



**by Dr. Charles Anderson**  
**Professor of Religion**

When Jesus was asked by a scribe regarding the great commandment of the law, he responded with words familiar to every Jew of the first century. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:29-30). These words were familiar to Jews because they were a part of their confession of faith, commonly called the Shema.

One should not center on the nouns in Jesus' reply as a means of designating distinct parts of the personality, for that would not be legitimate from either the perspectives of Judaism or Jesus. But there is a basic truth stated here that transcends the distinctions in the words. When it comes to important matters in life, we dare not become partial in our response. We dare not, for example, allow our emotional nature to rule us at the expense of our intellectual nature, or vice versa.

We can, for example, allow our emotions to be the primary component in our response when we sit in the stands cheering on our favorite athletic team. Similarly, when we balance our

check books, we may depend primarily on our intellectual nature. (It should be noticed, however, that even that activity may become an emotional experience for many of us.) But when it comes to the larger issues of life, e.g., the choice of a life work, a life partner, etc., the involvement of all of the dynamics of our personality is essential.

It is at this level that we come into contact with our faith. Some persons cultivate their devotional life to the neglect or exclusion of their mental life. Conversely, some persons cultivate their mental life to the exclusion of their devotional life. It would appear that a more healthy person would be one in whom there is a balance, if not a tension, operating in relation to these two factors.

We can extend this comparison to colleges. Some colleges make it their objective to cultivate the devotional lives of their students apart from any significant intellectual encounter with issues of the Christian faith. Coursework, extracurricular activities, and personal life are all fashioned in conformity with this objective.

Other colleges approach the Christian faith on an almost purely intellectual level. It is analyzed and scrutinized much like one would analyze a specimen in a science laboratory. The emotional and volitional aspects of faith are ignored. Here again, it would appear that a

healthier environment would be one in which there is a balance or tension in relation to these factors.

We attempt to attain this balance at Ottawa University. It is a difficult task. There are those, on the one hand, who want us to be more intellectual in our approach to the faith. Perhaps they are those who do not enroll in relevant course work, or do not think deeply about their faith in relation to their course work. There are those, on the other hand, who want daily, if not hourly expressions of personal commitment on the part of everyone on campus. Do they expect this of Christians in other settings?

The same tendency is seen in the churches of our constituency as they evaluate us. For some, we are not "spiritual" enough. For them, the Christian faith is primarily a matter of emotional expression. Certain key vocabulary words would demonstrate to them that we are serious about our faith.

For others, we are not intellectual enough. For them, the Christian faith is primarily a matter of the mind. Only if we exhibit an antiseptic rationalism in our dealing with the faith are we doing our job from their point of view.

The process is a constant struggle for us, but while we may not please all people at all times, we make this our objective: we continually strive to bring our hearts and our minds together. ■

## About the Cover

Harold Germer, director of Collegiate Education Services for ABC/USA and former Academic Dean of the University, was the keynote speaker at a luncheon prior to the leadership orientation meeting for the National Heritage of Faith capital fundraising campaign this spring. He discussed the importance of the church-related liberal arts college, and specifically, the important role to be played by Ottawa University. ■

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