development	Life-span development takes place as progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. One moves from child to adult through the mechanism of wisdom.	Life-span development occurs as progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. One moves toward cognitive moral maturity through the mechanism of crisis.
Understandings of Self	Self is to be oriented toward Christlikeness in order to grow in intellect. Self-denial leads to Christlikeness. Self submits to the authority of Christ.	Self grows in relationship to others. It is primarily oriented toward self and society. Self-denial is a negative concept. Self creates its own authority. Women speak of identity in terms of relationship. Men speak of identity in terms of individuation. Self is described through the metaphor of voice.
Understandings of Gender	Human sexual existence involves biological realities, functional realities, or cultural applications. Biological realities are the sex with which one is born. Functional realities are dictated by Scripture. Cultural applications are varied but are constrained by biblical commands and wisdom. Both genders have equal worth and dignity because they are both made in the image of God.	Biological realities are determined by nature. Functional realities are socially constructed. Cultural applications are determined by culture and constrained by societal expectations of gender- assigned behaviors. Both genders have equal worth because they both exist.
Understandings of Knowledge	Knowledge is gained through the study of Scripture. Wisdom, the application of knowledge, is gained through a fear of the Lord.	Knowledge is gained through the study of self and the world. Wisdom is primarily gained through experiences.
Understandings of <i>Telos</i>	The goal is to perfectly image God through union with Christ.	The ethic of nonviolence is the aim of moral maturity.

Evaluating *Women's Ways of Knowing* for Its Use in Women's Developmental Theory

Women's Ways of Knowing, by Belenky et al., presents five different perspectives on moral development. While these perspectives are oriented toward the self and not Christ, *WWK* still offers valuable understandings for Christian education with respect to cognitive development. This section will first discuss the pre-theoretical, philosophical, and biblical-theological understandings displayed in *Women's Ways of Knowing*. Finally, it will compare the findings with Trentham's developmental competencies.

Pre-Theoretical Understandings of Belenky et al.

Four individual women contributed to the study. This research does not discuss them individually, but it will discuss the understandings expressed in the study as reflective of the whole. This is the method that they themselves adopt in collaborating in their study: “. . . we searched for a single voice—a way of submerging our individual perspectives for the sake of the collective ‘we.’”⁸⁴ In *WWK*, there are feminist postmodern influences; however, *WWK* relies mainly on naturalistic ideas and inquiry. Existentialism, with its influence on postmodern feminism, is also evident. Additionally, the study, which is wholly secular, does not take into account the transcendent God of Scripture, who is the real.

What is prime reality? The basic philosophical question, “What is real?,” was asked by, Kay, one of their interview subjects.⁸⁵ In answer to this, they comment that she has learned of her ability to construct reality.⁸⁶ Kay is at the constructed knower position,

⁸⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, xxv.

⁸⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 131.

⁸⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 131.

which is what some consider to be the most advanced way of knowing. In contrast, in the anchor position, the silent knower could construct reality, but does not develop the capacities to do so through representational thought and is unaware of her own voice.⁸⁷ In all five epistemologies, women are wrestling with the nature of reality, their own capacities in the construction of knowledge, and the capacity of others to construct knowledge. The ability to construct is a notion prevalent in postmodernity. Postmodernity looks at “. . . how language functions to construct meaning.”⁸⁸ Belenky et al. comment about their understanding of language: “Language is a tool for representing experience, and tools contribute to creative endeavors only when used.”⁸⁹ In their view, prime reality is one of human making, forged with the tools of language. A biblical perspective can affirm that language exercises power.⁹⁰ However, prime reality is centered on Jesus, who is the Word—not on human words. God created language and language does not hold any power apart from Him.

What is the nature of external reality? A postmodern understanding of this question views reality as being hidden and relies on stories to reveal external reality.⁹¹ Furthermore, metaphors are a part of the language that reveals external reality. Belenky et al. describe one of their research questions as one that seeks out metaphors: “What are the metaphors that she uses to depict her experiences of growth and change?”⁹² In reply, they reject the popular metaphor of mind’s eye and instead opt for voice and silence. The mind’s eye speaks of the inner world but, in their understanding, the mind’s eye is not a

⁸⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 25.

⁸⁸Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 214.

⁸⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 25-26.

⁹⁰George R. Knight, *Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2006), 99.

⁹¹Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 219.

⁹²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 16.

sufficient metaphor to capture the nuance of how a woman interacts with the outer world. They describe the voice as “the unifying theme that links the chapters in our story of women’s ways of knowing and of the long journey they must make if they are to put the knower back into the known and claim the power of their own minds and voices.”⁹³ In Belenky et al.’s emphasis to put the knower back into the known, they are recognizing the knower as an agent of construction in the external reality.⁹⁴ This principle is a naturalistic understanding of external reality.

The metaphor of voice is a helpful descriptor when it comes to one’s view of the world. However, a biblical worldview cannot adopt voice as a power that supersedes the God of Scripture in terms of its ability to construct. In addition, a biblical worldview cannot elevate the voice as having the power to interpret reality in a more accurate way than Scripture.

What is a human being? A postmodern understanding describes the self, or a human, as “an insubstantial self-constructed by the language it uses to describe itself.”⁹⁵ The idea of self-definition is pervasive in *Women’s Ways of Knowing*. In all five positions, women are coming to realize this power. Belenky et al. realized women had been influenced by, and even accepted, the androcentric definition of their identity. *WWK* seeks to empower women to interpret their existence on their own terms.⁹⁶ At the most advanced position of constructed knower, the person becomes self-aware, which gives one a greater capacity for self-definition.⁹⁷

While this research can affirm the critique that women should not define

⁹³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 16.

⁹⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 19.

⁹⁵Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 226.

⁹⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 5-6.

⁹⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 141.

themselves via androcentric notions found throughout history and culture, this research does not think this critique goes far enough. According to a biblical worldview, neither self nor another gender provides definition for a human. God created humans; subsequently, God gives definition to humans. To correct women's faulty self-definitions, the answer is not to empower women by giving them tools for self-awareness. From a biblical perspective, the answer is to empower women by giving them tools to know God—namely, giving them access to, and training them in, Scripture.

What happens to a person at death? This question is not explicitly addressed in their study. It can be seen that women's ways of knowing are rooted in the experiences of women who are alive. These women are not shown to give thoughtfulness as to how their understandings of self, knowledge, and authority might affect their eternal destiny. A lack of acceptance of an eternal destiny affects the *telos* of their study. All ways of knowing center on creating a more realized version of the self. In contrast, a theistic worldview gives greater importance to the commitments and actions of this life because their consequences will last into eternity.

Why is it possible to know anything at all? Belenky et al. describe five different perspectives of knowledge in *WWK*. They explain it is possible to know anything because the self has the capacity to construct knowledge, even if it has not fully developed that capacity. The self must cultivate its capacity for representational thought to create knowledge.⁹⁸ This goal is achieved through dialogue with others in community.⁹⁹ While Frame's tri-perspectival view affirms a multi-perspective understanding to human knowledge, it does not affirm the understanding that knowledge is constructed. Tri-perspectivalism can affirm that the self can know (existential

⁹⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 25-26.

⁹⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 25-26

perspective) and that the perspective of others is valuable (situational perspective), but Belenky et al.'s view is anemic. It leaves out God's Word—which informs, conforms, and unifies these perspectives. Additionally, the normative perspective is informed differently depending on the stage, but also without content from the Word of God. This is discussed in the next section.

How do we know what is right and wrong? Belenky et al.'s view of morality is relative to the person. At each position, morality is reached through different means. In the silent knower position, the knower is basing her morality on her own survival.¹⁰⁰ Instead of a rightness or wrongness, she perceives actions in terms of winning or losing.¹⁰¹ In the received knower position, the knower looks outward to society for moral knowledge.¹⁰² In the subjective knower position, the knower looks to her own personal experience and practicality of a decision for what constitutes morality.¹⁰³ If it feels right, then it is. In the procedural separate knower position, the knower views situations with a posture of doubt whereby the decision is assumed to be wrong.¹⁰⁴ She then moves to critically examine an issue through reason, adversarial dialogue, and removing her own biased feelings. The procedural connected knower holds the same posture toward morality as does the subjective knower; she assumes the rightness of her experiences.¹⁰⁵ When confronted with another person's issues, the procedural connected knower will not impose her own standards on that person.¹⁰⁶ Instead, she attempts to understand that

¹⁰⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 30.

¹⁰¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 30.

¹⁰²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 46.

¹⁰³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 70.

¹⁰⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 104.

¹⁰⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 116-17.

¹⁰⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 117.

person's experience.¹⁰⁷ Constructed knowers try “to understand the conflict in the context of each person's perspective, needs, and goals—and doing the best possible for everyone involved.”¹⁰⁸ Care is the primary concern.

These positions view morality in connection to the self, experience, pragmatism, and others in varying degrees. Missing is the transcendent standard of righteousness the Bible provides. Without this, they fall into moral chaos. For example, in tracing how each position would respond to a friend seeking an abortion, they describe a way in each position to justify advising the friend to either keep or kill the baby.¹⁰⁹ Either one can be seen as right, even though these actions are diametrically opposed to each other. This research can affirm the value of understanding a moral dilemma “in the context of each person's perspective, needs, and goals.” In the abortion decision, there is value in understanding the mother's situation even though the standard of pro-life will not change. Knowing the situation will allow a Christian friend to better assist the mother who is experiencing difficulty. Rightness is not void of compassion. These situational facts are needed for accurately applying the standard that God's Word sets forth.

What is the meaning of human history? Belenky et al. view human history as being primarily shaped by a male-dominated majority culture.¹¹⁰ They seek to help women tell their stories and gain power through their own narratives.¹¹¹ They do not see one dominating narrative as a positive development, especially one that is androcentric. Devoid of the metanarrative of Scripture, care or the development of the self and the freeing of others from oppression in order for them to develop their self becomes the

¹⁰⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 121.

¹⁰⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 149.

¹⁰⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 120-21.

¹¹⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 5.

¹¹¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 4.

primary goal of human history. Table 10 provides a comparison of the worldviews previously mentioned in this section.

Tables 10. A biblical worldview framework compared to *Women’s Ways of Knowing*

<i>Worldview Diagnostic Questions</i>	<i>A Biblical Worldview Framework</i>	<i>Worldview Presented in “Women’s Ways of Knowing”</i>
What is prime-reality—the really real?	God is really real, as revealed by Scripture.	Reality is constructed by the knower.
What is the nature of external reality—that is the world around us?	God has created and designed the world.	Reality is hidden and relies on stories to reveal external reality. The voice describes reality and helps place the knower back into the known. The knower is an agent of external reality construction.
What is a human being?	A human is God’s creation, uniquely designed in his image, created male and female.	Humans construct who they are through their increased self-awareness (voice).
What happens to a person at death?	A person either is saved from their sins through Christ’s substitutionary atonement or they are judged for their sins.	There is an emphasis on the present without regard for what happens after death.
Why is it possible to know anything at all?	God has revealed knowledge through both general and special revelation. Three perspectives bear on knowledge: normative, existential, and situational.	Knowledge is constructed by humans through language. Purely objective knowledge is elusive.
How do we know what is right and wrong?	God’s moral standards for mankind are described in His Word.	Morality is relative to the person; epistemological positions judge morality on their own terms.
What is the meaning of human history?	The metanarrative of Scripture is the true story of the whole world. It spans creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Mankind needs redemption through Christ.	There is no metanarrative. Metanarratives suppress other stories or voices.

Philosophical Understandings in *Women's Ways of Knowing*

The very heart of *Women's Ways of Knowing* illuminates “how women struggle to claim the power of their own minds.”¹¹² They present a robust dialogue of five different perspectives on the basic philosophical questions surrounding knowledge and truth. In sum, their understanding of knowledge “is constructed, not given; contextual, not absolute; mutable, not fixed.”¹¹³ Each position either has realized these facts about knowledge or is coming to understand these realities.

How can we know? Belenky et al. appropriately recognize that human knowledge, in all of its complexities, is not viewed from one position. Belenky et al. studied how women view the self, which is the existential perspective; view the truth, which is the normative perspective; and view authority, which is similar to the situational perspective. While these perspectives influence one another, they are not submitted to the authority of God's Word. Additionally, these perspectives lack equity. The self is elevated above the other perspectives; subsequently, the voice—representing the self—is the controlling metaphor for the study. Belenky et al. deny, however, that they support entrenched subjectivism or irrationalism.¹¹⁴

They assert that entrenched subjectivism is an extreme self-focus to the exclusion of other constructed truths.¹¹⁵ They provide an example of a woman who displays the maladaptive tendencies of an entrenched view: “One depressed college sophomore told us about her discovery that there were multiple truths and multiple realities. She had concluded that, since no one could know anything for sure and each person was locked in her own world, there was no way and no reason for people to try to

¹¹²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 3.

¹¹³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 10.

¹¹⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 83-84.

¹¹⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 83-84.

communicate.”¹¹⁶ Ultimately, she contemplated the reason why people choose to live.¹¹⁷ They explain that women who are at the subjectivist position are listening to the ideas of others, which precludes them from being entrenched.¹¹⁸ A theistic position would not deny that subjectivism leads to depression. Indeed, a life without God’s interpretation of reality is a life without hope because God gives hope in all circumstances: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28). However, the answer is not simply to listen to others, but it is to listen to God as He speaks through His Word.

Belenky et al. deny a descent into irrationalism. They argue that numerous women in their study used reason; however, they used alternative versions of reason that are not scientific in nature.¹¹⁹ Procedural separate knowing is reliant on doubt and reason. At the opposite pole, connected knowing’s use of reason is not as apparent. They maintain, “We believe that connected knowing is not opposed to, but is at the insistence of, rationality.”¹²⁰ They rely on the reasonableness of their interpretation of their experiences and of the experiences of others. Frame’s explanation of the tension between rationalism and irrationalism is an apt description of what Belenky et al. use as their defense of being rational. “The irrationalist can assert his irrationalism only on a rationalist basis—the basis of his own autonomy.”¹²¹ Their internal criteria determine truth. Again, a theistic position does not deny the value of reason or of a reason that is connected to an epistemic community, but reason must be guided by the wisdom of

¹¹⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 84.

¹¹⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 84.

¹¹⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 84-85.

¹¹⁹Nancy Goldberger, “Looking Backward, Looking Forward,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 11.

¹²⁰Goldberger, “Looking Backward, Looking Forward,” 11.

¹²¹Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 61.

Scripture. Frame points out the futility of rationalism in that it denies an obvious reality: “the human mind is not autonomous, not suited to be the final criterion of all truth,” and the result is that “the mind turns out to only know itself or, more precisely, to know only its thinking.”¹²² What the mind thinks, is the only certainty. For the Christian, God is certain.

A point of compatibility with a Christian understanding of epistemology is one of connectedness. When the woman is silent, she is cut off from others. When the women have become constructivists, they “need and value attentive strangers as well as understanding friends and colleagues.”¹²³ This connectedness is reminiscent of the local church. The church is place where people are connected to one another and learn about God in community.

What is true and where is truth found? In this analysis, these questions are posed together because in *WWK*, the answer to both of them is closely linked. The context of truth determines its construction that “truth is a matter of the context in which it is embedded.”¹²⁴ In *WWK*, the relationship with truth varies from position to position, yet they all agree on the metaphysical idea that objective truth is elusive.¹²⁵

In silent knowing, truth is hidden because the knower is hidden from herself. In received knowing, truth is dualistic—black and white. Authorities give truth to the knower, and the knower automatically accepts the facts given from the authority without critical examination.¹²⁶ In subjective knowing, the knower informs herself concerning

¹²²Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 60.

¹²³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 146.

¹²⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 138.

¹²⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 140.

¹²⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 42.

what is true, and there are multiple personal truths.¹²⁷ Truth is internal—it is no longer external. Different than subjective knowers, procedural knowers “pay attention to objects in the external world.”¹²⁸ In separate and connected procedural knowing, truth is both internal and external. In separate knowing, the knower listens to authorities, but critically examines what they say. Truth is examined objectively through reason, with the removal of self-focused emotions. In connected knowing, truth is found in personal experiences. It is examined in dialogue with the experiences of other knowers. In constructed knowing, truth is being constructed and reconstructed. The context is being analyzed by the self and in dialogue with others: “Theories become not truth but models for approximating experience”¹²⁹

WWK views this understanding of truth as a positive one: “When truth is seen as a process of construction in which the knower participates, a passion for learning is unleashed.”¹³⁰ Unfortunately, their pursuit is limited. *WWK*’s descriptions of the search for truth are reminiscent of the Scriptural warning that describes women who have succumbed to sin. They are “always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth” (2 Tim 3:7). Sin limits one’s ability to know God. Anyone can know propositional truth, but only believers can know the divine. A Christian understanding of philosophy can agree that understanding truth is a positive thing and that an ongoing quest for truth is a positive thing, It does not affirm that truth is constructed through experience.

How is knowledge justified? Each position in *WWK* uses a slightly altered method to justify its construction of knowledge. The silent knower, again, is silent and

¹²⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 66.

¹²⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 98.

¹²⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 138.

¹³⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 140.

does not construct knowledge nor justify it. The received knower justifies knowledge through the authority that supplies it. The subjective knower justifies knowledge through her own internal agency, or the “still small voice” insider her.¹³¹ Belenky et al. describe the significance of this voice: “This interior voice has become, for us, the hallmark of women’s emergent sense of self and sense of agency and control.”¹³² The separate procedural knower justifies her belief through dispassionate reason. Reason is sought after she suspends her own passion, temporarily putting aside the self. She also uses dialogue with others, where the dialogue often takes the on an adversarial character. The connected procedural knower justifies knowledge through their own internal method of criteria, which is informed by their personal experience, and dialogue with others. In dialogue, she attempts to experience the other person’s point of view in order to justify knowledge. The constructed knower has learned to examine the self and the context of the truth. She seeks meaningful dialogue in an epistemic community. She searches for internal consistency and whether or not she is able to live her decisions. Similar to Gilligan’s ethic of nonviolence, she looks to an ethic of care in her decisions.

Being a secular model, the Word of God is not used as a tool of justification. Even though their ideas differ from Frame’s ideas on justification, there are some similarities. Namely, the process of justification at the constructed position is similar to Frame’s justification of the existential perspective. However, even the constructed position will ultimately fall short of a sufficient tool of justification. It falls short because the self—even a self who engages in critical examination—requires the lens of God’s Word to properly understand itself. Belenky et al. even acknowledge the problem of the inner voice: “Minna and others have discovered that the inner voice sometimes lies. It

¹³¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 68.

¹³²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 68.

tells you something is right for you that turns out to be disastrously wrong for you.”¹³³

They contend that more self-awareness can aid in correcting a flawed voice, but the Word of God is the only thing that can replace lies with truth.

Who can know? From the perspective of Belenky et al., everyone has the capacity to construct knowledge, but not all develop the tools to complete this task. Silent women do not use language to dialogue with others about their experiences. In addition, they do not communicate with authorities in a meaningful way; rather, they perceive them as overpowering and not approachable. Received knowers also have difficulty constructing knowledge because they do not realize they have a voice, and they accept knowledge from others. Viewing authority as supplying or controlling knowledge consequently limits one’s ability to construct. Furthermore, women in these positions tend to have had similar family situations in which words were used for violence.¹³⁴ Table 11 provides a summary of the research comparing philosophical understandings.

Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood in *Women’s Ways of Knowing*

Belenky et al. have a presupposition that gender does exist because they study *women*, but *WWK* is the subject of much debate among feminists concerning their paradigm of gender. They refer to this debate in their follow-up interactions in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power*.¹³⁵ Sara Ruddick writes in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power* of realizations she had about a divide among feminists after teaching through

¹³³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 99.

¹³⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 158-59.

¹³⁵Goldberger, “Looking Backward, Looking Forward,” 7.

Table 11. A framework for Christian philosophical understandings of epistemology compared with understandings in *Women's Ways of Knowing*

<i>Christian Philosophical Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Philosophical Understandings of "Women's Ways of Knowing"</i>
Philosophical Theme #1: How can we know?	
<p>Tri-Perspectival Epistemology:</p> <p>Normative (the law), Situational (the facts, the world), Existential (the person).</p> <p>Knowledge originates from the Trinity because of God's grace.</p> <p>Knowing is accomplished in relationship to others.</p> <p>Knowledge is gained from obedience to God and obedience to God brings knowledge.</p>	<p><i>WWK's</i> Epistemological Positions:</p> <p>There are multiple ways a person views the whole of knowledge: Self (existential perspective), Truth and Morality (normative perspective), and Authority and Others (situational perspective).</p> <p>The Self (described in terms of voice/silence) is elevated above other perspectives.</p> <p>Knowing is accomplished in connection to others.</p> <p>Knowledge is constructed, contextual, and mutable.</p>
Philosophical Theme #2: What is true?	
<p>The Bible presents different categories of truth. Truth is metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical. The Bible is truth and contains facts. It also contains a proper interpretation of facts. Truth is objective.</p>	<p>Truth is elusive. Truth is constructed by the knower. Truth is embedded in contexts; it is found in experiences.</p>
Philosophical Theme #3: Where is truth found?	
<p>Truth is found in the Bible. It can also exist outside of the Bible.</p> <p>It will be in the categories of general revelation and common grace.</p>	<p>The silent knower does not find truth.</p> <p>The received knower receives truth from authorities.</p> <p>The subjective knower constructs truth from their personal experiences.</p> <p>The separate knower constructs truth from impersonal reason.</p> <p>The connected knower constructs truth from personal experiences and dialogue from others.</p> <p>The constructed knower constructs truth through personal experience and after an analysis of context.</p>

Table 11. continued

Philosophical Theme #4: How is knowledge justified?	
<p>Knowledge is justified according to three perspectives of knowledge.</p> <p>In the normative perspective, truth is justified by divine law. The coherence theory of truth is used. Modest foundationalism is used.</p> <p>In the situational perspective, truth is justified by facts that are in accord with divine law. The correspondence theory of truth is used. The Bible has the highest correspondence with truth and actually is truth.</p> <p>In the existential perspective, truth is justified with the pragmatist theory where beliefs that lead to action are considered true. There is cognitive rest and confirmation from God. There is also justification in community. All of these are constrained by God's Word.</p> <p>Additionally, there are properly basic beliefs, and God is one of those properly basic beliefs.</p>	<p>The silent knower does not construct knowledge nor justify it.</p> <p>The received knower justifies knowledge through the authority that gives it.</p> <p>The subjective knower justifies knowledge using their own internal voice.</p> <p>The separate knower justifies knowledge through internal and external means. They use their own dispassionate reason and dialogue with others.</p> <p>The connected knower justifies knowledge through internal and external means. They use their own personal experiences and dialogue with others.</p> <p>The constructed knower justifies knowledge through self-examination, contextual examination, confirmation from the community, their ability to live with the decision, and an ethic of care.</p>
Philosophical Theme #5: Who can know?	
<p>Everyone can know truth, but the types of truth are differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state. An unbeliever can know propositional truths. An unbeliever is limited in their knowledge about their self and God. Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.</p>	<p>Anyone has the capacity to know truth though not all develop the tools necessary to know. Silent knowers do not construct knowledge. Negative environments can also limit access to truth. The types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state.</p> <p>Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.</p>

the tenets in *WWK*.¹³⁶ Ruddick explains that some feminists who are “maximizers” celebrate them.¹³⁷ Maximizers are those feminists who want to undo the oppression of patriarchy by embracing the differences between men and women.¹³⁸ Ruddick comments they celebrate characteristics typically attributed to women—such as connected knowing and care.¹³⁹ She summarizes their position: “Now I can be a woman.”¹⁴⁰ Some feminists who are “minimizers” want to equalize society, so that there are no differences between men and women. She summarizes their position: “now I don’t have to be a woman anymore.”¹⁴¹ Students from both postures view *WWK* as maximizers.¹⁴²

A vital distinction between maximizers and essentialists is that they have different ideas on the origins of the distinction between the genders. *WWK* does not claim to be essentialist where the epistemic differences stem from biological differences.¹⁴³ Instead, they embrace a culturally situated construction of gender. They further separate from essentialists because they acknowledge different ways of knowing among women.¹⁴⁴ Women respond to their cultural context and know in relation to their context. In Sandra Harding’s essay in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power*, she further explains the

¹³⁶Sara Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity’: A Case for Connected Knowing,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

¹³⁷Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 257.

¹³⁸Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 257.

¹³⁹Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 257.

¹⁴⁰Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 257.

¹⁴¹Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 257.

¹⁴²Ruddick, “Reason’s ‘Femininity,’” 258.

¹⁴³Goldberger, “Looking Backward, Looking Forward,” 7.

¹⁴⁴Sandra Harding, “Gendered Ways of Knowing and the ‘Epistemological Crisis’ of the West,” in *Knowledge, Difference, and Power: Essays Inspired by Women’s Ways of Knowing*, ed. Nancy Goldberger et al. (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 432.

gender dynamics present in *WWK* and the trajectories those beliefs have taken.¹⁴⁵ She proposes, “So individuals become gendered through positions that they are assigned in culturally varying gendered structural and symbolic systems.”¹⁴⁶ Society defines masculine and feminine, and then the biological sexes adapt to those constructs. Belenky et al. describe the gender system that affected the women in their study: “All women grow up having to deal with historically and culturally engrained definitions of femininity and womanhood—one common theme being that women, like children, should be seen and not heard.”¹⁴⁷ This is a description of a sinful world and its catastrophic effects on women. The tension that is felt goes back to the fall, when God judges Adam and Eve and pronounces their relationship to be forever strained apart from His saving grace: “Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you” (Gen 3:16).

Further illustrating this tension between male and female, is in *WWK*'s description of how women know in relation to men. *WWK* does not say women have greater value than men. But, in the most developed way of knowing (constructed knowing), women viewed themselves as being more holistic than men. In the constructed knower position, women want to overcome the weaknesses of men: “They want to avoid what they perceive to be a shortcoming in many men—the tendency to compartmentalize thought and feeling, home and work, self and other.”¹⁴⁸ Additionally, it was common in subjective knowing for women to identify with being independent from men and, at times, against men.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵Harding, “Gendered Ways of Knowing,” 432.

¹⁴⁶Harding, “Gendered Ways of Knowing,” 436.

¹⁴⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 5.

¹⁴⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 137.

¹⁴⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 79-80.

Points of convergence and divergence exist with these ideas when they are compared with a complementarian design of gender. First, complementarians can agree that biological sex exists, but that it is God-ordained and not a random act of nature. Second, complementarians may be considered maximizers. They celebrate the differences between men and women. However, they maximize differences that are ordained by God and not all cultural-bound expressions of masculinity and femininity are in-line with Scripture. Third, complementarians understand that Scripture determines masculinity and femininity or functional realities—not society. In other words, the biological sexes adapt to a biblically informed system, not to a societally constructed one. However, there must be an awareness of the societal system. How functional realities are lived takes wisdom and cultural acumen. Complementarians can affirm that women are situated in a context and that it affects them to varying degrees.

There is a challenge brought to complementarian thought through the idea of women being situated in a context. Has society established a system that conditions women to know in certain ways? As Belenky et al. explain in their view, the descriptions of women's ways of knowing arise out of a culture of patriarchal oppression. Has navigating a world of patriarchy indeed influenced women's epistemic maturity? Furthermore, has God set up a system that conditions women to know in certain ways? Do biological and subsequent functional realities (that is the functional realities described in the Bible) shape epistemic formation? *WWK* takes into account a woman's relationship with authority, and complementarians should also take into account a woman's relationship with authority and how that may affect epistemic formation.

In contrast to a world of sinful oppressive patriarchy, which may be the experience for some who live in this world, is biblical hierarchy. Biblical hierarchy presupposes both men and women equally have authority over all the earth through their vice-regency, as God's ruling representatives. In carrying out the vice-regency, men and women have varying relationships with authority. Women who hold to a

complementarian paradigm of womanhood are under authority in four main areas of their lives: (1) biblical authority is normative; (2) a woman responds to church authorities; (3) she submits to her husband's leadership if she is married (Eph 5:22); (4) she responds to governmental authorities.

Men and women are equally responsible to submit to the authority of Scripture. In the church, both men and women respond to the authority of church leadership. However, women are given boundaries in the church where they do not exist for men. This boundary is derived from 1 Timothy 2:12-13, where women not permitted "to teach or to exercise authority over a man" in the church based on the creation order. Subsequently, women have a responsibility to receive this leadership in a humble manner (1 Tim 2:11). Elders have responsibilities to lead graciously and responsibly, modeling Christ's methods (1 Tim 3:1-7). Not all men will be elders and therefore, men are responsible, like women are, to submit to their leadership (Heb 13:17). Within church leadership, there is further accountability in that elders, who are male, still submit to one another (Eph. 5:21). In the third category concerning marriage or the home, submission to a husband does not affect all woman, as some are single (Eph 5:28-30). In the fourth category of society, both men and women can equally serve in governmental roles, and they are both subject to the government (Rom 13:1). The home is the only category in which women are called exclusively to submit to earthly authority. Both genders are intended to flourish under this model since it is one proposed in God's original design. However, how a biblically modeled authority structure, with its diverse demands on both sexes, affects epistemic development for men and women have yet to be explored. Table 12 provides a summary of the research comparing paradigms of womanhood.

Table 12. Complementarian paradigm of womanhood compared with *Women's Ways of Knowing*

<i>Understandings of Gender</i>	<i>Complementarian Paradigm of Womanhood</i>	<i>"Women's Ways of Knowing's" Paradigm of Womanhood</i>
Biological Realities	Biological realities are determined by God.	Biological realities are determined by nature.
Functional Realities	Functional realities are determined by the Bible. They describe how men and women relate to one another.	Functional realities are socially constructed.
Cultural Applications	Cultural realities are determined by culture but constrained by biblical commandments and wisdom.	Cultural applications are determined by culture, constrained by societal expectations of gender-assigned behaviors.

Biblical and Theological Themes, Compared with Themes in *Women's Ways of Knowing*

This section will compare biblical and theological understandings to the conceptions of epistemic development in *Women's Ways of Knowing* in order to assess its usability in Christian developmental theories pertaining to women. Knowledge and gender have been previously discussed in these sections, respectively: "Philosophical Understandings in *Women's Ways of Knowing*" and "Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood in *Women's Ways of Knowing*." These section inferences will be added in the chart below. This section will focus on life-span development, the self, and *telos*.

Understandings of life-span development. Does this mirror the biblical path to wisdom? Estes explains that biblical knowing requires four elements: (1) the knower

must “receive wisdom”;¹⁵⁰ (2) the knower must “respond to wisdom”;¹⁵¹ (3) the knower must “value wisdom”;¹⁵² and (4) the knower must “assimilate wisdom.”¹⁵³ This research considers each way of knowing individually and then comment on the stages as a whole. It is important to acknowledge upfront that *WWK*’s model lacks the fear of the Lord, so it will be limited. Additionally, transitions do not correspond to specific ages.¹⁵⁴

The silent knower is not progressing and especially not along a biblically described path. The received knower is indeed receiving knowledge but is not actively trying to understand information that she has received.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, received knowing is not a complete way of knowing in a biblical sense. While the subjective knower listens to authority, the authority is of her own making without the constraint of God’s Word. Therefore, the subjective knower has an incomplete way of knowing. The procedural knower receives wisdom, values wisdom, and seeks to assimilate wisdom. However, the procedural knower position has a weakness in her response to wisdom, which is similar to the weakness in the subjective knower position. A perceived construction of knowledge and self lacks interpretation from God’s Word. In the constructivist position, all elements are present, but it inherits the weaknesses of the previous positions.

Belenky et al.’s five epistemological positions are the subject of debate as to whether or not they are truly developmental.¹⁵⁶ Regardless of the conclusion, *WWK* includes discussion about how a woman moves from one position to another. In moving

¹⁵⁰Daniel J. Estes, *Hear My Son: Teaching and Learning in Proverbs 1-9* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 136.

¹⁵¹Estes, *Hear My Son*, 140.

¹⁵²Estes, *Hear My Son*, 143.

¹⁵³Estes, *Hear My Son*, 135-49.

¹⁵⁴Estes, *Hear My Son*, 49.

¹⁵⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 42.

¹⁵⁶See chap. 2, “Theories about Women’s Development.” Belenky et al., *WWK*, 40-44.

out of the silent position, parenthood is a stimulator.¹⁵⁷ Belenky et al. describe the effects of motherhood: “It is as if this act of creation ushers in a whole new view of one’s creative capacities.”¹⁵⁸ In the transition from received knower to subjective knower, responsibility toward others is an impetus for growth, much like what happens in the transition from silent knowing.¹⁵⁹ Encouragement from authorities can also help the knowers perceive themselves in a new way.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, when their social positions change, they see the weakness of relying on external authorities and begin to look inward.¹⁶¹ In the transition from subjective to procedural, women faced conflict between the knowledge of an authority and the personal truths they developed as subjective knowers.¹⁶² Transitioning to constructive knowing comes after removing themselves from familiar things.¹⁶³ Psychological and possible geographical distance allows them to experience a period of introspection.¹⁶⁴

From a biblical understanding, all of these things can push one to become an active learner. However, a pursuit that is deficient in seeking God’s interpretation for all of life will lead to a false response to wisdom. Increase of knowledge should lead to an increase of humility and awe of the Lord, who created all things. Instead, this path will lead the learner to conflate the self above God, resulting in pride—not humility.

¹⁵⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 35.

¹⁵⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 35.

¹⁵⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 47.

¹⁶⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 49.

¹⁶¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 51, 56.

¹⁶²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 88.

¹⁶³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 135.

¹⁶⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 135.

Understandings of self. The self is oriented in a different way toward the knower at every stage, but the way of knowing is always described in terms of relationship with or without the self. Belenky et al. express their understanding of self, as Gilligan does, mainly through the metaphor of voice. Silent women are voiceless women. They are not able to describe themselves. Received knowers receive information about themselves through authorities.¹⁶⁵ Subsequently, received knowers can be encouraged and discouraged by authorities. Knowers are under pressure to conform into what the authorities conceive of them as being. They do not yet define themselves. The subjective knower has found her voice. She is her own authority and author of her life. Once the voice emerges, this leads the knower on a “quest for self.”¹⁶⁶ The self is constantly evolving as the new normal is being discovered.¹⁶⁷ Two characteristics of the self emerge in separate knowing: the self treats others as it would like to be treated and the self is temporarily suppressed in order to be able to utilize dispassionate reason.¹⁶⁸ In connected knowing, the self seeks out the viewpoint of others. In constructivist knowing, the self is reclaimed by creating knowledge.¹⁶⁹ The self had been suppressed under systems set up by authorities.¹⁷⁰ Now, the self can redefine the systems by combining personal truths with knowledge critically examined from others.¹⁷¹ They invite all parts of the self back into their understandings.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁵Belenky et al., *WWK*, 48.

¹⁶⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 77. At this point Belenky et al. diverge from Gilligan’s responsibilities stage. Gilligan describes a growth in moral maturity once the person becomes self-aware, but Belenky et al. did not observe moral maturity, only cognitive. Belenky et al., *WWK*, 77.

¹⁶⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 77.

¹⁶⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 102, 109.

¹⁶⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 134.

¹⁷⁰Belenky et al., *WWK*, 134.

¹⁷¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 134.

¹⁷²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 137.

A war of obedience is presented in this conception of self. The self is obedient to authorities; to reason; to others' experiences; and, ultimately to itself. There is no discussion of obedience to God, which is the impetus to knowing the Lord and properly knowing the world. Not only is the self wrestling with respect to authorities, but it is wrestling over perspectives. The self is gazing at a different object at each position: it gazes outward through the lens of authorities; its own lens; the lens of reason; the lens of others' experiences; and, finally, the combined lens of self and others. The gaze of the self should be on Christ because, in Christ we see our true self (1 Cor 13:12). The self needs to be reoriented to Christ.

Understandings of *telos*. Belenky et al. explain the commitment the constructed knowers make is based on “how their judgments, attitudes, and behavior coalesce into some internal experience of moral consistency.”¹⁷³ Their morals become ethical obligations to the self and the community. In addition, they consider the context and the connection to relationships in forming the commitment. They look not merely to the decision being made, but to the surrounding relationships, in order to judge the meaning of their life.

In applying the principle of inverse consistency, Trentham reorients Perry's view of mature commitments.¹⁷⁴ This approach is useful in critiquing Belenky et al.'s view of commitment because they use Perry's scheme with modifications in light of their discoveries with women. Trentham explains a Christian understanding of commitment.

Scripture: Commitment involves maintaining one's worldview “with universal intent”—i.e., exercising steadfast, convictional faith, acknowledging that one's commitment is the only means by which to genuinely fulfill one's longing for purposeful identity, through commitments that enable one to “draw near” to God,

¹⁷³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 150.

¹⁷⁴John David Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates: A Cross-Institutional Application of the Perry Scheme” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 128. See “Figure 3. Applying the principle of inverse consistency to the Perry Scheme.”

seek his will, and serve the benefit of his Kingdom (Heb 11:6).¹⁷⁵

The universal intent is present in Belenky et al.'s viewpoint. There is an exercising of moral convictions. Moreover, Belenky et al. recognize these individuals are “seriously preoccupied with the moral or spiritual dimension of their lives.”¹⁷⁶ They recognize that a meaningful life or identity is found in exercising those convictions. However, instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself as the criterion for morality. Other relationships and community, which are in a constant state of flux, further shape constructivist commitments. From Belenky et al.'s perspective, the self grows into a more realized self.

Belenky et al. concede to the natural outcome of this view of commitment—that the woman becomes overwhelmed with her responsibilities to others and to society.¹⁷⁷ In their view, women being assigned to domestic duties precludes them from fulfillment.¹⁷⁸ Belenky et al. point to the roles in the broader society to be the roles worth maintaining in a woman's effort to balance commitment. A complementarian view does not preclude women from working away from the home in society.¹⁷⁹ Complementarian thought does however, point to the value of motherhood and domesticity as described in Titus 2:3-5 and Proverbs 31:10-31.¹⁸⁰ From a complementarian understanding, the

¹⁷⁵Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 128. See “Figure 3. Applying the principle of inverse consistency to the Perry Scheme.”

¹⁷⁶Belenky et al., *WWK*, 150.

¹⁷⁷Belenky et al., *WWK*, 151.

¹⁷⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 152.

¹⁷⁹George W. Knight III discusses how the Scriptures do not limit a wife to only working at home. “Some Christians have interpreted Titus 2:5 (‘workers at home,’ NASB) to mean that any work outside the home is inappropriate for the wife and mother. But the fact that wives should care for their home does not necessarily imply that they should not work outside the home, any more than the statement that a ‘overseer’ in the church should ‘manage his own household’ (1 Timothy 3:4-5) means that he cannot work outside the home. In neither case does the text say that!” George W. Knight III, “The Family and the Church: How Should Biblical Manhood and Womanhood Work Out in Practice?,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 348.

¹⁸⁰Dorothy Patterson, “The High Calling of Wife and Mother in Biblical Perspective,” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL:

priority will be the home. Even with the elevation of the role of the home in a woman’s life, complementarians will still not point to the home as bringing the meaning of life. It is only in efforts to “to ‘draw near’ to God, seek his will, and serve the benefit of his Kingdom” that will bring about the proper *telos* of life.¹⁸¹ Table 13 provides a summary of the research comparing biblical-theological understandings.

Table 13. A Framework of Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemology Compared with *Women’s Ways of Knowing*

<i>Biblical-Theological Themes</i>	<i>A Framework of Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Understandings of “Women’s Ways of Knowing” Compared with Biblical-Theological Themes</i>
Understandings of Life-Span Development	Life-span development takes place as progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. One moves from child to adult through the mechanism of wisdom.	<p>Whether this model represents positions or stages is debated. This study still describes progress to a more mature way of knowing.</p> <p>One moves from silence and received knowing through the mechanisms of responsibility, external encouragement from authorities, and changes in social position.</p> <p>One moves from subjective knowing to procedural through the mechanism of conflict in personal truth and knowledge from authorities.</p> <p>One moves from procedural to constructivist knowing through the mechanisms of external changes and introspection.</p>

Crossway Books, 1991), 366-67.

¹⁸¹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 128. See “Figure 3. Applying the principle of inverse consistency to the Perry Scheme.”

Table 13. continued

<p>Understandings of Self</p>	<p>Self is to be oriented toward Christlikeness in order to grow in intellect. Self-denial leads to Christlikeness. Self submits to the authority of Christ.</p>	<p>Knowing is described in terms of relationship with or without the self. Self is described through the metaphor of voice.</p> <p>Silent women are unaware of the self.</p> <p>In received knowing, the self is defined by external authorities.</p> <p>In subjective knowing, the self is its own authority and subsequently defines itself.</p> <p>In separate procedural knowing, the self treats others as how it would like to be treated and it temporarily suppresses the self in order to be able to use dispassionate reason.</p> <p>In connected procedural knowing, the self seeks out the point of view of others.</p> <p>In constructivist knowing, the self redefines knowledge systems set up by authorities by combining personal truths with knowledge critically examined from others.</p>
<p>Understandings of Gender</p>	<p>Human sexual existence involves biological realities, functional realities, or cultural applications. Biological realities are the sex with which one is born. Functional realities are dictated by Scripture. Cultural applications are varied but are constrained by biblical commands and wisdom. Both genders have equal worth and dignity because they are both made in the image of God.</p>	<p>Biological realities are determined by nature. Functional realities are socially constructed. Cultural applications are determined by culture, constrained by societal expectations of gender-assigned behaviors. Both genders have equal worth because they both exist.</p>

Table 13. continued

<p>Understandings of Knowledge</p>	<p>Knowledge is gained through the study of Scripture. Wisdom, the application of knowledge, is gained through a fear of the Lord.</p>	<p>Knowledge is gained through the study of self and the world. Wisdom is primarily gained through experiences. Knowledge is constructed, absolute, and mutable. Knowing is accomplished in connection to others.</p>
<p>Understandings of <i>Telos</i></p>	<p>The goal is to perfectly image God through union with Christ.</p>	<p>Commitments are formed as “judgments, attitudes, and behavior” develop into a moral system. Their morals turn into ethical obligations to self and the community. Furthermore, they consider the context and the connection to relationships in forming the commitment. They consider not just the decision being made, but the relationships, for judging the meaning of their life.</p>

Evaluating *Knowing and Reasoning in College* for Its Use in Women’s Developmental Theory

Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-Related Patterns for Students’

Intellectual Development, by Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, offers four different stages of reflective epistemological development for undergraduate students. Three of these stages suggest gender-related patterns of cognition. This study is wholly secular in its approach to development and education. However, there are some common grace ideas that are represented in this work that Christian education should consider in their own formulations of development.

Baxter Magolda's Pre-Theoretical Understandings

Baxter Magolda describes her changing thoughts from an objectivist to a naturalistic approach to her study: "I suppose my flexibility in this regard was influenced by the increasing criticism of logical, abstract forms of knowing and the growing acceptance of alternate forms based on lived experience" ¹⁸² In addition, she found that the naturalistic worldview was more in line with the stories she was hearing: "The naturalistic notion of multiple realities instead of one objective matched the data on student reasoning patterns." ¹⁸³ Postmodern feminist writings also influenced her conceptions of gender and her interpretation of the data. ¹⁸⁴ Subsequently, existentialist thought is also prevalent as it is the main influence in postmodern feminism.

What is prime reality? Prime reality for a naturalist is made only of matter, without a transcendent God as Creator or a singular transcendent reality. Baxter Magolda recognizes that the stories people tell are the instruments with which they construct multiple realities. ¹⁸⁵ Comprehending the power of story, Baxter Magolda uses the narrative approach to describe knowing. ¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, this understanding directs the ultimate goal of her study, which involves "transforming" educational practices versus "simply redesigning" them. ¹⁸⁷ In transformation, objectivist presuppositions are exposed and rejected in favor of embracing a social construction of reality. ¹⁸⁸ In Baxter Magolda's assessment, a redesign would put more emphasis on pragmatics and avoid the

¹⁸²Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-Related Patterns in Students' Intellectual Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 14.

¹⁸³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 14.

¹⁸⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 14.

¹⁸⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 20.

¹⁸⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, xv.

¹⁸⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, xiv.

¹⁸⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, xiv-xv.

metaphysical and philosophical barriers that would need to change in order for progress to be made in education. A biblical worldview affirms rejecting objectivist presuppositions but would not affirm replacing them with naturalistic ones as the key to transformation.¹⁸⁹ Indeed, understanding ways of knowing in a more nuanced conception is a positive and ongoing task of social science and of Christians in social science, but the way forward is through knowing God.

What is the nature of external reality? Baxter Magolda explains how naturalistic presuppositions describe external reality. She notes that the student stories align with the naturalistic notion “that research observers could not be separated from what they observed”¹⁹⁰ This principle is similar to what Belenky et al. describe as their ambition to put the knower back in the known.¹⁹¹ The knower is the creator of external reality and therefore influences it. Baxter Magolda, like Gilligan and Belenky et al., uses the metaphor of voice to describe a person’s own construction of reality.¹⁹²

A biblical worldview can affirm that there is a knower involved in the known; this idea opens the way for a Christian perspective on philosophy itself.¹⁹³ Recognizing a knower allows there to be the perspective or bias of Christian beliefs. However, the power of the knower is limited; they are not their own god and do not determine reality.

¹⁸⁹James K. A. Smith, a Christian philosophy professor, discusses how postmodernity, with its emphasis on presuppositions and story, can be useful for the church: “To put this in more familiar terms, classical apologetics operates with a very modern notion of reason; ‘presuppositional’ apologetics, on the other hand, is postmodern (and Augustinian!) insofar as it recognizes the role of presuppositions in both what counts as truth and what is recognized as true. For this reason, postmodernism can be a catalyst for the church to reclaim its faith not as a system of truth dictated by neutral reason, but rather as a story that requires ‘eyes to see and ears to hear.’ The primary responsibility of the church as witness, then, is not demonstration but rather proclamation—the kerygmatic vocation of proclaiming the Word made flesh rather than thin realities of theism that a supposedly neutral reason yields,” James K. A. Smith, *Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism? Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 28.

¹⁹⁰Smith, *Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism?*, 15.

¹⁹¹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 16.

¹⁹²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 194-96.

¹⁹³Smith, *Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism?*, 73.

What is a human being? Naturalists affirm that humans are matter, and they are not created by God for His purposes. In contrast to a God-defined existence, self-definition through the development of voice is a theme in this work.¹⁹⁴ Baxter Magolda asserts that “validating students as knowers is essential to promoting students’ voice.”¹⁹⁵ Baxter Magolda validates the worth of the knower and one’s ability to create meaning. This emphasis on the individual echoes existentialism: “Individualism is the central pillar of existentialism. The existentialist does not seek for such things as purpose in the universe. Only the individual has purpose.”¹⁹⁶ Baxter Magolda extends this existential ideal of individual purpose. She rejects the idea that learning is solely individual; instead, connected knowing is a key feature in complex thought.¹⁹⁷ Others have value in relation to the individual as they aid in social construction of knowledge. In addition, men and women are viewed as equals, and their ways of knowing are equally validated because all individuals have purpose.¹⁹⁸

A biblical worldview assigns worth equally to all people, which is due to their connection to God as image bearers and not to their ability to define realities. Christian philosopher George R. Knight affirms the need to value the individual. “A distinctly Christian philosophy can never lose sight of the importance of individuality as it seeks to relate education to the learner.”¹⁹⁹ As Baxter Magolda does, Knight also affirms the value of others and the value of others as individuals within the group.²⁰⁰ He points to the

¹⁹⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 374.

¹⁹⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 376.

¹⁹⁶Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 76.

¹⁹⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 382.

¹⁹⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 13.

¹⁹⁹Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 206.

²⁰⁰Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 206.

illustration of the spiritual gifts given to the members of the church in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.²⁰¹ The church needs each gift, and each gift given to the person is unique.

What happens to a person at death? This question is not explicitly addressed in *Knowing and Reasoning*. Baxter Magolda's study and its conclusions are rooted in this present life. Eternal destiny does not play a factor in one's understanding of how men and women know in college or in the resulting conclusions for education. In contrast, in a holistic Christian education, eternal destiny is a factor in education. Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples, "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:20). In this Scripture passage, Jesus gives the primary content of Christian education, which is His teachings and, specifically, the gospel message. This curriculum includes a discussion with respect to human beings' eternal destiny as determined by their faith and repentance toward God. This provides the *telos* of development.

Why is it possible to know anything at all? Throughout *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, Baxter Magolda points to a social constructivist view of knowledge, where "multiple realities arise from negotiations among learners about the meaning of experience."²⁰² In addition to the concept of the construction of knowledge, Baxter Magolda points to three naturalistic assumptions that characterize the type of knowledge she heard in the students' stories. Knowledge has "subjectivity," is "context-bound," and is "jointly shaped in relationship."²⁰³ In Baxter Magolda's model, knowers do not fully embrace this conception of knowledge until the final stage—contextual knowing. At the lowest stage, knowledge is certain.²⁰⁴ When compared with Frame's tri-

²⁰¹Knight, *Philosophy and Education*, 206.

²⁰²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, xv.

²⁰³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 15-16.

²⁰⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 30.

perspectivalism, knowledge about both self and others is necessary for a nuanced understanding of human knowledge. Like *WWK*, this model lacks the cohesive foundation of God's Word as the proper interpretation for all knowledge. This issue will be further discussed in the section on philosophical understandings.

How do we know what is right and wrong? Morality is not a major theme in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, but several ideas about morality can be inferred. In Baxter Magolda's view, the content of morality relies on social consensus.²⁰⁵ Society determines which moral issues exist and how to respond to them. Specifically, society has determined that such subjects as "racial prejudice, sex discrimination, sexual violence, civility, and obligations to others" are problematic and are issues that can cause unhealthy campus life.²⁰⁶ In addition to society's values, moral formation exists at the individual level. Knowers arrive at their understanding of morality by varied means at each stage. In the absolute knowing stage, knowers rely on instructors for knowledge and hence for ideas about morality. In the transitional knowing stage, the knowers' voice is emerging, and they begin the process of comprehending morality, even though they are still mostly repeating what the authorities have taught them.²⁰⁷ In independent knowing, the voice and peers are sources of knowledge and therefore help determine morality.²⁰⁸ In contextual knowing, morality is determined based on its context and the evaluative dialogue that occurs among authorities, peers, and themselves.²⁰⁹ Further nuance in the gender-related patterns exist within the first three stages.

²⁰⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 391.

²⁰⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 391-92.

²⁰⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 133.

²⁰⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 138.

²⁰⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 170.

Baxter Magolda’s concepts about morality are most evident in her application of this model to cocurricular life, in which students deal with moral obligations to the community.²¹⁰ One example of her application is in applying the principle of validating the students as knowers to student conduct. She proposes one way of doing this is having students participate in student-conduct discussions.²¹¹ A biblical can affirm student involvement. However, on a campus that affirms a social construction of morality, this view may lead to widely varying results. On a campus where students hold to the same transcendent morality code that the Bible prescribes and describes, a more accurate depiction of fairness in student discipline will result. Overall, a socially constructed view of morality is an unreliable foundation for governing student life.

What is the meaning of human history? This study does not address Baxter Magolda’s perspective on human history. She values student stories and views them as making meaning.²¹² Individual stories are more significant than a controlling narrative. Devoid of the metanarrative of Scripture, these student stories lack proper placement in human history. Table 14 provides a summary of the research comparing worldviews.

Table 14. A Biblical Worldview Framework Compared to *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

<i>Worldview Diagnostic Questions</i>	<i>A Biblical Worldview Framework</i>	<i>Worldview Presented in “Knowing and Reasoning in College”</i>
What is prime-reality—the really real?	God is really real, as revealed by Scripture.	The knower constructs reality. There is no transcendent God—only matter.

²¹⁰Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 343.

²¹¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 351.

²¹²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, xv.

Table 14. continued

<p>What is the nature of external reality—that is the world around us?</p>	<p>God has created and designed the world.</p>	<p>Reality is hidden and relies on stories to reveal external reality. The voice describes reality and helps place the knower back into the known. The knower is an agent of construction in the external reality.</p>
<p>What is a human being?</p>	<p>A human is God’s creation, uniquely designed in his image, created male and female.</p>	<p>Humans construct who they are through their increased self-awareness (voice). The universe does not have purpose. Individuals have purpose. Others have value in relation to the individual as they aid in social construction of knowledge.</p>
<p>What happens to a person at death?</p>	<p>A person either is saved from their sins through Christ’s substitutionary atonement or they are judged for their sins.</p>	<p>There is an emphasis on the present without regard for what happens after death.</p>
<p>Why is it possible to know anything at all?</p>	<p>God has revealed knowledge through both general and special revelation. Three perspectives bear on knowledge: normative, existential, and situational.</p>	<p>Knowledge is socially constructed. In other words, “Multiple realities arise from negotiations among learners about the meaning of experience” (Baxter Magolda, <i>Knowing and Reasoning in College</i>, xv). Knowledge is subjective, context-bound, and shaped in a reciprocal relationship. Purely objective knowledge is elusive.</p>
<p>How do we know what is right and wrong?</p>	<p>God’s moral standards for mankind are described in His Word.</p>	<p>Morality is socially constructed, relying on social consensus. Each epistemological position judges morality differently.</p>
<p>What is the meaning of human history?</p>	<p>The metanarrative of Scripture is the true story of the whole world. It spans creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Mankind needs redemption through Christ.</p>	<p>Individual stories make meaning in relation to other stories. There is no metanarrative. Metanarratives suppress other stories or voices.</p>

Philosophical Understandings in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

Knowing and Reasoning in College presents an epistemological-reflection model. It concentrates on the nature of knowledge and the relationship with learners, peers, instructors, and educational-evaluation methods. Social construction is at the center of this developmental model. This model has points of agreement and disagreement with a Christian understanding of philosophy.

How can we know? Baxter Magolda, like Belenky et al., appropriately recognizes that human knowledge—in all of its complexities—is not viewed from one position. Baxter Magolda uses the perspective of the college student, or the learner, as the primary lens to view all other perspectives. By elevating the learner, she is essentially elevating the self and the existential perspective above other types of knowledge. Second, she elevates the situational perspective, but not above the learner. This situational perspective is comprised of the perspective of others and the context of knowledge. In the most developed stage, contextual knowing, the learner’s point of view is developed using others and context. Even though the situational perspective is influencing the existential perspective to a greater degree, still, the knowledge gained from others and from the context are ultimately judged by the learner’s internal criteria.²¹³ The normative perspective ultimately functions in a subservient role to the first two perspectives, instead of all three perspectives equally shaping knowledge.

Baxter Magolda’s model does well to value situational knowledge to a large extent, along with the existential. She explains, “Connection, or relational aspects of knowing, may be the key to complex forms of thinking.”²¹⁴ This model places the learners in situated knowledge and provides some constraints on their knowledge

²¹³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 188-89.

²¹⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 188-89.

formation through community connectedness.²¹⁵ Meek affirms that knowledge is situated.²¹⁶ We are in a time, place, culture, community, etc., that require acknowledgment. This situation gives a starting place to knowing.²¹⁷ Meek describes a Christian interpretation of situated knowing that includes both “creational rootedness” and “interpersonal covenantal relationship.”²¹⁸ Creational situatedness understands that an intrinsic value is bestowed on all of creation because the Lord created the world. Sin and the fall tainted creation, which is now being renewed through Christ’s redemptive work. With interpersonal covenantal relationships comes an understanding that God descended to humans, and “all human knowing is response” to this descent.²¹⁹ There is also a realization of knowing in reciprocating friendship versus knowing in impersonal data collecting.²²⁰ While Baxter Magolda lacks this interpretation of context, her ideas about knowing include the value of acknowledging context and community. Baxter Magolda does well to place constraints on knowing, but this constraint does not go far enough. God’s Word must be included as the foundation; otherwise, the content of this model will shift with prevailing cultural winds. This is not to say that the people in her model cannot have legitimate knowledge, but these statements require reorientation to a proper context.²²¹

²¹⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 188.

²¹⁶Meek, *Loving to Know*, 206.

²¹⁷Meek, *Loving to Know*, 206.

²¹⁸Meek, *Loving to Know*, 206.

²¹⁹Meek, *Loving to Know*, 209.

²²⁰Meek, *Loving to Know*, 209.

²²¹Frame discusses legitimate knowledge amidst false contexts: “But the idea that true sentences used as a part of a false system thereby become false themselves is a kind of idealistic theory of language that has no Christian basis and would be rejected by almost all linguists, including, idealist ones!” Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 53.

What is true and where is truth found? These questions are posed together in this analysis because the reply to both inquiries is closely linked in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*. Baxter Magolda does not speak in terms of truth but, rather, the nature of knowledge. She begins with the guiding assumption that knowledge, or truth, is socially constructed: “The meaning that students make of these experiences depends partially on their original view of the world, partially on the other views they encounter, and partially on the context in which the experience takes place.”²²² The learner progresses in one’s comprehension of the nature of knowledge toward this understanding. In the absolute knowing stage, knowledge is certain and found in instructors. In transitional knowing, learners move toward a contextual view of truth as they begin to perceive that not all knowledge is certain. Where uncertainty exists, they start to rely on self, peers, and instructors through dialogue. In independent knowing, knowledge is uncertain and found in self-construction of knowledge—namely, in the voice. Peers are a legitimate source of knowledge as well at this stage. In contextual knowing, Baxter Magolda’s assumptions about truth are fully realized. Truth is social. It is contextual. It is found in the self and others. A Christian perspective will appreciate the connection between the self and the world in forming truth, but Scripture is a necessary part of interpretation.

How is knowledge justified? Each stage and every gender-related pattern in *Knowing and Reasoning in College* uses a slightly altered method to justify the construction of knowledge. In the absolute knowing position, women identify more with the receiving pattern, and men identify more with the mastery pattern. Both patterns seek certainty of knowledge. The receiving pattern justifies knowledge by receiving knowledge from authorities.²²³ They settle competing claims through reconciling their

²²²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 20.

²²³Even though they received knowledge from authorities, they do not have much dialogue

feelings about the knowledge, assuming the knowledge provided was certain.²²⁴ In the mastery pattern, they rely on authorities that include both instructors and informational sources. They reconcile competing claims through their own internal logic.²²⁵ In this stage, looking for certainty in authorities establishes them as gods in the life of the learner, thus making them an idol.²²⁶ From the Christian perspective, certainty of knowledge is a biblical idea, where scriptural authority provides certainty of knowledge.²²⁷ Reconciling feelings and using reason will result in futility because of their false *telos* in seeking an authority outside of Scripture. This stage aptly describes a mind of an unbeliever.

In the transitional knowing position, knowledge is seen as both certain and uncertain. In this position, women identify more with the interpersonal pattern and men identify more with the impersonal pattern. The methods employed in the absolute knowing phase are used to justify certain knowledge. To justify uncertain knowledge, the interpersonal pattern learners utilize their own personal judgment, which is described as the emergence of voice. The impersonal pattern uses the voice, as well, but it is not as developed as is the voice of the interpersonal learner. The impersonal learners' voice repeats what they hear authorities teaching. The interpersonal takes into account the experiences of their peers.²²⁸ This stage adopts the weaknesses of the previous stage with its idolatrous pursuit of outside authority. This stage adds yet another idolatrous pursuit—

with them. Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 101.

²²⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 88.

²²⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 98.

²²⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 134.

²²⁷Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 136.

²²⁸Baxter Magolda describes the transitional interpersonal knower's use of experiences in shaping their voice: "Transitional interpersonal knowers held their opinions in abeyance while they collected the ideas of others, whose real or expected reactions constrained their voices." Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 155.

that of the self. There is value in knowing the self and the world, but they will not be able to constitute a complete system of criteria without God's Word. This stage aptly describes the mind of an unbeliever.

In the independent knowing position, knowledge is uncertain. In this position, women identify more with the interindividual pattern, whereas men identified more with the individual pattern. Both justify knowledge through their voice. In the interindividual pattern, they have increased confidence in their own voice when compared to peers or authority.²²⁹ In the individual pattern, they move away from repeating what authorities say to legitimizing their own voice.²³⁰ They also listen to peer experiences for the first time.²³¹ Baxter Magolda has correctly identified the result of the idolatrous pursuit of self, knowledge that is uncertain. As the learner becomes more self-aware, knowledge becomes less certain; subsequently, the movement toward others is a common grace corrective of selfishness.

In the contextual knower phase, there is no perceived gender-related pattern. Contextual knowers view knowledge as uncertain and justify it based on the context. They use existing knowledge and experts, and evaluate their validity based on their own internal criteria. Again, Baxter Magolda correctly perceives that a pursuit of self results in uncertainty of knowledge. The movement toward others and acknowledging the situatedness of knowledge is a biblical direction. However, this model is in need of a reoriented *telos* reflective of a biblical direction.

Who can know? In Baxter Magolda's view, everyone has the capacity to construct knowledge, but those in the absolute knowing stage are not constructing

²²⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 166.

²³⁰Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 165.

²³¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 165.

knowledge. The learners in the mastery pattern, who are typically male students, have the self-confidence to attempt to exercise their voice, but ultimately mimic authorities.²³² Those who are in the received pattern—the pattern typically related to females—remain voiceless. Baxter Magolda purports that this may be due to the oppressive expectations society places on them by society where they are expected to remain connected to others, even at the loss of self.²³³ Table 15 provides a summary of this comparative research.

Table 15. A framework for Christian philosophical understandings of epistemology compared with understandings in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

<i>Christian Philosophical Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Philosophical Understandings of “Knowing and Reasoning in College”</i>
Philosophical Theme #1: How can we know?	
<p>Tri-Perspectival Epistemology:</p> <p>Normative (the law), Situational (the facts, the world), Existential (the person).</p> <p>Knowledge originates from the Trinity because of God’s grace.</p> <p>Knowing is accomplished in relationship to others.</p> <p>Knowledge is gained from obedience to God and obedience to God brings knowledge.</p>	<p><i>Knowing and Reasoning in College’s</i> Epistemological Positions:</p> <p>There are multiple ways a person views the whole of knowledge.</p> <p>The perspective of the learner (existential perspective) is the primary lens to view all other perspectives. The self or the learner is described through the metaphor of voice.</p> <p>The situational perspective is elevated, but not above the learner. This situational perspective is comprised of the perspective of others and the context of knowledge.</p> <p>The knowledge gained from others and from the context are ultimately judged by the learner’s internal criteria.</p> <p>The normative perspective is subservient to the first two perspectives, instead of all three perspectives equally shaping knowledge.</p> <p>Knowledge is socially constructed. Knowledge is situated. Knowing is accomplished in connection to others.</p>

²³²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 101.

²³³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 92.

Table 15. continued

Philosophical Theme #2: What is true?	
<p>The Bible presents different categories of truth. Truth is metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical. The Bible is truth and contains facts. It also contains a proper interpretation of facts. Truth is objective.</p>	<p>Truth is elusive. Truth is socially constructed by the knower. Truth is embedded in contexts.</p>
Philosophical Theme #3: Where is truth found?	
<p>Truth is found in the Bible. It can also exist outside of the Bible. It will be in the categories of general revelation and common grace.</p>	<p>In the absolute knowing stage, knowledge is certain and found in instructors. In transitional knowing, not all knowledge is certain. When uncertainty exists they begin to rely on self, peers, and instructors through dialogue. In independent knowing, knowledge is uncertain and found in self-construction of knowledge--namely, in the voice. Peers are a legitimate source of knowledge. In contextual knowing, truth is social. It is contextual. It is found in the self and others.</p>
Philosophical Theme #4: How is knowledge justified?	
<p>Knowledge is justified according to three perspectives of knowledge. In the normative perspective, truth is justified by divine law. Uses coherence theory of truth and modest foundationalism. In the situational perspective, truth is justified by facts that are in accord with divine law. The correspondence theory of truth is used. The Bible has the highest correspondence with truth and actually is truth.</p>	<p>1. Absolute Knowing: Receiving Pattern—People justify knowledge by receiving knowledge from authorities. They settle competing claims through reconciling their feelings about the knowledge, assuming the knowledge given was certain. Mastery Pattern—Rely on authorities, who include both instructors and informational sources. Individuals reconcile competing claims through their internal logic. 2. Transitional Knowing: Interpersonal Pattern—To justify certain knowledge, the methods implemented in the absolute knowing phase are used. To justify uncertain knowledge, learners utilize their own personal judgment. It also takes into account their peer experiences. Impersonal Pattern—The impersonal pattern uses voice, as well, but it is not as developed as is the voice of the interpersonal learner. The impersonal learner’s voice repeats what authorities teach.</p>

Table 15. continued

<p>In the existential perspective, truth is justified with the pragmatist theory where beliefs that lead to action are considered true. There is cognitive rest and confirmation from God. There is also justification in community. All of these are constrained by God's Word.</p> <p>Additionally, there are properly basic beliefs, and God is one of those properly basic beliefs.</p>	<p>3. Independent Knowing: Both patterns justify knowledge through the voice. Interindividual Pattern—People have increased confidence in their own voice, when compared to peers or authority. Individual Pattern—Individuals move away from repeating what authorities say to legitimizing their own voice. Furthermore, they listen to the experiences of peers for the first time.</p> <p>4. Contextual Knowing: People justify knowledge based on the context. Contextual knowers employ existing knowledge and experts, and evaluate their validity based on their own internal criteria.</p>
<p>Philosophical Theme #5: Who can know?</p>	
<p>Everyone can know truth, but the types of truth are differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state. An unbeliever can know propositional truths. An unbeliever is limited in their knowledge about their self and God. Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.</p>	<p>Anyone has the capacity to know truth though not all develop the tools necessary to know. Silent knowers do not construct knowledge. Negative environments can also limit access to truth. The types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their spiritual state.</p> <p>Types of truth are not differentiated in a person due to their biological sex.</p>

Understandings of a Paradigm of Womanhood in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

Baxter Magolda did not originally set out to study gender differences in students' ways of knowing, but the contrast between the genders became a clear theme. She used postmodern feminist writings with regard to gender to assist in codifying the differences.²³⁴ From their writings, she adopted the premise that biological sex does not

²³⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 16.

determine gender-related patterns; instead, these patterns are products of society.²³⁵ She infers two ideas from that premise: (1) “variability exists among members of a particular gender,” and (2) “gender-related behavior is fluid; it changes depending on context and other factors that interact with gender-related behaviors, such as race, class, or identity.”²³⁶ Furthermore, she adopted the idea of gender-related patterns versus a prescribed set of behaviors based on gender. She wanted to articulate clearly that the patterns were not exclusive to one gender.²³⁷ In addition, the pattern is not a dichotomy, where students know one way or another, but it is a continuum where students know in varying combinations.²³⁸

Complementarians cannot affirm a purely socially constructed view of gender. Gender is rooted in the biological sexes that God determines. Biological realities determine functional realities. The expression of functional realities differs because of cultural variables, but they are constrained by scriptural wisdom. Baxter Magolda views gender differences as being “context-bound.”²³⁹ She rightly points out that gender differences are situated in a culture, but they are not bound to it; rather, they are bound to their biological sexes. Cultural variables still need consideration due to gender’s situatedness. While gender itself is not the exclusive function of culture, culture may influence how knowing is expressed. A complementarian paradigm can affirm the possibility that Baxter Magolda exposed gender-related patterns of knowing as a part of common grace. While the Bible does not explicitly describe varied paradigms of knowing related to gender, neither does it preclude them. Baxter Magolda mentions that men and

²³⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 16.

²³⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 16.

²³⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 22-23.

²³⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 22.

²³⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 16.

women are more alike than they are different.²⁴⁰ A complementarian paradigm does not shy away from celebrating differences because God made men and women to be different. It can also celebrate their similarities. The inherent value God bestowed upon men and women at creation as image bearers sets them apart from the rest of creation. Within their relationship, the woman was made from the man, and she was made for him (Gen 2:22-23). They are interdependent with one another yet distinct.

The taxonomy of “pattern” is helpful. Reoriented with a biblical understanding, pattern is useful term because it allows for the possible ways culture can determine how functional and biological realities are expressed. The term “pattern” also allows for an understanding of the complexity of men and women made in the image of God. All men do not express leadership in one way, just as all women do not express helping in one way. There can be a pattern of leadership or helping that may affect ways of knowing. Table 16 provides a summary of the research comparing these paradigms.

Table 16. Complementarian paradigm of womanhood compared with *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

<i>Understandings of Gender</i>	<i>Complementarian Paradigm of Womanhood</i>	<i>“Knowing and Reasoning’s” Paradigm of Womanhood</i>
Biological Realities	Biological realities are determined by God.	Biological realities are determined by nature.
Functional Realities	Functional realities are determined by the Bible. They describe how men and women relate to one another.	Functional realities are socially constructed.
Cultural Applications	Cultural realities are determined by culture but constrained by biblical commandments and wisdom.	Cultural applications are determined by culture, constrained by societal expectations of gender-assigned behaviors.

²⁴⁰Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 13.

Biblical and Theological Themes, Compared with Themes in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

This section will compare biblical and theological understandings with the conceptions of epistemic development in *Knowing and Reasoning in College* in order to assess its usability in Christian developmental theories pertaining to women. Gender and knowledge have been previously discussed in these sections, respectively:

“Understandings of the Paradigm of Womanhood in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*,” and “Philosophical Understandings in *Knowing and Reasoning in College*.”

The inferences from these sections will be added in table 17 below. This section will focus on life-span development, the self, and *telos*.

Understandings of life-span development. This section will discuss the general categories as they are representative of summary of the patterns and their adherences to the biblical path of wisdom.²⁴¹ Baxter Magolda’s study looked at college students starting their first year. She interviewed them during a five-year span. This study is not generalized to those outside of undergraduates and individuals in their first year out of college. Baxter Magolda describes the growth mechanism through the stages as a “genuine reflection on experience.”²⁴² This is likened to valuing wisdom. In this way, it is similar to a biblical path; however, it is still void of the wisdom of the Lord. In absolute knowing, the learner is receiving knowledge. This is comparable to the biblical pathway of receiving wisdom. In the transitional knowing stage, the learner is understanding knowledge. This is similar to the biblical pathway of responding to wisdom. The independent knower is using one’s own voice and further developing it. This is similar to the biblical pathway of responding to wisdom. The learner is actively pursuing

²⁴¹The biblical path to wisdom is receiving wisdom, responding to wisdom, valuing wisdom, and assimilating wisdom. See Estes, *Hear My Son*.

²⁴²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 365.

knowledge. Diverging from this pathway is the source of knowledge. In this model, the learner is diving more into the self and using peers as a source of knowledge. A biblical pathway would promote using the Bible as a source of knowledge to know the self and peers in a fuller sense. In contextual knowing, the learner is socially constructing knowledge. This is similar to the biblical pathway of assimilating wisdom. It diverges again from the path because the Bible is not normative. Overall, this model closely resembles the biblical pathway to knowledge, but lacks focus on the proper source of knowledge.

Understandings of self. The self develops along a similar trajectory when compared to the trajectory in *WWK*. The self is at the center of the narratives. In absolute knowing, the self is silent. It then develops further in the transitional knowing stage. The self emerges fully in the independent knowing stage. It moves then to create meaning and realities in the contextual knowing stage. In contrast to *WWK*, there is more of an emphasis on community. Baxter Magolda affirms, as does *WWK*, that autonomy of self is necessary for complex thought, but there must also be an emphasis on interdependence with others.²⁴³

Baxter Magolda describes three elements that are vital to the development of the self: “situating learning in student’s own experiences,” “developing community,” and “genuine dialogue” that includes reflection.²⁴⁴ These elements work together to push the self to grow both toward autonomy and with the voices of community.²⁴⁵ The self is in a

²⁴³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 374.

²⁴⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 360.

²⁴⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 363.

constant state of “rebalancing” autonomy and others.²⁴⁶ Baxter Magolda also points to a close relationship between self-definition and association with a pattern.²⁴⁷

These ideas possess both similarities and differences with a biblical view of self. A clear disparity is that the self is not autonomous. It is connected to God and His authority. Therefore, it is not able to provide self-definition. A similarity is that this model reflects a reciprocating self. Baxter Magolda emphasizes ways the self and others share perspectives and grow together. Where it diverges with this conception is that it is missing a proper orientation of growing toward God. Frame describes the proper orientation: “And as we are renewed in the image of Christ, we come to reflect God’s righteousness more and more, so that we become more and more a source of revelation—to ourselves and to others—of God’s law.”²⁴⁸ Baxter Magolda is right in a sense in that how a definition of self affects ways of knowing. Except that, God defines the self and thus, His definition reveals more and more of Him.

Understandings of *telos*. Baxter Magolda’s *telos* is described in her understanding of maturity defined by contextual knowing. Contextual knowing is an “individually created perspective constructed through judging evidence in a context.”²⁴⁹ Using Trentham’s reoriented understanding of Perry’s commitments to critique this position, there are point of similarity and difference.²⁵⁰ Universal intent is present from Baxter Magolda’s viewpoint. There is an exercising of moral convictions. Baxter

²⁴⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 363.

²⁴⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 374.

²⁴⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 73.

²⁴⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 188.

²⁵⁰Trentham explains a Christian understanding of commitment: “Scripture: Commitment involves maintaining one’s worldview ‘with universal intent’—i.e., exercising steadfast, convictional faith, acknowledging that one’s commitment is the only means by which to genuinely fulfill one’s longing for purposeful identity, through commitments that enable one to ‘draw near’ to God, seek his will, and serve the benefit of his Kingdom (Heb. 11:6).” Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 128. See “Figure 3. Applying the principle of inverse consistency to the Perry Scheme.”

Magolda explains, “Helping students create their own informed perspective is crucial to promoting responsible community membership on campus and beyond.”²⁵¹ She recognizes that the autonomous self and society construct a meaningful life or identity. Instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself and others. Self and society is the criteria for morality. Consequently, there is a constant state of evaluative dialogue.²⁵² Ultimately, the dialogue will not end in resolution because there is no biblical view of the eschaton. Table 17 provides a summary of the research comparing biblical-theological understandings.

Table 17. A framework of biblical-theological understandings of epistemology compared with *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

<i>Biblical-Theological Themes</i>	<i>A Framework of Biblical-Theological Understandings of Epistemology</i>	<i>Understandings of “Knowing and Reasoning in College” Compared with Biblical-Theological Themes</i>
Understandings of Life-Span Development	Life-span development takes place as progressive growth of intellect at various life stages. One moves from child to adult through the mechanism of wisdom.	Shows a progressive growth of intellect through the undergraduate years and a year out. Grows through the mechanism of reflection.
Understandings of Self	Self is to be oriented toward Christlikeness in order to grow in intellect. Self-denial leads to Christlikeness. Self submits to the authority of Christ.	Knowing is primarily described in relation to the self. Self is described through the metaphor of voice. The self is at the center of the narratives. The self is autonomous.

²⁵¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 392.

²⁵²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 170.

Table 17. continued

<p><i>Understandings of Self continued</i></p>		<p>In absolute knowing, the self is silent. In the transitional knowing stage it begins to develop. In the independent knowing stage the self fully emerges. In the contextual knowing stage, the self creates meaning and realities.</p>
<p>Understandings of Gender</p>	<p>Human sexual existence involves biological realities, functional realities, or cultural applications. Biological realities are the sex with which one is born. Functional realities are dictated by Scripture. Cultural applications are varied but are constrained by biblical commands and wisdom. Both genders have equal worth and dignity because they are both made in the image of God.</p>	<p>Biological realities are determined by nature. Functional realities are socially constructed. Cultural applications are determined by culture, constrained societal expectations of gender assigned behaviors. Both genders have equal worth because they both exist.</p>
<p>Understandings of Knowledge</p>	<p>Knowledge is gained through the study of Scripture. Wisdom, the application of knowledge, is gained through a fear of the Lord.</p>	<p>Knowledge is gained through the study of self and the world. Wisdom is primarily gained through experiences of self and others. Knowledge is socially constructed. Knowing is accomplished in connection to others.</p>
<p>Understandings of <i>Telos</i></p>	<p>The goal is to perfectly image God through union with Christ.</p>	<p>Contextual knowing, the highest stage, is an individual perspective constructed from the context.</p> <p>There is universal intent present in Baxter Magolda's view. There is an exercising of moral convictions. The autonomous self and society construct a meaningful life or identity. The self is turns to its primary relationship with itself and others.</p>

CHAPTER 5

TOWARD A REDEMPTIVE MODEL OF WOMEN'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, this research articulates a series of competencies for redemptive development among women, one that is rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical-worldview, employing David Powlison's epistemological priorities as a trajectory for critically considering existing theoretical paradigms. Specifically, the series of competencies will be from a complementarian perspective. In previous chapters, this thesis examined Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda's developmental ideas. This chapter will follow the trajectory of Powlison's third epistemological priority, which is to consider what can be learned from the alternative models. Additionally, this chapter will engage Trentham's fourth priority: "synthesize any available wisdom into a sharpened perspective."¹ There is an emphasis on learning and synthesis. This fifth chapter builds upon the previous ideas from the previous epistemological priorities. This chapter will discuss truth or points of apologetics to be learned; identify a series of developmental priorities and competencies of women's development pertaining to female undergraduates; discuss implications; and suggest areas of further research.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this research was to articulate a series of developmental priorities and competencies concerning the epistemological development of female undergraduates, which is both grounded in a thoroughgoing biblical worldview and considers the usefulness of existing paradigms after they have been critically evaluated.

¹See chap. 1, "Methodology Design and Instrumentation."

The following questions were used in the course of this study:

1. What is a biblical framework in a redemptive model of women's epistemological development from a complementarian perspective?
2. To what extent are the existing theoretical paradigms of women's epistemological development beneficial in order to inform a redemptive model of women's epistemological development from a complementarian perspective?
3. What essential priorities and competencies for redemptive epistemological development among female undergraduates may be identified in light of an established biblical framework and insights from theoretical paradigms?

Learning from Gilligan's *In a Different Voice*

This section was guided by the previously stated research questions. The following is a summary of points of truths or apologetics to be learned from Gilligan's cognitive moral development model. Gilligan was a trailblazer, who rightly acknowledged the necessity for a woman's perspective in developmental theory. God has created the human race as both male and female (Gen 1:27). Both sexes are interdependent. Any theory that considers one perspective—and not both—is anemic. The model she has proposed has some strengths but, due to its sharp contrast with Christianity, it cannot be universally integrated into a redemptive model of women's development from a complementarian perspective. The following sections on *In a Different Voice* will discuss points of common grace revealed in this research.

Pre-Theoretical Acknowledgments for *In a Different Voice*

Gilligan's contrasting worldview carries several implications for the usefulness of Gilligan's concepts in Christian education. First, Gilligan's interpretations require critical analysis from a scriptural perspective. There is a recognition that God and His ways are not cognizant factors in her conceptions of the meaning of her studies. Therefore, both the concepts and the language she uses need to be more accurately defined in light of her worldview. Second, the Lord's ideas about how women are designed as described in the Bible should be considered when looking at her ideas of

moral reasoning. Gilligan views womanhood as being self-referential for each woman. She does not take into account God's definition of womanhood. Third, because Gilligan does not use the metanarrative of Scripture, her concepts of moral reasoning should be critically examined in light of the implications of the metanarrative. Concepts in the metanarrative such as *telos*, sin, sanctification, and the functions of the Holy Spirit, will impact her described pattern of moral reasoning, but these are not addressed by Gilligan. Fourth, her pattern of moral reasoning must be examined in light of biblical standards of morality. Even though her worldview sharply contrasts a biblical one, ideas may be useful if the previous implications are considered.

Synthesizing *In a Different Voice*

Gilligan's model has several concepts that are useful in Christian education. First, her affirmation of a woman's perspective in development—and, from that acknowledging that knowing is a process of community—is a helpful insight. Frame's tri-perspectivalism and Scripture support these notions, and they can be included in developmental theories. As previously mentioned, developmental theories—that attribute relationships as a mark of maturity only to women or leave out the necessity of relationship in general—are not presenting a complete concept. This is a concept that encourages a complementarian perspective in that a complementarian perspective values the different views that each sex brings to knowledge. Consequently, her affirmation of the various perspectives on knowledge by women is helpful. Christians must be careful not to allow the perspective of one sex to describe both sexes. The contrast of these perspectives can sharpen one another.

To that end, a part of a woman's perspective that is helpful is the notion of adding responsibility and care to developmental theories as a mark of maturity with the caveat that responsibility and care should be nuanced by the teachings of Scripture—not by a collective voice of society or self-satisfaction. Part of women maturing in

relationships to others is expressed in their care for others. This is reminiscent of the woman's creation in Genesis, when she is declared to be a helper to Adam, and when she also participates in creating life (Gen 2:18, 3:20). Care is also expressed in biblical terms as kindness, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 6:8). Furthermore, care is encouraged among believers in the church (1 Cor 12:25-26; Heb 10:24-25) Primarily, this commandment to care for one another is given by Jesus when He says "just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). Care, therefore, is a part of a progressed maturation process.

Additionally, in describing those different perspectives, Gilligan pointed out that men and women define realities in different ways but use the same words. She says, "My research suggests that men and women may speak different languages that they assume are the same, using similar words to encode disparate experiences of self and social relationships."² How men and women communicate their experiences may sound the same, but they provide varied definitions of words. Therefore, there must be a careful defining of words such as responsibility. Gilligan explains that women consider this word to be more of a "weblike imagery of relationships," yet men perceive this word to be "a hierarchical ordering."³ Christian educators must be sensitive to ways men and women define words of development.

Second, her moral progression describes valuable insights into the mind of an unbeliever. Gilligan's description of moral maturity—while mimicking ideas in a biblical conception of development—has distorted definitions of care, responsibility, self-sacrifice, and nonviolence. Her model portrays an orderly ascent of a fallen mind into a

²Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (1982; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 173.

³Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 173.

new reality, in which self is god. First, in orientation to survival, the individual is separated from God and other people. She is alone and develops self-reliance. The person transitions into orientation of responsibility, where the self moves toward others. This is a move of common grace because it is proper to grow in relationship to others. However, this move is distorted through its focus on self. In other words, the fear of man—which is a sinful distortion of proper relationships, and not the fear of God, the utmost proper relationship—acts as a motivator in growth. In the second stage, goodness is self-sacrifice, the person starts to give up one’s rights and defer to others. This stage rightly acknowledges two biblical concepts of caring for others and self-sacrifice. However, sinful inclinations distort these ideas. At this stage, fear of man and self-definition are prevalent. This is a step further in establishing the self as god. The second transition from goodness to truth comes at the recognition that the self requires additional attention. Self-sacrifice is no longer valued as noble, but as a sacrifice that is too costly. In the third stage, a morality of nonviolence, both fear of man and idol of self are entrenched. The self, as the ultimate criterion, creates a new reality—one that is devoid of God, and in which these competing idols lead to moral relativism. For example, in the abortion study, women who chose to have an abortion or chose not to have an abortion can equally be considered as morally mature.⁴ The woman justifies abortion because not only does she now care for herself, but she is able to reconstruct reality to justify her decision.⁵ A scriptural ethic as normative would not allow the murder of the unborn. This demonstration of the progression of thought is helpful in understanding how women can choose abortion. Consequently, this understanding will assist Christian educators in both

⁴Diana and Sharon are abortion-minded women considered to be at the postconventional level. Gillian, *In a Different Voice*, 99.

⁵Sarah is choosing abortion and is at the conventional level in her thinking: “Confronting a choice between the two evils of hurting herself of ending the incipient life of the child, Sarah reconstructs the dilemma in a way that yields a new priority which allows decision. In doing so, she comes to see the conflict arising from a faulty construction of reality.” Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 91.

evangelistic and discipleship efforts for women. Additionally, Gilligan’s insight, that there are women at the preconventional stage who begin to consider abortion because they are alone and seeking to survive, presents a challenge to the Christian church. Christians can help a woman in her understanding of reality by being in friendship and sharing the gospel with her. Healthy relationships can help reorient reality as one being toward Christ and away from self. See table 18 for a summary of the reinterpretation of Gilligan’s cognitive moral developmental model.

Table 18. A biblical interpretation of *In a Different Voice*

<i>Gilligan’s Model of Moral Reasoning</i>	<i>A Reoriented Interpretation of Gilligan’s Model of Cognitive Moral Reasoning</i>
Stage 1— Preconventional Orientation to individual survival	The person is separated from God and others. She is alone and develops self-reliance. This is a correct acknowledgement of the consequences of sin.
Transition 1 Movement from self to an orientation to others	The individual transitions into orientation of responsibility; the self moves toward others. This is a move of common grace because it is proper to grow in relationship to others. However, this move is distorted through its focus on self. The fear of man, which is a sinful distortion of proper relationships, acts as a growth motivator. The fear of God, the utmost proper relationship, is not a growth motivator.
Stage 2—Conventional Goodness manifests in caring for others and self-sacrifice	This stage rightly acknowledges two biblical concepts of caring for others and self-sacrifice. However, sinful inclinations distort these concepts. Fear of man and self-definition are prevalent at this stage. This is a further step in establishing the self as god.
Transition 2 Goodness to truth	The second transition comes at the recognition that self-sacrifice is no longer valued as noble, but as a sacrifice that is too costly. This fact is due to the self being the focus of worship. It is costly to reorient one’s worship.
Stage 3— Postconventional Ethic of nonviolence	The definition of nonviolence differs from a biblical one because self and others inform its conception. Both fear of man and idol of self are entrenched. The self, as the ultimate criterion, creates a new reality—one devoid of God, by which this idolatry leads to moral relativism.

Third, Christian educators can adopt the theme of voice, but must not appropriate the full definition implemented in the secular field. Gilligan's introduction of the voice concept is carried on throughout *WWK* and *Knowing and Reasoning in College*. It has become a common term used to describe the whole person and voicing psychological realities. This is a helpful vocabulary for Christians to use, however, Christians must not adopt the understanding that voice creates reality. Voice can be used to express the self—not create the self. Furthermore, the voice does not give identity. Identity is gifted to believers through union in Christ. Therefore, voice can be used as long as it is a descriptor, rather than a creator.

Learning from Belenky et al.'s *Women's Ways of Knowing*

This section was guided by the previously stated research questions. Following is a summary of points of truths or apologetics to be learned from the five epistemological positions suggested in *Women's Ways of Knowing*. *WWK* was the first study to discuss comprehensively how women developed intellectually. The proposed positions can be considered but cannot be universally integrated into a redemptive model of women's development from a complementarian perspective. The following sections on *WWK* will discuss points of common grace revealed in this research.

Pre-Theoretical Acknowledgments for *Women's Ways of Knowing*

Belenky et al.'s contrasting worldview carries several implications for the extent of the usefulness of *WWK* in Christian education. First, the nature of reality—both prime and external—must be identified as in sharp contrast to a biblical worldview. Therefore, their interpretations require reorientation to biblical truth. Furthermore, they recognize the usefulness of language, words, narratives, and metaphors. A biblical worldview indeed can affirm that words are not neutral. Words are powerful as described and defined by God. Belenky et al., however, attribute too much power to narrative,

which allows stories to create new realities and new truths. Whenever they speak of stories, it should be understood that they are referring to something more than information sharing. Each story is a relative truth that is authoritative over their view of reality undermining biblical authority. Second, it should be recognized that Belenky et al., like Gilligan, affirms a view of womanhood is contrary to a complementarian view. Women are seen as having the ability to define themselves without reference to a God-given definition. Third, it should be recognized that, like Gilligan, they do not affirm the metanarrative of Scripture as being the true story of the whole world. This principle affects their understanding of *telos*. The self is the author of knowledge, and the trajectory is a more realized self. Fourth, God's Word does not influence their conceptions of knowledge and morality. Their understandings will always be limited by this lack of acknowledgement. Although their worldview is in sharp contrast to a biblical one, ideas may be useful if the previous implications are considered.

Synthesizing *Women's Ways of Knowing*

Women's Ways of Knowing presents several useful concepts for Christian education. First, this model is useful in understanding how a mind, oriented to self and not to God, understands knowledge. In general, these positions do well to acknowledge the complexities of human experiences and how these experiences affect how one relates to knowledge. Because every position has a different orientation to self, knowledge will be viewed in different ways. Common grace understandings are apparent in this model, as well as the influence of a secular worldview. If this model is perceived as progressive stages, it would resemble a biblical pathway to wisdom, though—as previously discussed—its progressive nature is debated.⁶ Its adherences echo a common-grace

⁶The biblical path to wisdom is receiving wisdom, responding to wisdom, valuing wisdom, and assimilating wisdom. See Daniel J. Estes, *Hear My Son: Teaching and Learning in Proverbs 1-9* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997).

reality that wisdom is obtained along a similar path as the Bible describes, but inclines toward a divergent *telos*.

In the anchor position of silent knowing, there is an “extreme denial of self and a dependence on external authority for direction.”⁷ Belenky et al. note that the women at this position feel “dumb” and that they lack confidence.⁸ This description of silent knowing is similar to a biblical definition of shame.⁹ Christian psychologist Edward T. Welch explains that a person can feel shame that is both “self-imposed” and “other-imposed.”¹⁰ Self-imposed shame is manifested due to sin or lack of relationship with God.¹¹ In the silent knower position that Belenky et al. describe, an individual who is without acknowledgement of a relationship to God, thus experiences self-imposed shame as a default position. The silent knower additionally experiences other-imposed shame due to the sin of others. Those in the silent knowing position are most associated with families who use words as weapons.¹² Also, their families show other signs of sin such as abuse or neglect.¹³ These feelings of shame crippled these women to the point that they cannot properly gain knowledge. Indeed, sin distorts truth. Belenky et al. point to a

⁷Mary Field Belenky et al., *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (1986; repr., New York: Basic Books, 1997), 24.

⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 24, 34

⁹Edward T. Welch describes the close associate between biblical shame and little confidence and how that is described in secular literature: “Shame, and its feeling of disgrace before God and others, surfaces in our culture as low self-esteem, with its feelings of worthlessness. Shame and low self-esteem are both rooted in Adam’s sin. They are both governed by the perceived opinions of others, and they both involve, ‘not feeling good about ourselves.’ The only difference is that our word ‘shame’ still retains the idea that we are ashamed before God as well as before other people, while self-esteem is seen as strictly a problem between ourselves and other people, or a problem just within ourselves. Low self-esteem is a pop version of biblical shame or nakedness. It is secularized shame.” Edward T. Welch, *When People Are Big and God Is Small: Overcoming Peer Pressure, Codependency, and the Fear of Man* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1997), 28.

¹⁰Welch, *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, 26.

¹¹Welch, *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, 26.

¹²Belenky et al., *WWK*, 158.

¹³Belenky et al., *WWK*, 159.

“failure of the community” as their primary hindrance to growth.¹⁴ While lack of proper community is a contributing factor, their own personal shame from lack of union with Christ is the primary hindrance to growth. The gospel will help these women progress from silent to truly knowing.

In the received knower position, the knower is dependent on others for knowledge, and there is no critical examination of information. This position describes individuals who avoid God’s eyes by living “as if fear of other people is our deepest problem—they are big, not God.”¹⁵ They look to authority outside of God. In contrast, Belenky et al. view received knowers as looking to authority outside of the self, without reference to God. Nonetheless, Belenky et al. recognize the search for a type of authority, which is a biblical idea. This search is ultimately one for a relationship with God, who is the ultimate authority. The search is distorted because of sin. The distortion of this search—namely, avoiding God as the *telos*—leads people to settle for earthly rulers as substitutes. Furthermore, information gained from earthly authorities is not inherently flawed, but the biblical path to wisdom dictates that this information be critically reflected upon through the lens of Scripture.

In the subjective knowing position, the self emerges and creates multiple personal truths. Belenky et al. properly identify the result of individuals who avoid God as authority; they turn to the self as the ultimate authority. The self is an idol and, subsequently, justifies morality in its own estimation without the constraints of God’s Word.

Procedural knowing demonstrates a movement of common grace, in which the self recognizes the need to know things from the perspective of others as well. Frame’s tri-perspectivalism affirms that both the self and others are necessary to bring a full

¹⁴Belenky et al., *WWK*, 34.

¹⁵Welch, *When People Are Big and God Is Small*, 33.

picture of human knowledge. However, there is a lack of constraint from the Word of God, so this position—while it is more complete than are the previous positions—still does not present a total picture of human knowing. In separate procedural knowing, impassioned reason is relied upon. This position inherits the weakness of rationalism, where the human mind knows more of itself. Reason is idolized.¹⁶ In connected procedural knowing, the process of knowing in this position, where the self is used to understand the other, is upheld by Meek.¹⁷ This position has a weakness in that experiences are valued over truth. A strength in this position is that it does well to acknowledge the situatedness of knowledge, but the situatedness is interpreted through self and others—not through God’s Word.

In constructive knowing, the self is perceived as autonomous. This perception is problematic because the self is not autonomous; it was created for relationship with God. Therefore, instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself and others. Self and society is the criteria for morality. Consequently, there is a constant state of evaluative dialogue.¹⁸ Ultimately, the dialogue in this exchange will be endless. A model that upholds the self without God will never be satisfied. See table 19 for a summary of the reinterpretation of positions presented in *WWK*.

¹⁶Frame analyzes rationalism: “In biblical terms, the rationalist’s quest is idolatrous because it is the attempt to deify human thought.” John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1987), 114.

¹⁷Esther Lightcap Meek, *Loving to Know: Covenant Epistemology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 462. Meek explains the common grace displayed in connected knowing: “Clinchy’s connected knowing both accords with and amplifies the notion of indwelling. In this synopsis are touchpoints of commonality especially to the covenant epistemology project. Indwelling, therefore, is the intimate relationality of interpersonal communion in knowing in which we penetrate, and view from within, the yet-to-be-known, to the extent that we are able. It is a felt body empathy. It invites the real. And if Loder and Buber are correct, the real seeks and needs the mutuality of indwelling if it is to gain voice and legs in the world.” Meek, *Loving to Know*, 462.

¹⁸Belenky et al., *WWK*, 170.

Table 19. A biblical interpretation of *Women's Ways of Knowing*

<i>Epistemological Positions in "Women's Ways of Knowing"</i>	<i>A Reoriented Interpretation of Epistemological Positions in "Women's Ways of Knowing"</i>
Silent Knowledge	<p>Women in this position experience a biblical understanding of shame—both self-imposed and other-imposed. These feelings of shame cripple the women to the point that they cannot properly gain knowledge. Belenky et al. point to a “failure of the community” as their primary hindrance to growth (Belenky et al., <i>WWK</i>, 34). While lack of community is a contributing factor, their own personal shame from lack of union with God is the primary hindrance to growth. The gospel will help these women progress from silent to truly knowing.</p>
Received Knowledge	<p>Women in this position look to authority outside of God. In contrast, Belenky et al. views received knowers as seeking authority outside of the self, without reference to God. Nonetheless, Belenky et al. recognize the search for a type of authority, which is a biblical idea. This search is ultimately one for a relationship with God, who is the ultimate authority. Sin distorts this search. The distortion of this search—namely, avoiding God as the <i>telos</i>—leads the person to settle for earthly rulers as substitutes. Furthermore, information gained from earthly authorities is not automatically flawed, but the biblical path to wisdom dictates that this information be critically reflected upon through the lens of Scripture.</p>
Subjective Knowledge	<p>The self emerges with the ability to create multiple personal truths. Belenky et al. properly identify the result of an individual who avoids God as authority; one turns to the self as the ultimate authority. The self is an idol and, subsequently, justifies morality in its own estimation without the constraints of God's Word.</p>
Procedural Knowing	<p>Procedural knowing demonstrates a movement of common grace, wherein the self recognizes the need to know things from the perspective of others, as well. Frame's tri-perspectivalism affirms that both the self and others are required to create a full picture of human knowledge. However, there is a lack of constraint from God's Word, so this position—while it is more complete than are the previous positions—still does not present a total picture of human knowing.</p>

Table 19. continued

<p>—Procedural Knowledge: Separated</p>	<p>In separate procedural knowing, impassioned reason is relied upon. This position inherits the weakness of rationalism, where the human mind knows more of itself. Reason is idolized.</p>
<p>—Procedural Knowledge: Connected</p>	<p>In connected procedural knowing, the process of knowing in this position, where the self interprets the other, is compatible with a Christian perspective. This position has a weakness in that experiences are valued over truth. In addition, this position does well to acknowledge the situatedness of knowledge, but the situatedness is interpreted through self and others—not through God’s Word.</p>
<p>Constructed Knowledge</p>	<p>In constructive knowing, the self is viewed as autonomous. It is problematic in that the self is not autonomous; it was created for relationship with God. Therefore, instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself and others. Self and society are the criteria for morality. Consequently, there is a constant state of evaluative dialogue between self and others. Ultimately, the dialogue in this exchange will be endless. A model that upholds the self without God will never be satisfied.</p>

Second, *WWK* points out that, at the highest position, women tend to make commitments based on relationships in contrast to men, who make them based on the merits of the action.¹⁹ This is valuable common-grace truth, and it is important to recognize connection as a mark of maturity. While Gilligan also recognizes the value of connection, Belenky et al. further develop the value of connection—not just in terms of moral development, but also in terms of how one views the nature of knowledge. Connectedness is best realized within the structures and directives provided in Scripture. In this way, connectedness will lead to flourishing. Connectedness without this approach will prove insufficient and, at times, harmful to those who are in relationship.

¹⁹Belenky et al., *WWK*, 150.

Complementarianism provides the most sufficient guide to connectedness under God's guidelines and will lead to a flourishing of knowledge.

**Learning from Baxter Magolda's
*Knowing and Reasoning
in College***

This section was guided by the previously stated research questions. The following is a summary of points of truths or apologetics to be learned from Baxter Magolda's reflective epistemic model of cognitive development. Baxter Magolda was the first theorist to consider both women and men's voices in intellectual development. The stages and patterns proposed can be considered but cannot be universally integrated into a redemptive model of women's development from a complementarian perspective. The following sections on *Knowing and Reasoning in College* will discuss points of common grace revealed in this research.

**Pre-Theoretical Acknowledgments for
*Knowing and Reasoning in College***

Baxter Magolda's contrasting worldview carries several implications for the usefulness of her model in Christian education. First, her presuppositions carry with them both naturalistic and postmodern feminist leanings, which imply that the knower has the ability to create reality. It is a helpful correction to recognize that the knower is a part of reality, as opposed to an objectivist perspective that understands the knower as being completely separate. These presuppositions, however, do not acknowledge God as the creator of reality. This outlook allows the knower to be elevated above God and replace God as the *telos* of development. Second, her conception of womanhood is different from a complementarian one. She perceives gender as created through the construction of society, without the influence of biological sex. Consequently, a different societal structure may change how genders develop. Complementarians can acknowledge that society may have the ability to affect learning. However, both biological and functional

realities are anchored in Scripture in the complementarian structure. They will not change, though society may shift. Cultural applications—with the governance of biblically defined biological and functional realities—will offer the best structure for the sexes to flourish and learn. Subsequently, complementarians deny that biological sex has nothing to do with psychological differences, but how much influence is undetermined. Third, the *telos* of this study is different from that of a Christian worldview. She conceives that maturity involves the autonomous self and society, constructing a meaningful life or identity. Christians deny an autonomous self; rather, the self is in some type of relationship with God. Additionally, the Christian *telos* is to know God. Fourth, Baxter Magolda views truth and morality as socially constructed, which leads to various understandings of both. Even though her worldview is in sharp contrast to a theistic one, ideas may be useful if the previous implications are considered.

Synthesizing *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

Knowing and Reasoning in College presents several concepts that are useful in Christian education. First, this model is helpful in its taxonomy and conception of “pattern” to describe gender differences in cognitive development.²⁰ Baxter Magolda describes development wherein gender patterns are not absolute but, instead, they are a continuum.²¹ Possibility exists for the different genders to hold to these patterns of knowing in varying degrees. It is reasonable to adopt this idea of a continuum because it still acknowledges that with the different sexes that there are varying degrees of expression situated in culture and personality. However, what cannot be adopted with this conception is that sexual dimorphism is fluid or a denial of functional realities

²⁰Marcia B. Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-Related Patterns in Students' Intellectual Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 21-22.

²¹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 37.

determined by Scripture. Pattern acknowledges the rich nuances of individuals, while still recognizing differences in men and women. Moreover, pattern allows for conversation between the perspectives of the sexes that can lead to increased awareness of God's work in the world.

Second, this model is useful because it acknowledges the equal complexity with which both men and women know. Baxter Magolda determined that "(1) both [patterns] cut across most of the developmental picture, and (2) both are equally complex ways of making meaning of experience."²² Additionally, she confirmed that the way women know is not an inferior method to that of men: "The evidence refutes the argument that learning arising from connections to others and intuition is inferior to the objective version traditionally characterized as the male approach."²³ This principle attests to men and women's equal worth as image bearers.

A point of exploration is in how much biblically defined maleness and femaleness determine patterns of knowing. She proposes the patterns "relate to, but are not dictated by gender."²⁴ In other words, patterns relate to—but are not dictated by—society's description of male and female. Her proposed patterns may not be properly representative of maleness and femaleness because these descriptions are not rooted in scriptural truth. Thus, to what extent knowing relates to biblically defined male and female can be explored. She then concludes: "Finally, their mixed use offers hope that more women and men can use both patterns, a condition that appears necessary for the most complex forms of knowing."²⁵ This convergence represents a growth toward Christlikeness in knowing. While complementarians do not acknowledge the

²²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 367.

²³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 369.

²⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 369.

²⁵Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 369.

disembodiment of knowing, an increased recognition by individuals of both perspectives works toward a complex, mature way of knowing. To what extent society influences knowing is yet to be determined.

Third, Baxter Magolda acknowledges that “position vis-à-vis authority affects the transition from certainty to uncertainty.”²⁶ It is helpful to recognize the dynamic between authority and knowing. Baxter Magolda asserts that different relationship with authority is open for research: “The differences in the authority and voice story lines offer new directions for research to explore how dominant versus subordinate position vis-à-vis authority affects development of a distinct voice.”²⁷ Complementarians—with their acknowledgment of a biblically defined authority structure can explore this area.

Fourth, Baxter Magolda concludes: “Connection, or relational aspects of knowing, may be the key to complex forms of knowing.”²⁸ Whereas Gilligan and Belenky et al. related connected knowing in a stronger way to a female voice, Baxter Magolda attributes this way of knowing to both sexes.²⁹ Gilligan and Belenky et al. did not claim that the male voice could not use connected knowing, but the participants in their respective studies were female. Baxter Magolda—in studying both male and female—identified ways that males related to connection. Connection is a part of a biblically grounded understanding of development. This is true from both a philosophical standpoint and a theological one. From a philosophical understanding, Meek adopts “interpersoned covenantal knowing” as her thesis of covenant epistemology.³⁰ From a theological standpoint, connectedness is an essential element of the Christian life.

²⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 370.

²⁷Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 372.

²⁸Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 371.

²⁹Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 375.

³⁰Meek, *Loving to Know*, 245.

Connectedness to God and to other believers are expected of every believer.

Fifth, Baxter Magolda's model represents multiple layers of common grace, in that the overall pathway resembles the path to biblical wisdom, but this model still inherits the weakness of a secular orientation.³¹ The first position, absolute knowing, is similar to the biblical pathway of receiving wisdom. The learner is focused on obtaining knowledge from authorities, but there is no critical reflection. This stage is similar to *WWK*'s received knowing position. The weakness at this stage is that the learner is considering earthly authorities as the source of knowledge without regard to God. It is not wrong to look to earthly authorities for information; however, this information needs to be examined in light of Scripture in order for it to be properly received. Within absolute knowing, the receiving pattern settles competing claims through reconciling feelings about the knowledge.³² In the mastery pattern, one reconciles competing claims through internal logic.³³ In this stage, looking for certainty in authorities elevates authorities as a god in the life of the learner, therefore making them an idol.³⁴ From the Christian perspective, certainty of knowledge is a biblical idea where the authority of Scripture provides certainty of knowledge.³⁵ Reconciling feelings and using reason will result in futility because of their false *telos* in looking for an authority outside of Scripture.

The second stage, transitional knowing, resembles responding wisdom where the learner endeavors to understand knowledge. In this model, the learner is diving more into the self and utilizing peers as a source of knowledge. This is a step toward connectedness. This is a step toward embracing all three perspectives on knowledge

³¹The biblical path to wisdom is receiving wisdom, responding to wisdom, valuing wisdom, and assimilating wisdom. See Estes, *Hear My Son*.

³²Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 88.

³³Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 98.

³⁴Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 134.

³⁵Frame, *Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*, 136.

equally. This is a movement toward common grace, but God's Word is not informing the normative perspective. A biblical pathway would promote using the Bible as a source of knowledge to know the self and peers in a fuller sense. Within transitional knowing, the interpersonal-pattern learners use their own personal judgment, or voice, to justify uncertain knowledge. The interpersonal also takes into account the experiences of their peers. The impersonal learners' voice repeats what they hear authorities teaching. This stage adopts the weaknesses of the previous stage, with its idolatrous pursuit of outside authority. This stage adds another idolatrous pursuit—that of the self and others. There is value in knowing the self and the world but, without the self being humbly submitted to God's authority, the self becomes the authority.

Independent knowing is similar to valuing wisdom. Self-awareness is augmented for both patterns, and the wisdom of others is increasingly valued. This is a step toward connectedness. Self-awareness is not negative. It is a healthy progression when accomplished through union with Christ. In this model, union with Christ is not addressed. Instead, as previously stated, Baxter Magolda has correctly identified the result of the idolatrous pursuit of self, which is that knowledge is uncertain. As the learner becomes more self-aware, knowledge becomes less certain; subsequently, the movement toward others is a common-grace corrective of selfishness.

Contextual knowing resembles assimilating wisdom. As previously stated, some overlap exists with the competencies Trentham produced for this level of maturity. There is universal intent present in Baxter Magolda's view. There is an exercising of moral convictions. She recognizes that the self and society construct a meaningful life or identity. Instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself and others. Self and society are the criteria for morality. Consequently, self and society maintain a constant state of dialogue.³⁶ This

³⁶Baxter Magolda, *Knowing and Reasoning in College*, 170.

dialogue is a healthy mode of development. Ultimately, the dialogue will not end in resolution because there is no biblical view of the eschaton, nor a normative perspective from God’s Word bearing on the conversation. Table 20 provides a summary of the reinterpretation of *Knowing and Reasoning in College*.

Table 20. A Biblical interpretation of *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

<i>Epistemological Positions in “Knowing and Reasoning in College”</i>	<i>A Reoriented Interpretation of Epistemological Positions in “Knowing and Reasoning in College”</i>
Absolute Knowing	This is similar to the biblical pathway of receiving wisdom. The learner is focused on obtaining knowledge from authorities, but no critical reflection exists. The weakness at this stage is that the learner is considering earthly authorities as the source of knowledge, without regard to God.
<i>Absolute Knowing continued</i>	It is not wrong to look to earthly authorities for information; however, this information should be examined in light of Scripture in order for it to be properly received. Seeking certainty in authorities establishes them as a god in the life of the learner, therefore making them an idol. From the Christian perspective, certainty of knowledge is a biblical idea by which the authority of Scripture provides certainty of knowledge. The receiving pattern settles competing claims through reconciling feelings about the knowledge. The mastery pattern reconciles competing claims through internal logic. Reconciling feelings and using reason will result in futility because of false <i>telos</i> in seeking an authority outside of Scripture.
Transitional Knowing	This resembles the biblical pathway of responding to wisdom. The learner endeavors to understand knowledge. In addition, the learner is diving more into the self and employing peers as a source of knowledge. A step toward connectedness. A step toward embracing all three perspectives on knowledge equally. This is a movement toward common grace, but God’s Word is not informing the normative perspective. A biblical pathway would promote using the Bible as a source of knowledge to know the self and peers in a fuller sense. The interpersonal-pattern learners utilize personal judgment, or voice, to justify uncertain knowledge. Moreover, the interpersonal takes into account the

Table 20. continued

	<p>experiences of their peers. The impersonal learners' voice repeats what they hear authorities teaching. This stage adopts the weaknesses of the previous stage with its idolatrous pursuit of outside authority. This stage adds another idolatrous pursuit, that of the self and others. There is value in knowing the self and the world, but without the self being humbly submitted to the authority of God, the self becomes the authority.</p>
<p>Independent Knowing</p>	<p>This is similar to the biblical pathway of valuing wisdom. Self-awareness increases for both patterns, and the wisdom of others is increasingly valued. This is a step toward connectedness. Self-awareness is not negative. It is a healthy progression when accomplished through union with Christ. In this model, union with Christ is not addressed. Rather, Baxter Magolda has correctly identified the result of the idolatrous pursuit of self, which is that knowledge is uncertain. As the learner becomes more self-aware, knowledge becomes less certain; subsequently, the movement toward others is a common-grace corrective of selfishness.</p>
<p>Contextual Knowing</p>	<p>Contextual knowing resembles assimilating wisdom. As previously stated, some overlap exists with the competencies Trentham produced for this level of maturity. There is universal intent present in Baxter Magolda's view. There is an exercising of moral convictions. She recognizes that the autonomous self and society construct a meaningful life or identity. Instead of drawing near to God as the primary relationship, the self is turning to its primary relationship with itself and others. Self and society are the morality criteria. Consequently, there is a constant state of evaluative dialogue exists between self and society. This dialogue is a healthy mode of development. Ultimately, the dialogue will not end in resolution because there is no biblical view of the eschaton, nor a normative perspective from God's Word bearing on the conversation.</p>

**Developmental Priorities and Competencies
of Women's Development Pertaining
to Female Undergraduates**

Trentham developed competencies as a tool to evaluate developmental models.

The models presented by Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda were compared to

these competencies. The tables highlight both points of compatibility and divergence with these competencies. Table 21 has been completed according to the previously mentioned research on Gilligan’s *In a Different Voice*.³⁷

Table 21. Trentham’s categorical chart for assessing epistemological priorities and competencies compared with *In a Different Voice*

1. Biblically-founded presuppositions for knowledge and development	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>In a Different Voice</i> Competencies
A recognition of the God of the Bible as metaphysically ultimate, and of revelation as the source and most basic component for knowledge and development	Presuppositions have natural, existential, and post-modern influences. Truth about reality is focused on being, knowing, and ethics as a function of society. The self is the most basic component for knowledge and development.
A clear articulation of the Knowledge relationship between faith and rationality	Faith and reason are functions of self and society. This idea is clearly articulated but is different from those principles expressed in a biblical worldview.
2. Metacognition, critical reflection, and contextualistic orientation	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>In a Different Voice</i> Competencies
A preference for higher-level forms of thinking according to Bloom’s taxonomy	In the third stage, the person is able to “develop” an ethic of care corresponding with Bloom’s highest taxonomy category—create. However, the language utilized to construct the ethic is more consistent with the lower level—understanding. The language used is “more adequate understanding,” “increasing differentiation,” and “growing comprehension” (Gilligan, <i>In a Different Voice</i> , 74).

³⁷John David Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates: A Cross-Institutional Application of the Perry Scheme” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), 138.

Table 21. continued

A prioritization of wisdom-oriented modes of learning and living	There is a growth in the application of knowledge, resulting in changing ethics.
A reflective criterion of assessing one's own beliefs and values, as well as divergent beliefs and values	The criterion is the inner voice.
A recognition of social-environmental influences on one's learning and maturation	Society's judgment and values are the primary influencers, along with the self.
3. Personal responsibility for knowledge acquisition and maintenance—within community	
Trentham's Competencies	<i>In a Different Voice</i> Competencies
A pursuit of personal development that results from mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one's relationships with authority figures and peers	Connectedness is a key feature in development. At the third stage, interdependency on the self and others is displayed.
A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in a clear articulation of the knowledge	The person actively reconstructs moral dilemmas.
A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process	The person actively reconstructs moral dilemmas.
A convictional commitment to one's own worldview—maintained with critical awareness of personal contexts, ways of thinking, and challenges brought to bear by alternative worldviews—through testing and discernment	One's own worldview is loosely held. It is seen as a function of connection in relationships. The person is concerned with maintaining connections over balancing competing claims. Nonviolence is seen as the highest ethic.

Table 22 has been completed according to the previously mentioned research in order to present a comparison of *Women's Ways of Knowing* and Trentham's competencies.³⁸

³⁸Trentham, "Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates," 138.

Table 22. Trentham’s categorical chart for assessing epistemological priorities and competencies compared with *Women’s Ways of Knowing*

1. Biblically-founded presuppositions for knowledge and development	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>Women’s Ways of Knowing</i> Competencies
A recognition of the God of the Bible as metaphysically ultimate, of revelation as the source and most basic component for knowledge and development	Presuppositions have existential and postmodern influences. Prime reality is one of human construction, forged with the tools of language. The self, in the metaphor of voice, is the most basic component for knowledge and development. They endeavor to put the knower back into the known.
A clear articulation of the Knowledge relationship between faith and rationality	Faith and reason are functions of self, authority, experiences, and others. This is clearly articulated but is different than those expressed in a biblical worldview.
2. Metacognition, critical reflection, and contextualistic orientation	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>Women’s Ways of Knowing</i> Competencies
A preference for higher-level forms of thinking according to Bloom’s taxonomy	The ways of knowing correspond to each stage of Bloom’s taxonomy: Silent and received knower corresponds to the taxonomy category—knowledge. Subjective knowers correspond to the taxonomy categories—understand and apply. Procedural knowers correspond to the taxonomy categories—analyze and evaluate. Constructed knowers correspond to the highest level—create.
A prioritization of wisdom-oriented modes of learning and living	The received, subjectivist, procedural, and constructivist knowers apply wisdom with increasing acumen. However, this model does not acknowledge the fear of the Lord as a mechanism for gaining wisdom.
A reflective criterion of assessing one’s own beliefs and values, as well as divergent beliefs and values	The silent knower and reflective knower do not use reflective criteria.

Table 22. continued

	<p>The subjective knower justifies knowledge through her own internal agency or the voice.</p> <p>The separate knower justifies knowledge through their own method of criteria and in dialogue with others.</p> <p>The connected knower also justifies knowledge through their own internal method of criteria, informed by personal experience, and in dialogue with others.</p> <p>The constructed knower has learned to examine the self and the context of the truth. They look for meaningful dialogue in an epistemic community. They look for internal consistency and if they are able to live their decisions. They also use an ethic of care.</p>
<p>A recognition of social-environmental influences on one’s learning and maturation</p>	<p>Society, peers, and authority’s judgments and values are the primary influencers, along with self.</p>
<p>3. Personal responsibility for knowledge acquisition and maintenance–within community</p>	
<p>Trentham’s Competencies</p>	<p><i>Women’s Ways of Knowing</i> Competencies</p>
<p>A pursuit of personal development that results from mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one’s relationships with authority figures and peers</p>	<p>Silent and received knowers show dependence on authorities and lack reciprocity.</p> <p>Subjected knowers show independence from external authorities and lack reciprocity with external sources.</p> <p>Subjected knowers are interdependent on self as an authority and reciprocates within the self.</p> <p>A pursuit of personal development, through mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one’s relationships with authority figures and peers, happens in procedural and constructed knowing.</p>

Table 22. continued

<p>A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in a clear articulation of the knowledge</p>	<p>A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in a clear articulation of the knowledge is apparent in the subjectivist, procedural, and constructivist positions.</p> <p>Silent and received knowers do not show personal responsibility. When confronted with personal responsibility, they may transition to the subjectivist position.</p>
<p>A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process</p>	<p>A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process is present in the subjectivist, procedural, and constructivist positions. Silent and received knowers do not demonstrate a preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process.</p>
<p>A convictional commitment to one’s own worldview—maintained with critical awareness of personal contexts, ways of thinking, and challenges brought to bear by alternative worldviews—through testing and discernment</p>	<p>Commitments are formed by “how their judgments, attitudes, and behavior coalesce into some internal experience of moral consistency” (Belenky et al., <i>WWK</i>, 150). Their morals turn into ethical obligations to self and the community. Furthermore, they consider the context and the connection to relationships in forming the commitment. They look not just to the decision being made, but to the relationships in order to judge the meaning of their life.</p>

Table 23 has been completed according to the previously mentioned research in order to present a comparison of *Knowing and Reasoning in College* and Trentham’s competencies.³⁹

³⁹Trentham, “Epistemological Development in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates,” 138.

Table 23. Trentham’s categorical chart for assessing epistemological priorities and competencies compared with *Knowing and Reasoning in College*

1. Biblically-founded presuppositions for knowledge and development	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>Knowing and Reasoning in College</i> Competencies
A recognition of the God of the Bible as metaphysically ultimate, and of revelation as the source and most basic component for knowledge and development	Presuppositions have natural, existential, and post-modern influences. Prime reality is one of human construction, forged with the tools of language. The self, in the metaphor of voice, is the most basic component for knowledge and development. Stories people tell are the instruments with which they construct multiple realities.
A clear articulation of the Knowledge relationship between faith and rationality	Faith and reason are functions of self, authority, experiences, and others. This is clearly articulated but is different than those expressed in a biblical worldview.
2. Metacognition, critical reflection, and contextualistic orientation	
Trentham’s Competencies	<i>Knowing and Reasoning in College</i> Competencies
A preference for higher-level forms of thinking according to Bloom’s taxonomy	The ways of knowing correspond to each stage of Bloom’s taxonomy: Absolute knowing corresponds to the taxonomy category—knowledge. Transitional knowing corresponds to the taxonomy categories—understand and apply. Independent knowing corresponds to the taxonomy categories—analyze and evaluate. Contextual knowing corresponds with the highest level—create.
A prioritization of wisdom-oriented modes of learning and living	The absolute, transitional, independent, and contextual learners apply wisdom with increasing acumen. However, this model does not acknowledge the fear of the Lord as a mechanism for gaining wisdom.

Table 23. continued

<p>A reflective criterion of assessing one's own beliefs and values, as well as divergent beliefs and values</p>	<p>Absolute Knowing: In the absolute knowing stage, knowledge is obtained and therefore little to no reflection is taking place.</p> <p>Transitional Knowing: In the interpersonal pattern, learners used their own voice and the experiences of their peers as criteria. In the impersonal pattern, learners used their own voice and authority as criteria.</p> <p>Independent Knowing: In independent knowing, learners used their own voice as criteria.</p> <p>Contextual Knowing: In contextual knowing, learners used their own voice, the context, and community as criteria for reflection.</p>
<p>A recognition of social-environmental influences on one's learning and maturation</p>	<p>Society, peers, and authority's judgments and values are the primary influencers along with self.</p>
<p>3. Personal responsibility for knowledge acquisition and maintenance—within community</p>	
<p>Trentham's Competencies</p>	<p><i>Knowing and Reasoning in College Competencies</i></p>
<p>A pursuit of personal development that results from mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one's relationships with authority figures and peers</p>	<p>The pursuit of personal development results in an autonomous self's interdependence with others. There is reciprocity in one's relationships with authority figures and peers.</p>
<p>A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in a clear articulation of the knowledge</p>	<p>A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in a clear articulation of the knowledge is apparent at all stages.</p>
<p>A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process</p>	<p>A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process is present in all stages.</p>
<p>A convictional commitment to one's own worldview—maintained with critical awareness of personal contexts, ways of thinking, and challenges brought to bear by alternative worldviews—through testing and discernment</p>	<p>Contextual knowing, the highest stage, is an "individually created perspective constructed through judging evidence in a context" (Baxter Magolda, <i>Knowing and Reasoning in College</i>, 188).</p>

Table 23. continued

	There is universal intent present in Baxter Magolda's view. There is an exercising of moral convictions. The autonomous self and society construct a meaningful life or identity. The self is turns to its primary relationship with itself and others.
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The following priorities and competencies are based on commonalties among the literature and their compatibility with biblical truth. Furthermore, they are based on the findings guided by the research questions. These priorities and competencies require additional refining and study through various means as Christian educators and sociologists work toward a development model that robustly recognizes a woman's perspective as a valued voice. The following priorities and competencies may augment or enrich the competencies created by Trentham:

1. There should be an awareness of the cultural situatedness of the knower in general.
2. There should be an awareness of the cultural situatedness of the knower in terms of manhood and womanhood. There needs to be an awareness of cultural applications related to gender, compared with complementarian ideals of biblical gender roles.
3. There should be an awareness of cultural situatedness of the knower in terms of authorities.
4. There should be a consideration of the virtue of care as a mark of epistemic maturity with biblically defined ethical implications.
5. There should be a consideration of the value of connectedness in knowing with biblically defined parameters.
6. There should be a consideration of the taxonomy of "pattern" for describing gender differences within cultural realities matching a complementarian paradigm.
7. There should be a consideration of the taxonomy of "voice" as defined within scriptural parameters.

Implications for Christian Education

Christian educators can implement these affirmations in the following ways. First, acknowledge the reality of a woman's experience in the classroom and in the

church. Second, provide women with platforms and opportunities for sharing their stories and participating in academic dialogues. Address materials in light of a woman's experience to ensure that a woman's experience is acknowledged in applications. Third, prioritize the practice of mentoring in light of Titus 2. Relationships in mentoring should not be perceived as concessions to cultural oppression, but as necessary and normal educational experiences. Fourth, view kindness and care as a strength and as a unique type of intelligence, not as a weakness or mental deficit. Challenge women intellectually, while celebrating fruit of the Spirit. Fifth, evaluate areas of employment in Christian education and development and assess to see if women are offered equal opportunities and encouragement for success.

Further Research

This study represents the first to reorient Gilligan, Belenkey et al., and Baxter Magolda to a complementarian model of women's intellectual development. Research should be conducted with respect to these findings to confirm their validity. Additionally, these developmental competencies can guide further studies with female undergraduates.

Conclusion

Gilligan, Belenkey et al., and Baxter Magolda represent the fruitful, yet flawed, root of so many ideas with regard to women's development. Their inherent weakness stems from an overall secular worldview and lack of adherence to the authority of Scripture. After critiquing their work from a Christian worldview, several affirmations can be made when moving toward a model of women's development from both a biblical worldview and a complementarian perspective. Based on God's affirmation that all human beings are made in the image of God, Christian educators are obligated to avoid the neglect of women that was displayed in early developmental theories. Christians have the opportunity to demonstrate the beauty of God's plans by honoring women through including their experiences in developmental theories and Christian education.

APPENDIX 1
THE DANVERS STATEMENT

The Danvers Statement¹ summarizes the need for the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) and serves as an overview of our core beliefs. This statement was prepared by several evangelical leaders at a CBMW meeting in Danvers, Massachusetts, in December of 1987. It was first published in final form by the CBMW in Wheaton, Illinois in November of 1988.

Rationale

We have been moved in our purpose by the following contemporary developments which we observe with deep concern:

1. The widespread uncertainty and confusion in our culture regarding the complementary differences between masculinity and femininity;
2. the tragic effects of this confusion in unraveling the fabric of marriage woven by God out of the beautiful and diverse strands of manhood and womanhood;
3. the increasing promotion given to feminist egalitarianism with accompanying distortions or neglect of the glad harmony portrayed in Scripture between the loving, humble leadership of redeemed husbands and the intelligent, willing support of that leadership by redeemed wives;
4. the widespread ambivalence regarding the values of motherhood, vocational homemaking, and the many ministries historically performed by women;
5. the growing claims of legitimacy for sexual relationships which have Biblically and historically been considered illicit or perverse, and the increase in pornographic portrayal of human sexuality;
6. the upsurge of physical and emotional abuse in the family;

¹“The Danvers Statement,” The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, accessed March 18, 2018, <https://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement>.

7. the emergence of roles for men and women in church leadership that do not conform to Biblical teaching but backfire in the crippling of Biblically faithful witness;
8. the increasing prevalence and acceptance of hermeneutical oddities devised to reinterpret apparently plain meanings of Biblical texts;
9. the consequent threat to Biblical authority as the clarity of Scripture is jeopardized and the accessibility of its meaning to ordinary people is withdrawn into the restricted realm of technical ingenuity;
10. and behind all this the apparent accommodation of some within the church to the spirit of the age at the expense of winsome, radical Biblical authenticity which in the power of the Holy Spirit may reform rather than reflect our ailing culture.

Affirmations

Based on our understanding of Biblical teachings, we affirm the following:

1. Both Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct in their manhood and womanhood (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18).
2. Distinctions in masculine and feminine roles are ordained by God as part of the created order, and should find an echo in every human heart (Gen 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor 11:7-9; 1 Tim 2:12-14).
3. Adam's headship in marriage was established by God before the Fall, and was not a result of sin (Gen 2:16-18, 21-24, 3:1-13; 1 Cor 11:7-9).
4. The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women (Gen 3:1-7, 12, 16).
 1. In the home, the husband's loving, humble headship tends to be replaced by domination or passivity; the wife's intelligent, willing submission tends to be replaced by usurpation or servility.
 2. In the church, sin inclines men toward a worldly love of power or an abdication of spiritual responsibility, and inclines women to resist limitations on their roles or to neglect the use of their gifts in appropriate ministries.
5. The Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, manifests the equally high value and dignity which God attached to the roles of both men and women (Gen 1:26-27, 2:18; Gal 3:28). Both Old and New Testaments also affirm the principle of male headship in the family and in the covenant community (Gen 2:18; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 2:11-15).
6. Redemption in Christ aims at removing the distortions introduced by the curse.
 1. In the family, husbands should forsake harsh or selfish leadership and grow in love and care for their wives; wives should forsake resistance to their husbands' authority and grow in willing, joyful submission to their husbands' leadership (Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18-19; Tit 2:3-5; 1 Pet 3:1-7).

2. In the church, redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles within the church are restricted to men (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 11:2-16; 1 Tim 2:11-15).
7. In all of life Christ is the supreme authority and guide for men and women, so that no earthly submission-domestic, religious, or civil-ever implies a mandate to follow a human authority into sin (Dan 3:10-18; Acts 4:19-20, 5:27-29; 1 Pet 3:1-2).
8. In both men and women a heartfelt sense of call to ministry should never be used to set aside Biblical criteria for particular ministries (1 Tim 2:11-15, 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9). Rather, Biblical teaching should remain the authority for testing our subjective discernment of God's will.
9. With half the world's population outside the reach of indigenous evangelism; with countless other lost people in those societies that have heard the gospel; with the stresses and miseries of sickness, malnutrition, homelessness, illiteracy, ignorance, aging, addiction, crime, incarceration, neuroses, and loneliness, no man or woman who feels a passion from God to make His grace known in word and deed need ever live without a fulfilling ministry for the glory of Christ and the good of this fallen world (1 Cor 12:7-21).
10. We are convinced that a denial or neglect of these principles will lead to increasingly destructive consequences in our families, our churches, and the culture at large.

APPENDIX 2

THE NASHVILLE STATEMENT

“Know that the LORD Himself is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves...”
-Psalm 100:3

Preamble

Evangelical Christians at the dawn of the twenty-first century find themselves living in a period of historic transition.¹ As Western culture has become increasingly post-Christian, it has embarked upon a massive revision of what it means to be a human being. By and large the spirit of our age no longer discerns or delights in the beauty of God’s design for human life. Many deny that God created human beings for his glory, and that his good purposes for us include our personal and physical design as male and female. It is common to think that human identity as male and female is not part of God’s beautiful plan, but is, rather, an expression of an individual’s autonomous preferences. The pathway to full and lasting joy through God’s good design for his creatures is thus replaced by the path of shortsighted alternatives that, sooner or later, ruin human life and dishonor God.

This secular spirit of our age presents a great challenge to the Christian church. Will the church of the Lord Jesus Christ lose her biblical conviction, clarity, and courage, and blend into the spirit of the age? Or will she hold fast to the word of life, draw courage from Jesus, and unashamedly proclaim his way as the way of life? Will she maintain her clear, counter-cultural witness to a world that seems bent on ruin?

¹“The Nashville Statement,” The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, accessed March 18, 2018, <https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement>. Note, the signatories have been left out.

We are persuaded that faithfulness in our generation means declaring once again the true story of the world and of our place in it—particularly as male and female. Christian Scripture teaches that there is but one God who alone is Creator and Lord of all. To him alone, every person owes glad hearted thanksgiving, heart-felt praise, and total allegiance. This is the path not only of glorifying God, but of knowing ourselves. To forget our Creator is to forget who we are, for he made us for himself. And we cannot know ourselves truly without truly knowing him who made us. We did not make ourselves. We are not our own. Our true identity, as male and female persons, is given by God. It is not only foolish, but hopeless, to try to make ourselves what God did not create us to be.

We believe that God’s design for his creation and his way of salvation serve to bring him the greatest glory and bring us the greatest good. God’s good plan provides us with the greatest freedom. Jesus said he came that we might have life and have it in overflowing measure. He is for us and not against us. Therefore, in the hope of serving Christ’s church and witnessing publicly to the good purposes of God for human sexuality revealed in Christian Scripture, we offer the following affirmations and denials.

Article 1

WE AFFIRM that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife, and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and his bride the church.

WE DENY that God has designed marriage to be a homosexual, polygamous, or polyamorous relationship. We also deny that marriage is a mere human contract rather than a covenant made before God.

Article 2

WE AFFIRM that God’s revealed will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage.

WE DENY that any affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual intercourse before or outside marriage; nor do they justify any form of sexual immorality.

Article 3

WE AFFIRM that God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, in his own image, equal before God as persons, and distinct as male and female.

WE DENY that the divinely ordained differences between male and female render them unequal in dignity or worth.

Article 4

WE AFFIRM that divinely ordained differences between male and female reflect God's original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing.

WE DENY that such differences are a result of the Fall or are a tragedy to be overcome.

Article 5

WE AFFIRM that the differences between male and female reproductive structures are integral to God's design for self-conception as male or female.

WE DENY that physical anomalies or psychological conditions nullify the God-appointed link between biological sex and self-conception as male or female.

Article 6

WE AFFIRM that those born with a physical disorder of sex development are created in the image of God and have dignity and worth equal to all other image-bearers. They are acknowledged by our Lord Jesus in his words about "eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb." With all others they are welcome as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and should embrace their biological sex insofar as it may be known.

WE DENY that ambiguities related to a person's biological sex render one incapable of living a fruitful life in joyful obedience to Christ.

Article 7

WE AFFIRM that self-conception as male or female should be defined by God's holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture.

WE DENY that adopting a homosexual or transgender self-conception is consistent with God's holy purposes in creation and redemption.

Article 8

WE AFFIRM that people who experience sexual attraction for the same sex may live a rich and fruitful life pleasing to God through faith in Jesus Christ, as they, like all Christians, walk in purity of life.

WE DENY that sexual attraction for the same sex is part of the natural goodness of God's original creation, or that it puts a person outside the hope of the gospel.

Article 9

WE AFFIRM that sin distorts sexual desires by directing them away from the marriage covenant and toward sexual immorality—a distortion that includes both heterosexual and homosexual immorality.

WE DENY that an enduring pattern of desire for sexual immorality justifies sexually immoral behavior.

Article 10

WE AFFIRM that it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.

WE DENY that the approval of homosexual immorality or transgenderism is a matter of moral indifference about which otherwise faithful Christians should agree to disagree.

Article 11

WE AFFIRM our duty to speak the truth in love at all times, including when we speak to or about one another as male or female.

WE DENY any obligation to speak in such ways that dishonor God's design of his image bearers as male and female.

Article 12

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ gives both merciful pardon and transforming power, and that this pardon and power enable a follower of Jesus to put to death sinful desires and to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ is insufficient to forgive all sexual sins and to give power for holiness to every believer who feels drawn into sexual sin.

Article 13

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ enables sinners to forsake transgender self-conceptions and by divine forbearance to accept the God-ordained link between one's biological sex and one's self-conception as male or female.

WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ sanctions self-conceptions that are at odds with God's revealed will.

Article 14

WE AFFIRM that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners and that through Christ's death and resurrection forgiveness of sins and eternal life are available to every person who repents of sin and trusts in Christ alone as Savior, Lord, and supreme treasure.

WE DENY that the Lord's arm is too short to save or that any sinner is beyond his reach.

Scripture References*

Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-24; Ex. 20:14; 20:17; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Dt. 5:18, 21; 22:5; Jdg. 19:22; 2 Sam. 11:1-12:15; Job 31:1; Ps. 51:1-19; Prov. 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; Isa. 59:1; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 5:27-30; 19:4-6, 8-9, 12; Acts 15:20, 29; Rom. 1:26-27; 1:32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-7; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 4:15, 20-24; 5:31-32; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Tim. 1:9-10, 15; 2 Tim. 2:22; Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 13:4; Jas. 1:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:11; Jude 7

* Scripture texts are not a part of the original document but have been added subsequently for reference

APPENDIX 3
TOWARD A TAXONOMY OF VIRTUOUS
CHRISTIAN LEARNING

The following text provides a taxonomy of virtuous Christian living from John David Trentham's unpublished paper on the subject.

A. Progressive thesis on Virtuous Christian Knowing:

1. Learning requires “knowing” in the fullest sense.
2. Ultimate “reality” (I.e., God) is fixed. “Knowing” is dynamic and progressive.
3. Knowing that is “virtuous” is (1) honest, (2) humble, and (3) lived.
4. All knowing requires a worshipful personal commitment (or faith assumption) to Truth (capital T).
5. Secular knowing assumes a temporal foundation for Truth; religious knowing assumes a supernatural foundation; Christian knowing assumes a biblical foundation.
6. Knowing is not mere comprehension and awareness, but requires it.
7. Knowing is not mere reflection and analysis, but requires it.
8. Knowing is not mere experience and application, but requires it.
9. Virtuous Christian Knowing thus entails a personal commitment to Truth in which one (a) recognizes biblical priorities; (b) seeks biblical implications; and (c) engages in biblical commitments and practices.

*Educational implication: Effective Christian education prompts Virtuous Christian Knowing. The role of the teacher is thus to facilitate virtuous knowing through virtuous teaching. The role of the learner is thus to pursue virtuous knowing through virtuous learning.

B. The categories for virtuous Christian knowing correspond to the categories for Christian personal identity—as comprised by gospel, worldview, and discipleship, in which (a) gospel is one's life-defining Truth, (b) worldview is one's life-informing framework, and (c) discipleship [formation] is one's live-living commitments.

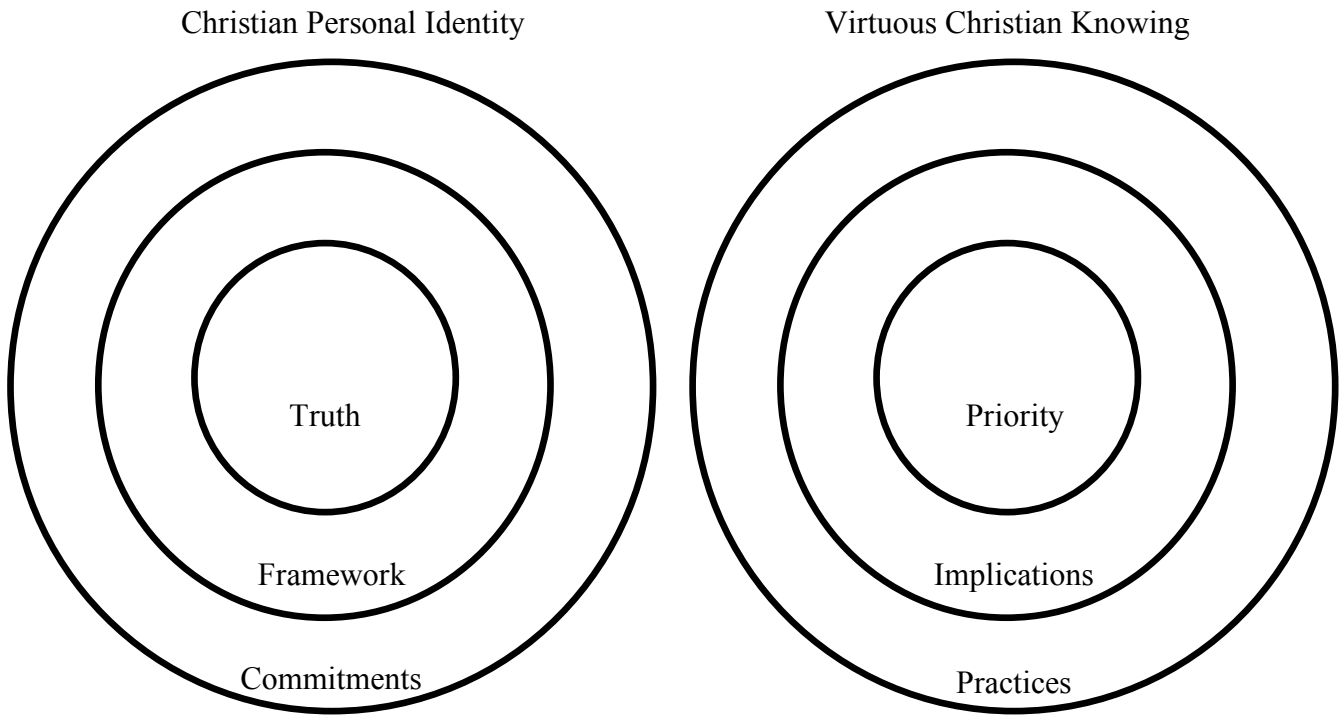


Figure A1. Christian personal identity and virtuous Christian knowing

C. Virtuous Christian Knowing is thus, “tri-perspectival” [*Ref. John Frame]

Table A1. Tri-perspectival virtuous Christian knowing

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Implication</i>	<i>Practices</i>
Head	Heart	Hands
Knowledge	Understanding	Wisdom
Comprehension	Reflection	Experience
Presupposition	Critical Judgement	Responsibility
Normative*	Situational*	Existential*
Metaphysics	Epistemology	Axiology
Claim	Apologetic	Demonstration

- D. Applied to Christian teaching and learning contexts, Virtuous Christian Knowing may be recognized by a series of corresponding categories, each with identifiable priorities and competencies. • Virtuous Christian Learning is an educational manifestation of Virtuous Christian Knowing. • Virtuous Christian Teaching is an educational manifestation of Virtuous Christian Learning.

Table A2. Taxonomy for virtuous Christian learning

Category A: Biblically-founded presuppositions for knowledge and development	Category B: Metacognition, critical reflection, and contextualistic orientation	Category C: Personal responsibility for knowledge acquisition and maintenance—within community
Learning entails...	Learning entails...	Learning entails...
A recognition of the God of the Bible as metaphysically ultimate, and of revelation as the source and most basic component for knowledge and development	A preference for higher-level forms of critical reflection	A pursuit of personal development that results from mutual interdependence and reciprocity in one's relationships with authority figures and peers
A clear articulation of the relationship between faith and rationality	A prioritization of wisdom oriented modes of learning and living	A sense of personal responsibility for gaining, maintaining, and progressing in knowledge
	A reflective criteria of assessing one's own beliefs and values, as well as divergent beliefs and values	A preference for active involvement in the teaching and learning process
	A recognition of social environmental influences on one's learning and maturation	A convictional commitment to one's own worldview—maintained with critical awareness of personal contexts, ways of thinking, and challenges brought to bear by alternative worldviews—through testing and discernment

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ABSTRACT

SHE KNOWS TRUTH: TOWARD A REDEMPTIVE MODEL OF WOMEN'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018
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Gilligan, Perry, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda have spoken the loudest on epistemological development in past decades with numerous follow-up studies that sought to confirm and add to their ideas. Christian higher education has generally accepted or sought to integrate these models which include developmental prescriptions rooted in sub-biblical presuppositions—namely constructivism, feminism, and egalitarianism. This research asserts a series of competencies for redemptive development among women, one that is rooted in a thoroughgoing biblical-worldview and from a complementarian perspective. It employs David Powlison's epistemological priorities as a trajectory for critically considering existing theoretical paradigms. Specifically, this project examines the developmental ideas of Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Baxter Magolda. This thesis proposes a series of developmental priorities and competencies, from an evangelical, complementarian perspective.

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