

# **‘Shepherding’ Academia: Motivation, Approach, Method and Tool**

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## **Abstract**

Too little have Christians properly engaged with mainstream academic thinking, except sometimes to oppose it. This essay, reflecting on one life as a Christian academic, offers a theological motivation for doing so, a strategic approach, a practical method and a conceptual tool.

The theological motivation for engaging is based not only in the Creational mandate God gave to humans of ‘shepherding’ the rest of Creation (including academic fields), but also in the Gospel of Christ, in which Christ’s people are empowered to treat Creation with His attitude (that of Good Shepherd). The strategic approach is of Abrahamic blessing rather than antagonism, acquiescence or Augustinian ‘plundering’. The practical method is to listen to, affirm, critique and enrich (LACE) ideas in our fields. The conceptual tool, which facilitates LACE, is Dooyeweerd’s aspects.

With these, Christian academics can ‘shepherd’ both research and teaching/learning in their fields towards ‘fresh pastures’ (paradigms, perspectives) where they can flourish as God originally intended.

## **THE ESSAY**

This is a personal reflection on a life as a Christian academic in various interdisciplinary areas of research, teaching and practice. It offers an approach that, by bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide [Note: SSD], encourages Christian engagement in secular scholarship. It is aimed at Christian academics but others too might find it helpful.

For much of the Twentieth Century, the Gospel has been isolated from academic activity, in both Christian Unions and in Churches, by both staff and students. I yearned for the Gospel to engage with academic work, and found ways to doing this without either compromising or improperly imposing my beliefs. This account reflects on how I, and some others, have done this.

Some Christian response to mainstream thought has been antagonistic, such as against evolution. Much Christian response has been acquiescent, accepting mainstream ideas, such as business and economic theories, without question when they do not seem counter to sacred doctrine. Augustine used the world’s ideas to construct better Christian theological theory; he called it “plundering the Egyptians” [Note: Plundering].

I go in the opposite direction, using Christian perspectives to “bless” the world’s ideas. This approach is in God’s promise to Abraham “I will bless you ... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3). I see this fulfilled in Abraham’s biological descendants blessing the nations, in Jesus Christ bringing Salvation, and in Jesus’ followers allowing Jesus to work through them to bless the world. I believe that includes the realm of life that is academic activity. A Christian perspective can “bless” humanity’s academic activity in unique ways.

This essay offers, for such blessing, a motivation, a strategy, a method and a conceptual tool, which have undergirded my academic life, in research and in learning and teaching for years.

## A Motivating Theology, Part I - The Mandate of Academia

What has motivated me over the years is the following, though I only understood it as clearly as this a decade ago, from the discovery of a number of theological issues, which are only summarized here [Note: Theology]

God intended, and intends, all Created Reality to Rejoice! [Note: Rejoicing] The entire Creation is meant to 'sing' in harmony before its loving Creator - a harmony of many parts all working together. During Creation, each stage was observed by God as "Good" (the Hebrew word implies "worked as it should") and, when all was completed, "Very Good", which I take to echo what is meant by the Hebrew word *Shalom* - everything contributing to the joy of others: good light, air, growth, food, enjoyment, fulfilment, meaningfulness, and also rest.

Humans have a special Role in all this, a mandate, expressed in the Hebrew words *radah* and *kabash* (Genesis 1:26-28) and *abad* and *shamar* (Genesis 2:15). I believe that these words together may be summed up with the metaphor of 'shepherding' the rest of Creation [Note: Shepherding]. As a Middle-Eastern shepherd explores to find good pasture for the sheep under their care, judging what is good for the sheep and leading them there, enabling the sheep to flourish, so humans are mandated to care for the rest of Creation in a way that enables it to flourish, exploring Creation in order to do so. In this way humans image (*Imago Dei* Genesis 1:26-28) the God, Who is revealed as utter love (I John 4:16), to the rest of Creation.

Initially, the metaphor of shepherding the rest of Creation helped me understand the relationship between humans and plants, animals, habitats and planet (environmental issues), but I realised it might apply also to human aspects of Creation, as manifested in mathematics, logic, technology, language, sociality, business, art, justice, morals and faith. Our 'shepherding' of these, as well as of animals, plants and the physical world, is to open up their potential for the good, the Rejoicing, the *Shalom*, of the entire Creation, humans and non-humans in harmony before God.

This involves study, as in Proverbs 25:2 and as in Adam getting to know and name the animals God brought to him (Genesis 2:19-20) [Note: Naming]. Getting-to-know and 'naming' are academic processes, which I have been carrying out in the fields of computer science, human factors, information systems, economics and environmental sustainability.

This view *allows* me to engage in academic life as something of which God approves, but it does not *compel* me enough to overcome the sneaking feeling that I ought, instead, to be 'in the ministry' or at least seeing my academic activity as a mere arena in which I carry out the 'more important' work of leading people to Christ or of spiritual warfare against "principalities and powers" in academia.

I needed something more if this fear, bred of the sacred-secular divide, was to be overcome. For the idea of 'shepherding' academic fields to be *compelling*, I needed convincing, from Scripture, that God intends the Gospel of Christ to relate to our academic mandate.

## A Motivating Theology, Part II - Fulfilling the Mandate

All Creation is interconnected, so that whatever a creature does affects others. Moreover, every aspect relates to others, each depending on others for its full manifestation in temporal reality. For example, biology depends on chemistry and is in turn affected by psychological behaviours, which in turn are affected by social relationships and by faith (see below), which itself affects our technology, literature, systems of justice, and so on.

Such relatedness among all creatures and aspects expresses our utter dependence on God and implies responsibility, in that each creature is responsible (to the extent that it can be) for the repercussions of its behaviour and functioning on others. Humans function in a wider range of aspects than do animals and plants, and hence have greater responsibility before God for the Rejoicing of Creation.

I see this as the reason why sin is so harmful, why human sin causes animals and land, as well as other humans, to suffer (Hosea 4:2-3), and why it is such an offence to God, Who ardently loves all Creatures (Psalm 145:9). The root of human sin is what Scripture calls "heart" - our deepest commitments and attitudes. I interpret Genesis 3 as humans refusing, in their (and our) heart, the God-given mandate of 'shepherding' the rest of Creation and instead, in independence from God, wanting the rest of Creation to serve them (us) and their (our) desires. So, as God warned Adam and Eve, they (we) would find various aspects of Creation (cultivation and childbirth are mentioned) working against them. The full *Shalom* had been broken.

This distorts academic activity. Wanting "knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:17) without reference to God, we tend to reductionism, in which one aspect or one kind of being becomes all-important to us, an idol. Our understanding becomes "futile ... darkened" (Romans 1:21) because we no longer recognise the God-given rich, interconnectedness of aspects or things.

God's solution is a Gospel of Rich Redemption by Jesus Christ. As Paul sets out in Romans 8, this Redemption has not just one dimension (justification, v1), not just a second dimension (sanctification and experience of God here and now by the Holy Spirit, v14-18), but a third dimension, in which Gods mature "sons" [Note: Sons] are eagerly awaited by Creation (v19-21). With the attitude of Christ (the Good Shepherd), grown in them by the Holy Spirit, God's mature "sons" no longer consume or plunder Creation but treat it with "love, joy, peace, patience, ... self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). This is why "the world" (John 3:16) becomes saved. Thus the Genesis Creational mandate is fulfilled, despite sin, not by human effort, however worthy, but by the action of God in human hearts.

This includes in the academic arena. I take that 3-dimensional 'big picture' of salvation to mean that I can now fulfil my role of 'shepherding' my academic fields, not in acquiescence, nor antagonism, nor even in 'plundering' (Augustine), but by "blessing" them (Abraham). Christ's people are *meant* to lovingly, humbly open our academic fields to 'fresh pastures'. Without Dimension 3, the Gospel is only partial. This, I find compelling, as something God wants and intends, not just approves. I believe Paul had an inkling of this when he ended Romans 8 with such joy and glory.

This can give Christians in academia their mandate and meaningfulness. In its pastoral role, the UK Christian Academic Network [Note: Christian Academic Network] discovered that, at the root of the loneliness and depression that some Christian academics experience, lies the feeling that their academic work is of little importance to their faith. The reasoning laid out above answers that, affirming that their academic work is actually part of God's cosmic Plan.

That is the 'big picture', which has sustained and motivated my academic work, justifying my being a Christian academic in a mainstream ('secular') university rather than either joining a so-called Christian university or going 'into the ministry'.

But big pictures are not enough. They might inspire, but we need them worked out as strategic approaches, operational methods and conceptual tools. Let me explain what, with the help of the Christian Academic Network, the approach and method I have found helpful.

## A Strategic Approach: Shaping Our Disciplines for Christ

Except in cross-disciplinary contexts, those in each field focus on what is meaningful to them and seldom talk with those in other fields. Biologists seldom consult sociologists, jurists or theologians, linguists seldom consult technologists or economists, economists seldom consult physicists or theologians, and so on. Silos! Even within a field, silos of discourse arise that seldom interact. Cross-fertilization seldom occurs and antagonism is not unknown.

Christians believe self-giving love (*agape*), peace and humility are important, and one of the significant contributions we can make is to help those within each discourse to widen their ideas to encourage meaningful dialogue and cross-fertilization - to enter 'fresh pastures'. One of my colleagues in the Christian Academic Network expresses something of this:

"In 1956, I started training for the Christian mission field that I'd earlier volunteered for in principle (not knowing where), having discovered that it was in the two cutting edges of human wisdom about the Creator's ongoing works - the 'linguistic' philosophy developed by the later (Ludwig) Wittgenstein (died 1951) from the mid-1930s and psychological science with its theory of mental processes in deciding our actions (the first experiments in the 1830s), plus psychology's applications to improving human life. I wondered initially if I might bring such thinking and practice to the Church but soon discovered my job was to bring implicitly biblical thinking about the Creator's sustaining of mortal human community (society) as well as universal materiality (nature) into psychology and its relation to social and biological sciences."

The Christian Academic Network devised six questions by which we can "shape our disciplines for Christ" (horrible name, "shape", with connotations of manipulation, but it stuck!). They are usually addressed in order, and often in groups. The words "field" and "discipline" are interchangeable here.

**Question 1.** What do we like about our discipline or field? What are we not comfortable with?

These introductory questions engage our intuition before becoming more theoretically precise. Answers to them provide reference points for later discussions.

**Question 2.** What are the main perspectives or paradigms that currently influence our fields?

This question identifies various bases from which theories and rules are developed, and often the various rival groups in the field. Each revolves around a different core meaningfulness [Note: Paradigm cores].

**Question 3.** What is missing or neglected? Is there any major issue that is meaningful in reality but ignored by those with whom we are engaging?

Example: Most economics, whether capitalist or socialist, largely ignores unpaid household activity such as child-rearing, which is especially important in the Two-Thirds World. At heart, they also ignore climate and environmental responsibility. This question clarifies how current perspectives distort the field, even when seemingly complete, and it relates them to the entire diversity of meaningfulness in God's Creation. It thereby reveals possible 'fresh pastures'.

**Question 4.** Which of the neglected issues might we be able to develop as a contribution to the field?

This question gets us discussing which 'fresh pastures' those in the field might

reasonably wish to enter, often as new paradigms or perspectives that embrace and enrich existing ones.

**Question 5.** Who are the 'friends'? Is there any (minority) group in the field who recognise and are concerned with what is ignored, and makes it a topic of discourse?

Example: The concern of more recent forms of Feminism is to ensure the field recognises the importance of a wider range of aspects than previously. They call them "feminine" aspects (body, care, aesthetics, etc.), in contrast to the "masculine" ones (logic, achievement, economics, etc.) - but let us not be deterred by labels! This question means we can perhaps liaise and work with others already in the field, to the benefit of both. I often find, in the discourses of such 'friends', much insight and wisdom that resonates with my Christian perspective.

**Question 6.** How might we introduce the new ideas into the thought and practice of the field, in a way that people will listen to, appreciate and understand?

This question moves us from thinking in abstract ways to practical steps for action.

Such questions help us recognise that we can indeed make a contribution, and suggests where we might do so. This leads to the question of how do we do so in practice? The Christian Academic Network has developed a method for doing so.

### **Method: LACE - Listen, Affirm, Critique, Enrich**

In the day-to-day activity of scholarship, we encounter people's ideas in books or papers, and find ones with which we want to engage and discourses in which to contribute. We can do so, not just to improve our publications count, but as part of our Christ-enabled Creational mandate. A way of doing this, which can lead to 'fresh pastures' in love and humility, which does not over-spiritualise but remains true to the mandate of academic scholarship, is LACE: Listen, Affirm, Critique, Enrich.

- ◆ **Listen** - "What are they *really* trying to say? What are they reaching for? What is truly important to them?" (Get below the surface of the words and slogans they use, to which we sometimes react unthinkingly.)
- ◆ **Affirm** - "What valid insights are there here?" (Regardless of things that might seem unsound to us.)
- ◆ **Critique** - "What assumptions and presuppositions underlie their ideas, which narrow, impoverish or distort their insights?" (Assumptions they would acknowledge, not just those that their enemies use as ammunition against them.)
- ◆ **Enrich** - "In what ways might their ideas be 'blessed'?" (Widened beyond their presuppositions, often by gently introducing aspects of reality that they had not yet considered.)

That is for engaging with other thought that seeks to understand, but if we want to engage with those who wish to transform or act in the world, then we can add one more element to make it LACER:

- ◆ **Recommend** - "What recommendations might they welcome from us?" (Bearing in mind we don't yet understand their whole situation fully.)

These elements of LACE need not be taken in sequence, but can proceed somewhat in parallel. Listening is perhaps a prerequisite to the others, but is also an attitude to

adopt throughout, more than an activity or process, so our understanding of what they are reaching for develops and deepens throughout.

A keen awareness of the diversity of ways in which things can be meaningful can help all of these. So it is useful to have, as a conceptual tool, a collection of kinds of meaningfulness.

### **Conceptual Tool: Dooyeweerd's Aspects**

A conceptual tool that I have found very useful over the years is the suite of aspects or "modalities of meaning" offered by the Dutch philosopher, Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977). I have found it more comprehensive than Maslow's hierarchy of needs or suites offered by systems thinkers like Kenneth Boulding (1910-1993), and usually more soundly grounded in good philosophy. [Note: Suites]

Each aspect is a different 'sphere' or modality of meaningfulness, a constellation of meaning centred on a meaning-kernel that cannot be reduced to others [Note: Aspects]. No aspect meaning-kernel can be derived from others even in combination. Each contains distinct kinds of law by which Creation is enabled and guided in its creaturely operations and activity. To Dooyeweerd, meaning always refers beyond itself, first to all other kinds of meaning (c.f. Relatedness of aspects) but ultimately to the Creator, Who alone is the Origin of Meaning. My own view is that the diversity of such aspects is a love-gift of the Creator to the Creation, to enable Creation to function with dignity and non-deterministically, and do so in coherence, in rich harmony, none working against others (c.f. Reality Rejoicing). Dooyeweerd found fifteen aspects:

- ◆ Quantitative: quantity, amount
- ◆ Spatial: continuous extension, space
- ◆ Kinematic: movement
- ◆ Physical: energy + causality
- ◆ Biotic: life functions, health, ecology
- ◆ Sensitive: sense, feeling, emotion
- ◆ Analytical: distinguishing and logic
- ◆ Formative: deliberate forming, as in planning, design, structuring, technology, history and culture
- ◆ Lingual: symbolic signification that makes data possible and enables communication
- ◆ Social: social interaction and agreement that enables working together
- ◆ Economic: frugal management of resources
- ◆ Aesthetic: harmony, enjoyment, humour
- ◆ Juridical: appropriateness and 'due', rights and responsibilities
- ◆ Ethical: self-giving love, openness
- ◆ Pistic: belief, aspiration, commitment, ultimate meaning, religion/ideology

Dooyeweerd warned that no such suite of aspects can ever be final because theoretical thinking might always modify those or find more, but I find them more than adequate for my research and teaching [Basden 2020]. In LACE, I find them helpful in the following ways.

*Listening:* Awareness of aspects helps me separate out and identify the meaningfulness of what people are trying to say, especially the tacit knowledge and hidden issues (including hidden agendas). Example: In Adam Smith's work we find the aesthetic, juridical and ethical aspects, not just the economic.

*Affirming:* Taking each aspect to be a contribution towards the "Very Good" of Creation, I find they give me a sound basis for affirming some meaningful issues in the ideas with which I am engaging. Example: Neo-classical economics provides insight into how the economic aspect itself operates while Marxist economics offers insight into how the juridical aspect impinges on that.

*Critiquing:* Very often, I can identify aspects that the current discourse overlooks. Frequently, the discourse actually over-elevates some favourite aspects and presumes all else can be reduced thereto. Example: The fundamental failure of neo-classical economics is that it ignores all aspects apart from the economic, and of Marxist economics, that it ignores the ethical, pistic and aesthetic aspects.

*Enriching* may be accomplished by gently drawing attention to overlooked aspects, or to over-elevation of aspects. When I have done this, those in the field appreciated it. Example: Many discussions of environmental economics can be enriched by understanding sustainability, not just as biology and prosperity, but as right functioning in all aspects together, introducing them all [Gunton et al. 2022].

*Recommending:* Aspects can help us work out recommendations, especially if some have been overlooked. Example: Use Dooyeweerd's understanding of inter-aspect relationships to foster dialogue among warring factions [Note: Factions].

Since all human beings function within the same framework of Creation, such aspects resonate with people's intuition, even if not their narrow theories. I have found that mainstream thinkers welcome aspectual approaches as long as we offer them wisely and with humility. The aspects are particularly useful in discussing interdisciplinary situations and theories. [Tip] Even Christian values like love, joy, peace, patience or those in the Beatitudes or even concerns like idolatry can be welcomed if we contribute them via aspects that make them meaningful, especially since they are of aspects often overlooked. We may even mention their source, at which Lord's Name might be held in more honour than previously.

## **Learning and Teaching**

The above are mainly about how Christians can contribute to building humanity's bodies of knowledge, which is usually called "research". Learning and teaching are the process of helping many people to share and properly understand these bodies. Less will be said about them here, partly because we have yet to work out a scheme for it, but a few reflections from experience may be helpful.

Firstly, why? Why is it good, in God's eyes, that all shall learn? It was the Reformer, John Knox, who first instituted universal education, in Scotland. He did so on the grounds that everyone is made in the Image of God and therefore everyone is worth educating (in contrast to England, where only the aristocrats, clergy and other elites were worth educating).

Following Knox's example (maybe with different methods today!) we can see our teaching and facilitation of student learning, not as a mere money-earner, duty or chore, but as a joy because we are enhancing the *Imago Dei* in people so that they more fully help to bring God's intended *Shalomic* Rejoicing to Created Reality. Of course, without widespread coming to Christ and filling with the Holy Spirit, this might be only partial, yet it still fulfils some of God's Plan. Also, good quality learning can provide openings in people's souls for the Holy Spirit to work.

Secondly, how can we fulfil this part of our mandate? I have found Dooyeweerd's aspects to be an excellent conceptual tool for this.

At short notice I was asked to teach a masters' module on *Key Issues in Information Systems Development*. Realising that each aspect is a different kernel of meaningfulness around which different kinds of issues revolve, I decided to teach my students these aspects. They loved it and the module was taught 11 times over 6 years before departmental reorganisations stopped it. As various students commented,

"I have come to learn something with was completely new to me - aspects!  
These aspects help us to see and understand the key - or persistent - issues

that a central to Information Systems Development and which happen all the time in the development project. ... I am eternally grateful.

“Aspectual analysis is one of the interesting parts of the module that I worked upon, interesting to learn and in fact I did the assignment with much more enthusiasm and dedication than ever. ... To talk about the assignment as a whole, it was an awesome experience giving me enough opportunities to learn things which I could've not learnt otherwise.”

“I found the module very informative and interesting and something I can say of my own taste. The knowledge acquired from this module will hopefully help a long way in our careers and will pave the way for many successes in IS development.”

“For me personally, the knowledge of this module was very interesting and valuable. It broadened my spheres of understanding of the IS development process. As I mentioned earlier that before the start of this module, I thought that this module will be about the technical development of an IS. But after finishing the module it is clear to me that its not only the technicalities that are important but other related aspects to the technology are also equally important. This made me think about impacts of already developed and successful systems. The realization of individual as well as group needs and understanding can make the process a bit more time consuming and complex but this can make the experience rich and successful at the same time. End-users and stakeholders involvement can make the system almost error free and can provide a platform for social, juridical, lingual etc. understanding of them during the process.”

I then extended use of aspects to teach knowledge management and human-computer interaction, and devised other modules using aspects.

There were perhaps five reasons the students liked aspects.

1. Aspects help us separate out issues clearly, so learners can understand better. All students appreciated this.
2. Issues that are often overlooked or hidden are made more visible, because usually the overlooking is of an aspect (sphere of meaningfulness) that is taken for granted. Things like hidden agendas or cultural presuppositions can be revealed and discussed. Most mature students, with experience of these in 'real life' appreciated this.
3. The different kinds of issue are all given equal respect (in contrast Maslow's hierarchy). In particular, the faith aspect, which many Christians elevate above others and which most secular teachers downplay because of the Sacred-Secular Divide in Western thinking, was laid alongside the technological, social, economic aspects and all others. I found that Muslim and Hindu students especially liked this, because it gave a place for their faith in their work, and so did some Christians from the Global South. In fact, because of this, two Muslim students came to Christ later on.
4. Understanding the kernel meaning of each aspect in its own right provides a basis for deeper understanding and learning. It often provides hooks on which to hang the various ideas that have been circulating in the field. For example, in economics, technological innovation (formative aspect) is seen by some as crucial, fair distribution of wealth (juridical aspect) is seen by others as crucial, so we could see these aspects as joining with the economic aspect in real life, and needing to be attached to 'pure' economic theory.
5. That all aspects relate to others gives a basis for discussing their



interdependence, such as what social and economic possibilities technological development enables.

I found that such an approach helped me fulfil my mandate as an academic to help human beings gain not just theoretical knowledge but a modicum of wisdom with which to enter the world. In my view, Dooyeweerd's aspects offer a pretty good understanding of the diversity and coherence (harmony) of the laws by which God designed the Creation to operate and Rejoice.

## Conclusion

Jesus saw the crowds, not as enemies, but as "harrassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). This essay has shown how Christ's people might 'shepherd' an 'harrassed' academia - its plethora of ideas, theories and perspectives - towards better flourishing of all Creation.

It offers a theological motivation, a strategic approach, a method and a conceptual tool for leading academia to 'fresh pastures'. Whereas most theologies of Christian engagement emphasise Creation, this involves the Gospel of Christ too. Whereas Christians have tried to engage with either antagonism, acquiescence or Augustinian "plundering the Egyptians", this approach, *Shaping our Disciplines for Christ*, devised with the UK Christian Academic Network, seeks to bring Abrahamic blessing to our fields. Whereas Christians often react negatively to the words and slogans used by mainstream thinkers, the *LACE* method, of Listening, Affirming, Critiquing and Enriching, facilitates more fruitful engagement, characterized by love and humility. Whereas the diversity of meaning in Creation often suffers reductionism in academic theories, the tool of Dooyeweerd's suite of aspects ensures we can widen and enrich mainstream thought.

This bridges the Sacred-Secular Divide in a very natural way and is especially useful in cross-disciplinary work in research and teaching.

## Notes and References

**Note on SSD, Sacred-Secular Divide.** In his excellent booklet *The Great Divide*, Mark Green discusses the Sacred-Secular Divide as "the greatest challenge facing the church today". It refers to how Christians tend to elevate 'sacred' things like praying and either ignore or denigrate 'secular' things like playing and paying as of little value. Green argues against this. In Scripture I find God is concerned about the 'secular' just as much as the 'sacred'.

**Note on Plundering the Egyptians.** Exodus 12:32-36 shows the people of Israel exiting Egypt, after "plundering" the Egyptians, who gave them many rich gifts. Augustine allegorically applied this to using the world's thinking to help build up Christian theology. For example, Aristotle was used to understand the nature of Christ. This accommodation to the world's thinking later led to many problems.

**Note on Theology.** See <<http://abxn.org/nv/>> "A New View in Theology and Practice".

**Note on Rejoicing.** The R-words in capitals (Rejoice, Relatedness, Role, Representation, Rich Redemption) are major themes in that theology. It may be found in draft form at <<http://abxn.org/nv/rrrr.html>> "Five R's".

**Note on Shepherding.** Shepherding means caring, looking after, guiding, leading, protecting, helping the sheep to flourish, etc. That is the metaphor used here. Ezekiel 34 condemns the "shepherds of Israel" who treated the sheep uncaringly and cruelly, as resources. Shepherding implies a love that stewarding lacks. The shepherd exists for the sake of the sheep, not the sheep for the sake of the shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. See <<http://abxn.org/nv/shepherds.html>> "Dominion of Humankind in Rest of

Creation: Consumers? Stewards? Shepherds!". See also ["http://abxn.org/discussion/radah2.html"](http://abxn.org/discussion/radah2.html) > "On the Interpretation of Four Hebrew Words: *Radah, Kabash, Abad, Shamar*".

**Note on Naming.** Names in the Hebrew Scriptures are not mere labels, but expressions of character, so it seems that God expected Adam to study the animals.

**Note on Sons.** The Greek word in Romans 8:19 is *huioun*, which means sons who are mature enough that they are just like their father, trusted to make decisions and promises that he would. Especially pronounced at Jesus' baptism, "This is my *huios*".

**Note on Christian Academic Network.** See ["https://christianacademicnetwork.net/"](https://christianacademicnetwork.net/) > "Christian Academic Network" website.

**Note on Paradigm Cores.** Paradigms or perspectives are differentiated by what is meaning: different kinds of things are meaningful to each. See Basden A, Joneidy S. 2019. Dooyeweerd's understanding of meaning (2) Some implications. *Philosophia Reformata*, 84(2), 1-28.

**Note on Suites of Aspects.** For a comparison of Dooyeweerd's aspects with many suites, including those of Maslow and Boulding, see ["http://dooy.info/compare.asp.html"](http://dooy.info/compare.asp.html) > "*Tabular Comparison of Suites of Aspects*". For information about Maslow, Boulding and Dooyeweerd see their *Wikipedia* pages or, for Dooyeweerd, see ["http://dooy.info/"](http://dooy.info/) > "*The Dooyeweerd Pages*".

**Note on Aspects.** For a good summary of aspects, with their kernels and constellations, see web page on ["http://dooy.info/aspects.smy.html"](http://dooy.info/aspects.smy.html) > "*Description of Each Aspect*".

**Basden A. 2019/2020.** *Foundations and Practice of Research : Adventures with Dooyeweerd's Philosophy*. Routledge. ISBN: 978-103-2086-927 (pbk), 970-1-138-72068-8 (hbk.) 971-1-315-19491-2 (ebk).

**Gunton RM, Basden A, Hejnowicz AP, van Asperen E, Christie I, Hanson DR, Hartley SE (2022)** Valuing beyond economics: a pluralistic evaluation framework for participatory policy-making. *Ecological Economics* \*196:107420.

**Note on Factions.** For an example of using aspects to bring factions together, see Basden A. 2011. Enabling a Kleinian integration of interpretivist and critical-social IS research: The contribution of Dooyeweerd's philosophy. *European Journal of Information Systems*. 20, 477-489.

**Tip.** Do not offer the suite of aspects as a ready-made schema or any Truth, but rather have it as the back of our minds as we consider which aspects to draw attention to and how to do so. Often it is not helpful to name aspects as such, but rather issues made meaningful by certain aspects.

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