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**MANAGING FOR QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION:  
A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

by

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## **MANAGING FOR QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Quality is a complex concept. Its meaning varies with different people and organizations. For example, a common notion of quality is that it is synonymous with superiority or excellence (Evans and Lindsay, 1999). It is something that is intuitively understood but almost impossible to communicate to others (Foster, 2007). This view is referred to as the transcendent definition of quality. You may not be able to define it precisely but “you know it when you see it” (Pirsig, 1974, p. 185). Another definition of quality puts it as a function of a specific, measurable variable. This product-based approach views quality as the presence or absence of a particular desired attribute. The greater the amount of a desired attribute possessed by a product or service, the better the quality.

The manufacturing-based approach defines quality as conformance to a set of requirements or specifications and “making it right the first time” (Crosby, 1979, p. 15). Any deviation, hence, from these requirements or specifications implies lack of quality. According to the user-based approach, quality “lies in the eyes of the beholder” (Garvin, 1988, p. 43), a definition which is highly subjective. This definition states that the quality of a product or service depends on its ability to satisfy the preferences of individual consumers. The last approach - the value-based approach - defines quality in terms of cost and price. A quality product or service is one that “performs or conforms” at an acceptable cost or price. In light of the different definitions stated and described above, Bergquist (1995, p. 43) proposed the following comprehensive definition of quality with respect to higher education:

*Quality is the extent to which an institution successfully directs adequate and appropriate resources to the accomplishment of its mission-related outcomes and that its programs make a significant and positive difference in the lives of people*

*associated with it and that these programs are created, conducted, and modified in line with the mission and values of the institution.*

When quality definitions were first developed, they were designed to provide organizations sound theoretical foundation for quality initiatives like total quality management (TQM) and other continuous improvement programs. Unfortunately, many of these initiatives have been deemed as failures (Koch, 2003). While a number of organizations have experimented with the approach and have become world class competitors, many others have not performed according to expectations. Worker opinion surveys pointed to management attitude and practices as major source of grievances (Holoviak, 1995). Of course, this is hardly what we would expect to happen in a TQM world. It seemed as if many TQM programs have focused too much on intensifying work and failed to address adequately the plight of those who did the work. It also appeared that the TQM structure that emerged from years of application resulted in more control by management instead of more opportunities given to workers to influence the direction and focus of their TQM efforts. There has been little or no shift at all in the attitudes of people at work (Holoviak, 1995). Because of apparent failures of TQM especially in the United States, it has become fashionable to mock it as a passing fad (Giroux, 2006). Holoviak (1995) observed that “what we have is an attitude problem and that “it doesn’t matter if you start with the president of the company or the entry level job. If the new philosophy of life doesn’t catch on and then lead to behavior which reflects the philosophy, the TQM program will fail. It’s about how people value people.”

It may be postulated then that the key to success in any quality initiative lies beyond training, quality certification, statistical process control, or customer focus. Modern quality management initiatives may need to reconsider an important dimension that has proven to be effective over the centuries – the spiritual dimension of quality informed by the biblical perspective. Higher education can benefit

immensely from this reconsideration. It is widely known that colleges and universities are highly valued social institutions because they do not only impact the personal and professional lives of students but also enrich the social fabric of the communities they are in. Unfortunately, these valued institutions are not insulated from the many economic, demographic, political, and other pressures facing social institutions today. Although higher education has long been committed to excellence, its pace of change and improvement has been slow and episodic at best (Ruben, 2007). To address the many obstacles confronting it, strong leadership is needed in all areas: academic, administrative, student life, and service. The challenge is to clarify the principles, knowledge, and skill bases necessary for effective higher education leadership from directors of boards to chairs of departments.

This paper proposes that the spiritual dimension is perhaps the missing piece that today's institutions of higher education need to effect lasting and meaningful change in the behaviors or attitudes of their people from the top administrator to the entry-level employee. After all, "quality is about relationships" and "the engine that drives all major decisions" (Aikens, 2006, p. 3). This paper explores and describes what the Bible has to say about managing for quality in higher education. Although the paper delves mainly with higher education, many of the principles that will be described are also applicable to other levels of education.

### **A SYSTEM OF PROFOUND KNOWLEDGE**

The prevailing style of management in higher education must undergo transformation. By transformation we mean change of form, shape, or appearance. Perhaps a better word to use is the Greek word *metanoia* which means penitence, repentance, reorientation of one's life, or spiritual conversion. This transformation requires an understanding of the system of profound knowledge and the application of its principles in every kind of relationship between individuals. The system of profound

knowledge includes an appreciation for a system, knowledge about variation, theory of knowledge, and psychology (Deming, 1993).

### **Appreciation for a System**

A system is a network of interdependent components that work together to try to accomplish the aim of the system. The apostle Paul in the Bible understands the meaning of a system. “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all parts are many, they form one body” (1 Corinthians 12:12). “If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it” (1 Corinthians 12:26).

A system must have an aim. An example of an aim is the institutional mission. The management of the system requires knowledge of the interrelationships between all the components within the system and of the people that work in it. The efforts of all components of the higher educational system must be orchestrated or managed towards achieving its stated aim because, left to themselves, components tend to become selfish, competitive, independent profit centers. The greater the interdependence between components, the greater will be the need for communication and cooperation between them. For example, the efforts of the various schools or faculties in a college or a university are not additive but interdependent. One school, to achieve its goals (which may require a bigger slice of the institutional budget) may, left to itself, kill off another school. The obligation, therefore, of every component in the college or university is to contribute its best to the optimization of the aim of the higher educational system. For example, when schools or departments plan for the next fiscal year and send in requests for budget allocations, they should take into account how their plans can help advance the mission of the college or the university and not simply cater to the narrow interests of their respective units. Narrowly focusing on their own interests (e.g. fighting for a bigger slice of the budgetary

pie to support new programs) can lead to in-fighting and result in eventual loss to all the components of the said institution.

### **Knowledge about Variation**

There will always be variation between people, in output, in service, and in product. We need to understand what the variation is telling us about the process and about the people that work in it. In fact, life is variation. “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

All educational work occurs within a system of interconnected processes, which contain many sources of variation. By *variation*, we mean the extent to which or the range within which a thing or a process varies. For example, the professors working at a school have different upbringings, educational backgrounds, and working experiences, which makes each one unique in terms of personality and values. They work with different students, each with a unique personality. They interact with various individuals (other professors, administrators, and staff) on campus. They perform different kinds of tasks. They often utilize a variety of resources (e.g., textbooks, reference books, notes, writing instruments). Their work involves the use of different kinds of equipment, with varying features, capability, and performance. They work under different supervisors, who may have a variety of management styles. They are also affected by many environmental conditions that exist at home, in their classrooms and laboratories, and within the institution as a whole (e.g., family relationships, noise level, the collegiality of the work environment, morale level, weather patterns, etc.). The complex interactions of these variations are not easily understood. Variation due to these sources occurs randomly. However, their combined effect is presumed to be stable and predictable. The factors that are present as a natural part of the process are referred to as *chance* or *common causes of variation* (Fos-

ter, 2007). Thus, a process that is being affected by this type of variation is said to be a stable process (which should not be tampered with) and is referred to as being *in control*. Common-cause variation comes as a result of the design of the system. It is inherent in a process and generally accounts for about 80 to 95 percent of the observed variation in the outcome of that process.

The other type of variation that may exist in an educational process results from *special causes* (Evans and Lindsay, 2008). Special causes can be attributed to external sources that are not inherent in a process. They produce unnatural variation that disrupts the random pattern of common causes. Thus, they tend to be readily detectable and, with foresight and commitment, can be prevented or corrected. When special-cause variations are present, the process is said to be *unstable* or *out of control*. Some examples of special-cause variations in education that could affect the performance of professors are the hiring of unqualified, incompetent, or untrained administrators, faculty, or staff; the admission of students who are unprepared to do college work; malfunctioning equipment; inadequately equipped laboratories and libraries; dysfunctional interpersonal relationships; management by fear; a professor's serious illness or accident; excessively warm or cold classroom temperatures; a food poisoning episode in the cafeteria; campus crime or civil unrest; extreme climactic changes; flooding, fire, or natural disaster; and many others. In general, these special-cause variations have an unpredictable effect on the outcome of teaching and learning and can seriously affect the educational system as a whole. Therefore, whenever possible, they must be identified and prevented, remedied, or resolved in a timely manner.

### **Theory of Knowledge**

The Bible says that "to the man who pleases Him, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and happiness" (Ecclesiastes 2:26). In another part it is said that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7). Unfortunately many "people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

At this point, it is important to distinguish between knowledge and wisdom. According to Merriam-Webster's dictionary, knowledge is the fact or condition of having information. Wisdom, on the other hand, refers to the ability to discern inner qualities and relationships.

Managers and leaders of colleges and universities need to understand how things work and why decisions that affect the future of their respective institutions should be effective. Any plan, no matter how simple requires prediction concerning conditions, behavior, and comparison of performance. Such predictions should be grounded in theory. For example, if the university raises its tuition fees for the next academic year, how much should the fees be raised? How will it impact the financial condition of the university? This requires a theory of cause and effect. According to Deming, knowledge is not possible without theory (Deming, 1993). Deming (1993) further states that "rational prediction requires theory and builds knowledge through systematic revision and extension of theory based on comparison of prediction with observation". Theory helps one to understand cause-and-effect relationships that can be used for prediction and rational management decisions.

## **Psychology**

Psychology helps us to understand people, interaction between people and circumstances, interaction between customer and supplier, interaction between teacher and student, interaction between a manager and his/her people and any system of management (Deming, 1993). A true leader recognizes that people differ from one another and learn in different ways and at different speeds. He or she also understands that people are born with a need for love and esteem in their relationships with other people. Therefore, "those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor

to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it” (1 Corinthians 12:22-26).

## **BIBLICAL APPROACHES TO QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Many of the insights found in this paper come from the Bible where many sound management principles still remain unexplored. God Himself wrote the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone with His own finger. He gave us the most powerful principles of sound management as demonstrated in the lives of godly men and women of the Bible. It is thus fitting to tap this vast repository of knowledge and wisdom and explore the divine principles which can be used by colleges and universities to improve the quality of their respective operations.

The following sub-sections are patterned after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria. The Baldrige Award is the highest honor an organization can receive in the United States. Since it was first created by Public Law 100-107 in 1987, the Baldrige has evolved over the years to become an award for overall effectiveness of an organization. Its dual goals are “to improve value to customers, which results in marketplace success, and to improve overall financial and company performance to meet the needs of shareholders, owners, and other stakeholders” (Brown, 2005, p. 2).

### **Leadership**

The ideal relationship that man should have with God and with his fellowmen is defined in the commandments, “And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength” (Mark 12:30) and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:31). So it is important that the leadership of the organization, just like the rest of the workforce, knows who the Supreme Leader is and loves and respects Him. It is also important to know who the neighbor is and

to love him as well. The leader understands that he is accountable to a higher authority for his actions for “each of us will give a personal account to God” (Romans 14:12).

Spiritually guided leaders ought to be individuals who are faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2), “known for their wisdom and understanding” (Deuteronomy 1:13), and people of integrity at the highest level (Xavier, 2002). They identify with a set of values that raise them to higher levels of motivation and morality (Kanungo and Mendonca, 1994). Joshua demonstrated this commitment when, before his death, as the Israelites settled in the Promised Land, challenged them to “choose today whom you will serve ... as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). As it deals with the organizational workforce, the leadership is admonished to be lowly, gentle, and patient, “making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love” (Ephesians 4:2). “But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant” (Luke 22:26). At the heart of servant leadership is openness, an ability to listen, and an ability to speak in a way that engages people directly affected by the choices to be made. From the divine perspective, whoever humbles himself like a child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:4). Leaders must therefore set a good example. Of model leaders, the following will be aptly spoken: “Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith” (Hebrews 13:7). Leaders of colleges and universities should model, promote, and ensure ethical behavior. They are commanded to adhere to the golden rule of human relationships which is to “do to others as you would like them to do to you” (Luke 6:31). The person who truly serves earns justifiable trust. Trust given and received in this manner fosters a climate for service at the deepest level.

The institutional leadership has the responsibility to protect the interest of its stakeholders, to actively support and strengthen its key communities, and to address the possible adverse impact of its

operations to society and the environment. This is important for “the earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it” (1 Corinthians 10:26). Leaders are accountable to God for their actions that destroy the earth.

### **Strategic Planning**

Strategic planning focuses on the development of strategic objectives and action plans and their deployment. It begins with a firm commitment from leaders and the workforce that everyone will be included in the transformation and that a trusting and open environment will be maintained. This is especially true when the college or university develops a strategic plan for its entire campus. Most strategic plans in higher education are developed and implemented for a period of five years.

If the institution commits its plans to the Lord, its plans will succeed (Proverbs 16:3). It is advised to seek the Lord for wisdom when it develops its plans. “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking” (James 1:5). God will show us what to do and cause our plans to succeed. He knows things that we can never know and knows how to make these things work for us. “For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). The Bible clearly states that “good planning and hard work lead to prosperity” (Proverbs 21:5) and that He will work out His plans for our lives (Psalm 138:8). The Bible also warns that where there is no vision, the people will perish (Proverbs 29:18).

God wrote for humankind the first quality manual which embodied His key principles (Ten Commandments) for a healthy relationship between God and man and between man and his fellow beings. These are summarized in the following: “And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength” (Mark 12:30) and “Love

your neighbor as yourself” Mark 12:31). These commandments provide the basis for the operationalization of these relationships.

### **Customer and Market Focus**

The ultimate goal of managing for quality is customer satisfaction. This is the real measure of whether or not the mission and goals of the institution are being met. The Bible counsels us to do to others whatever we would like them to do to us (Matthew 7:12). This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets. We should love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31). The law of love calls for the devotion of body, mind, and soul to the service of God and our fellow men (White, 1960). We should be thinking of others as better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3). This principle “inspires us to attempt to grant to others the regard in which we hold ourselves – a beginning point for the customer-conscious” (Corts, 1992, p. 2).

Strategies should begin with extensive research to find out who the customer is, what is of value to him/her and how he/she buys. The customer may be external (final user of the good or service – employers, accrediting bodies, government agencies, suppliers, etc.) or internal (e.g., students; employees within the institution – administrators, faculty, and staff). The institutional provider must respect and understand its customers enough to listen to their values and understand their satisfactions (Drucker, 1990). “Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another. If you love your neighbor, you will fulfill the requirements of God’s law” (Romans 13:8). “Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others” (Proverbs 12:15).

### **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management**

Data and information are the forces that drive quality excellence and organizational performance (Evans and Lindsay, 2008). In colleges and universities these are found in manuals,

handbooks, bulletins, brochures, other documents, as well as in electronic databases. Knowledge is the fundamental building material that helps the organization to sustain a competitive advantage. “All organizations have it, but most don’t know what they know, don’t use what they do know, and don’t reuse the knowledge they have” (Harrington, 2003; cited in Evans and Lindsay, 2008). “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). Because they have no knowledge, even honorable men are famished (Isaiah 5:13). But the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10). As stated earlier in this paper, knowledge is the fact or condition of having information while wisdom is the ability to discern inner qualities and relationships.

Wise people treasure knowledge (Proverbs 10:14). “Wise words satisfy like a good meal; the right words bring satisfaction (Proverbs 18:20). Indeed, it is “wonderful to be wise, to analyze and interpret things” (Ecclesiastes 8:1). Wisdom and knowledge will provide stability for our times (Isaiah 33:6). The institution must therefore test and examine its ways (Lamentations 3:40) and use data and knowledge assets to achieve its key business results and strategic objectives. Data and information should be used carefully for with the same measure that we use, it will be measured back to us (Luke 6:38). Knowledge about best practices ought to be shared among others performing similar jobs. The benefit can be tremendous not only for the recipient of such knowledge but also on the sharer of the knowledge himself. “Give and it will be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom” (Luke 6:38). If we are willing, God will put His instructions deep within us, and write them in our hearts (Jeremiah 31:33). Process improvement requires new knowledge that results in better processes and procedures (Evans and Lindsay, 2008).

## **Workforce Focus**

A quality college or university helps its workers to understand their role in the institution and enable them to do their best work. People who are valued, who understand the importance of their job, and who have the freedom and the tools needed to do them will be committed and motivated to do great work. The Bible exhorts all employees to work with enthusiasm as though they were working for the Lord rather than for people (Ephesians 6:7). They should work hard so that they can present themselves to God and receive His approval, to be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed (2 Timothy 2:15).

In quality institutions, leaders get their workers involved in a vigorous program of education and self-improvement. They remove barriers that rob their workers of their right to pride in workmanship. They recognize that everyone wants to do a quality job. This is where the concept of service becomes paramount. “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). And for the workers, the admonition is “If your gift is serving others, serve them well” (Romans 12:7).

Quality institutions promote team building. The synergy developed within effective teams in terms of relationships, trust, and support can exceed the original expectations of the team. Closely-knit institutions are likened to the human body which consists of different parts functioning together. “He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love” (Ephesians 4:16). Maximizing team involvement, cohesiveness, and effectiveness requires training and support. While physical training is good, training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come (1 Timothy 4:8).

Effective higher educational leaders strive to listen to their employees and implement valid suggestions as well as resolve key issues (Summers, 2009). They also provide reasonable and ample compensation for their people for after all “the worker deserves his wages” (Luke 10:7). The Bible says that “when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation” (Romans 4:4). At any rate, employees are also advised to be content with their pay (Luke 3:14).

### **Process Management**

A process is one that takes inputs and performs value-added activities on those inputs to create an output (Summers, 2009). People in our institutions perform processes on a day-to-day basis without even realizing it. Colleges and universities have innumerable processes that enable them to provide goods and services to their various stakeholders. A few examples of processes are course registration, faculty and staff hiring, book orders, equipment installation and maintenance, billing, production and inventory control, product and service design, etc.

According to Deming and Juran (Evans and Lindsay, 2008), the overwhelming majority of quality problems are associated with processes. Few are caused by the workers themselves. The bulk of responsibility, however, lies with management with respect to the design and continuous improvement of processes within which individuals work. To a certain extent, management shares this responsibility with the workforce. Unless the process is changed, no one should expect the results to change. The institutional leadership will do well to heed the biblical advice that “Unless the Lord builds the house, the work of the builders is wasted. Unless the Lord protects a city, guarding it with sentries will do no good” (Psalm 127:1). Divine guidance is there for the asking. “Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). As we

work with our colleagues in the production line, it is good to heed the warning: “Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us” (Romans 12:3). Quality means continuous process improvement which applies not only to the organization but to our personal lives as well. “I know all the things you do. I have seen your love, your faith, your service, and your patient endurance. And I can see your constant improvement in all these things” (Revelation 2:19).

## **Results**

Workers are counseled to work with enthusiasm as though they were working for the Lord and not for the people for the Lord will reward each of them for the work they do (Ephesians 6:7, 8). He who is greatest among them should be as the younger and he who governs as the one who serves (Luke 22:26). We need to pay attention to our own work for then we will get the satisfaction of a job well done and we won’t need to compare ourselves to anyone else (Galatians 6:4). If we serve Christ with the right attitude, we will please God and others will approve of us too (Romans 14:18). “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Romans 13:9). This command admonishes us to treat others in the same way we would like to be treated ourselves (Luke 6:31). An institution that builds its “house” upon the rock is wise indeed. Although the rain may descend, the floods come, or the winds blow and beat on the house, it will not fall because it is built on the solid rock of morality and integrity (Matthew 7:24-25).

Those who work for the Lord will not work in vain, and their children will not be doomed to misfortune. They will be considered people blessed by the Lord and their children too will be blessed (Isaiah 65:23). They will bear the following fruits in their lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22). “You will live in joy and peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song, and the trees of the field will clap

their hands” (Isaiah 55:12). The ultimate goal of quality is customer satisfaction, regardless of whether the customer is external (final user of the good or service) or internal (employees within the institution). Whatever their lot in the institution, blessings (Matthew 5:3-11) are pronounced upon those who trust in the Lord with all their heart, who do not depend on their own understanding, and who seek His will in all they do (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

### **Summary of Biblical Approaches**

The Bible admonishes college and university leaders to be lowly, gentle, and patient. They are commanded to be exemplary models as they lead their respective institutions in the spirit of service. Only by truly serving can they earn justifiable trust from their stakeholders and foster a climate for service at the deepest level. Spiritually guided leaders commit their plans to the Lord for only He is the true source of knowledge and wisdom knowing that the ultimate goal to manage for quality is satisfying the customer/stakeholder. To do this, it is important to identify who the customer/stakeholder is and then try to understand their needs, wants, and expectations. The applicable biblical principle is to do to others what we would like them to do to us which is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets. To drive quality excellence and institutional performance, data and information are necessary. The Bible teaches that knowledge and wisdom come from God and they are there for the asking.

Quality in higher education will not be possible without the participation of the workforce. People who are valued, who understand that importance of their job, and who have the freedom and the tools needed to do them will be committed and motivated to do great work. Nevertheless, the Bible exhorts all employees to work with enthusiasm as though they are working for God rather than for people. Colleges and universities must engage in the constant process of renewal while steadfastly acknowledging that unless the Lord builds the house, the work of the builders will be wasted. The Bible pronounces blessings upon those who trust in the Lord with all their heart, who do not depend on their own understanding, and who seek His will in all that they do.

## CONCLUSION

If change is to have a lasting and meaningful impact in higher education, it must be articulated, defined, developed, and delivered by the people that comprise it. It is here that the quality improvement philosophy can play a critical role in facilitating the kind of change that educational institutions need. To be more effective, however, any quality initiative must also include the spiritual dimension which is the necessary element in effecting lasting and meaningful change in the behaviors or attitudes of workers from the top administrator to the entry-level employee. Quality improvement initiatives in our colleges and universities will be more effective when they are infused with principles and values from the Scriptures. In view of this, the spiritual dimension of quality informed by the biblical perspective may be the most important piece that higher educational leaders need to manage their institutional operations for quality and performance excellence.

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