



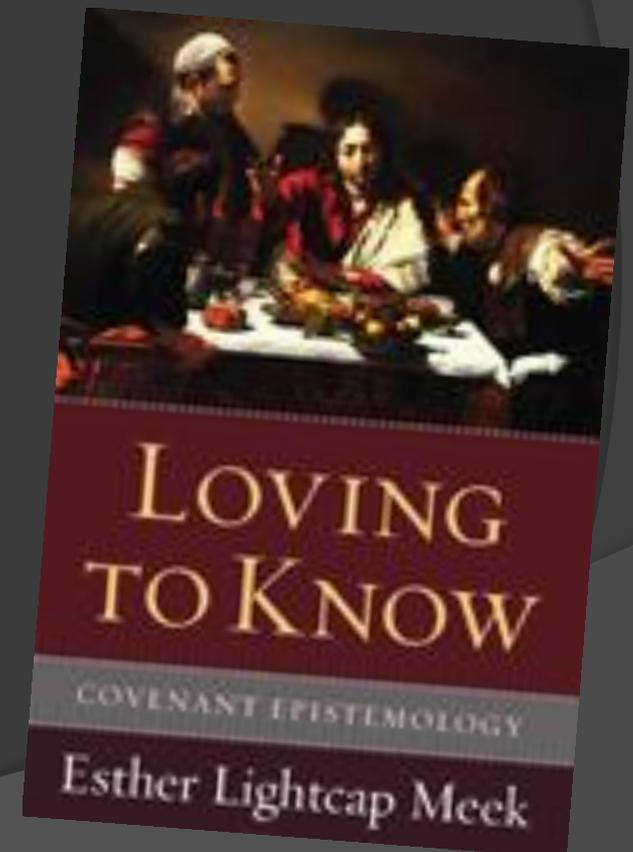
Esther L. Meek, PhD
Geneva College

Not Without Hope
RZIM 2012 Summer Institute

HOPE
FOR, IN, THROUGH,
KNOWING

Introduction

- ⦿ Epistemology: how we know what we know
- ⦿ Covenant epistemology:
- ⦿ an epistemology of hope



For, In, and Through

◎ *For:*

- The need for reorientation to a different epistemic paradigm

◎ *In:*

- Introducing covenant epistemology

◎ *Through:*

- Stories of knowing for shalom

Motifs

- ⊙ *Transformation* (ct. information)
- ⊙ *Dynamism* (ct. static passivity)
- ⊙ *Persons in relation* (ct. impersonal, disconnected)
- ⊙ *Hope*: committed openness to the future (ct. exhaustively closed “eternal now”)
- ⊙ *Love, pledge, communion, shalom*
- ⊙ *Redemptive encounter*
- ⊙ *Reorientation to life*



Hope

- End and practice
- Vision/imagination future.
- Unspecifiable, unconceived
- Good
- Choice to embrace and live persistently
- In the face of present reality
- Need help of beyond ourselves
- Essential to our humanness.
- The Christian hope: to see God
- With faith and love.

- Hopelessness is a choice to acquiesce to powerlessness and despair.

- Hope is the dream of shalom. It is what propels us into the future. Hope is leaning into the unknown and risking the present for the sake of the future. It takes risk, struggle, surrender, and waiting.

- Dan
- Allender,
- *The*
- *Healing*
- *Path*



Hope for Knowing:

the need for reorientation to a different paradigm

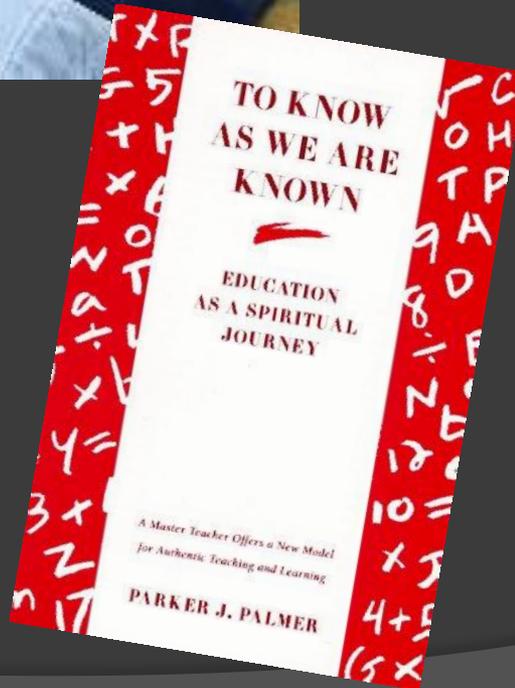
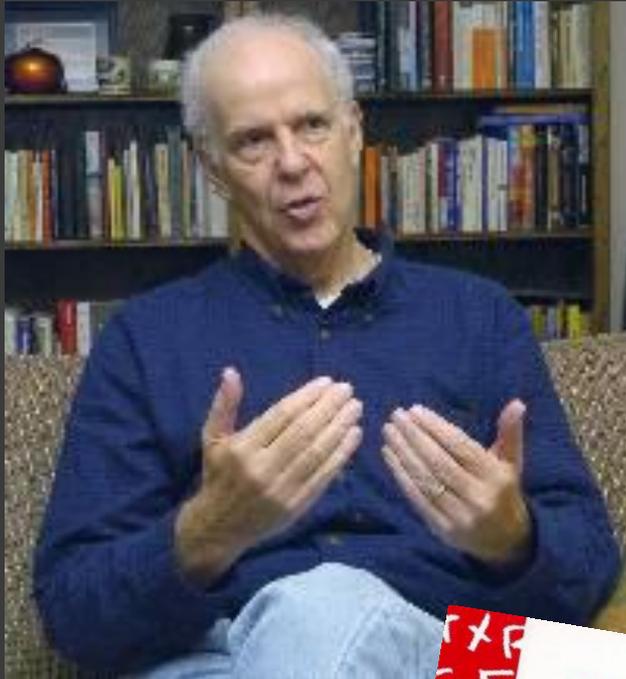
- Life-shaping epistemology
- Hopeless knowing: the defective default
- An epistemology of hope



Epistemology shapes our lives.

- “...the patterns of epistemology can help us decipher the patterns of our lives. Its images of the knower, the known, and their relationship are formative in the way an educated person not only thinks but acts. The shape of our knowledge becomes the shape of our living; the relation of the knower to the known becomes the relation of the living self to the larger world.”

● Parker Palmer



Hopeless knowing:
our epistemic default:
Knowledge is...



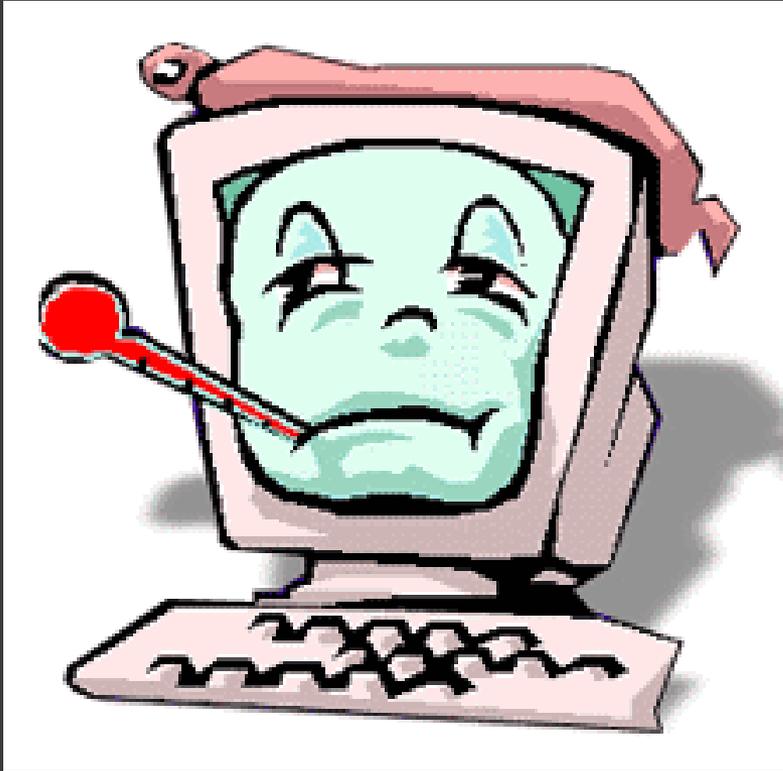
- Information
- Factoids
- Statements and proofs
- Linear
- Passive
- Static
- Impersonal
- Just read it off the world

Your epistemic default: “Esther’s Daisy of Dichotomies”

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| ◉ Knowledge | Belief |
| ◉ Facts | Opinions, Interpretations, Values, Morals |
| ◉ Reason | Faith, Emotion |
| ◉ Objective | Subjective |
| ◉ Theory | Application |
| ◉ Science | Art, Imagination, Religion, Authority |
| ◉ Public | Private |
| ◉ Mind | Body |
| ◉ Male | Female |



DEFECTIVE!!!!!!!



= Modernist Epistemology

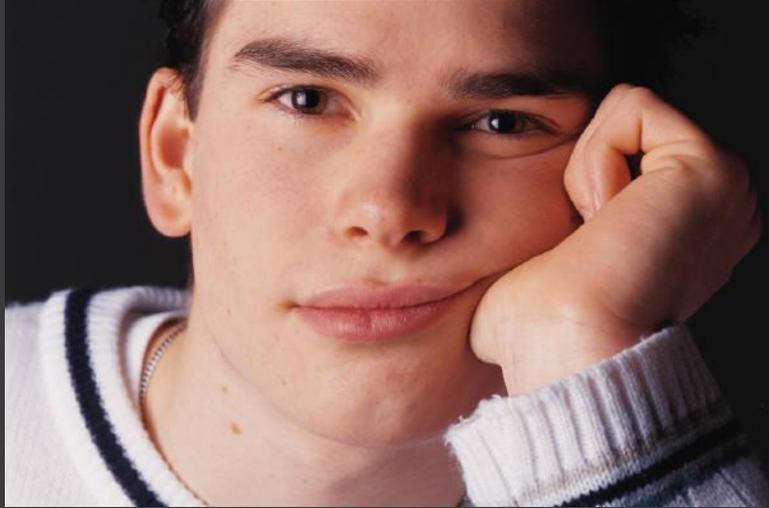


Rene Descartes, ca 1650

- The theoretical paradigm
- (David Kettle)



The defective epistemic default : Consequences



- Depersonalization
- Disengagement
- Irresponsibility
- Indifference
- Boredom
- Cluelessness
- Hopelessness
- Skepticism
- Cynicism
- Atheism
- Secularism
- Compartmentalization
- Fragmentation
- Disembodiment

- Dynamism
- Adventure
- Confidence
- Risk
- Wonder
- Wisdom.
- Jesus the Truth

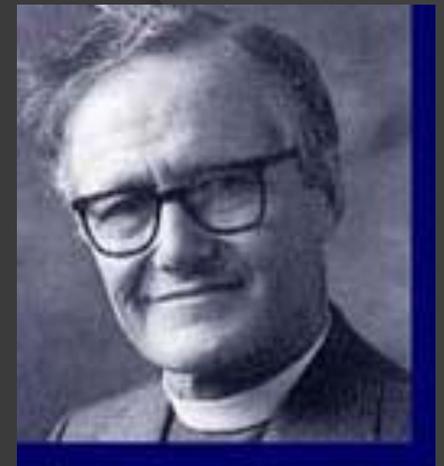


Protestant Christian epistemic default?

- ◉ Comprehensive Christian Information
- ◉ Sermons, Bible studies, conferences, heaven...
- ◉ Christian Daisy:
 - ◉ Absolute Truth Relativism
 - ◉ Reason Faith
 - ◉ Theory Application
 - ◉ Theology Relationship w/ Jesus

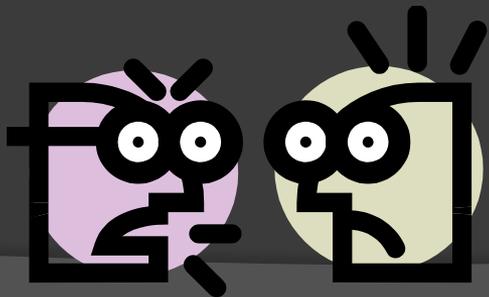
I love
Jesus!





Leslie Newbigin

& Evangelical
Christianity??



Modernist Epistemology and Protestant Christians

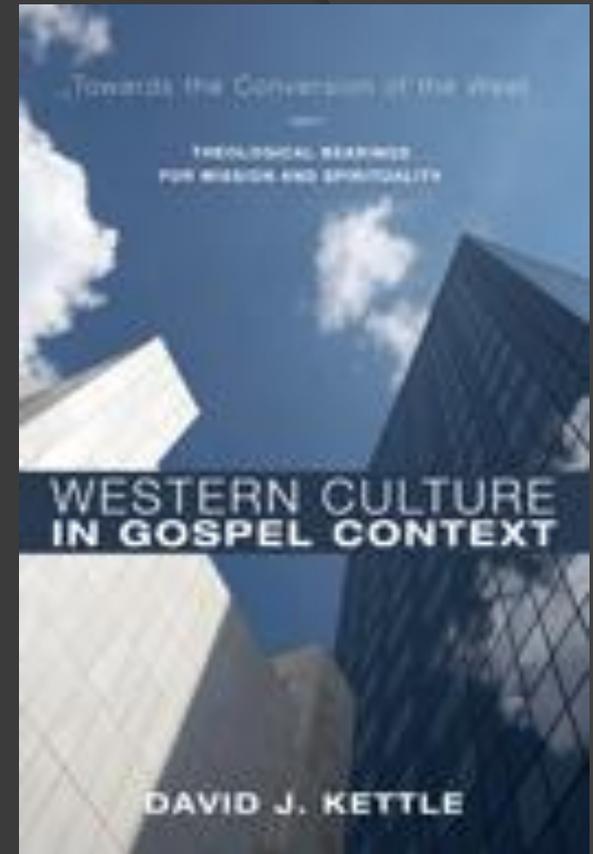
- ◉ Delegitimizes religion, faith, Christianity, and God.
- ◉ Enlightenment Metanarrative: Reason-Scientific progress-Human potential-Civilized Society-Christendom
- ◉ Individualized, inward



Modernist Epistemology

- ◎ = the theoretical paradigm
- ◎ “In ‘modern’ society a theory of *knowledge* has established itself that turns *theoretical*/knowledge into a paradigm for *all* knowing, including—in an act of ‘logical inversion’—knowledge of God.”
- ◎ According to *modern thinking*, ‘value’ can be separated from ‘fact’ and is subjective and private. ...the idea has subverted the exploration of reality at the level of our deepest and most lively personal engagement with the real.

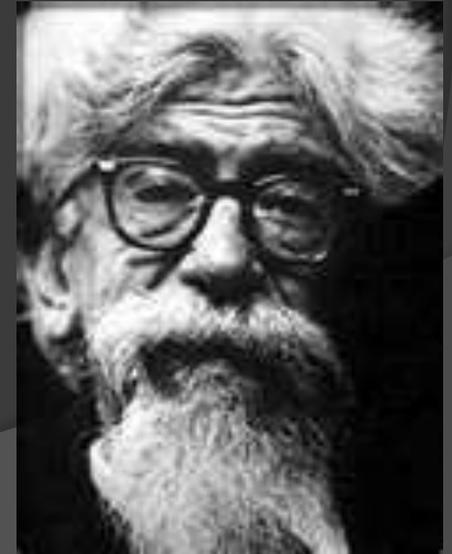
◎ David J. Kettle



Modernist Epistemology

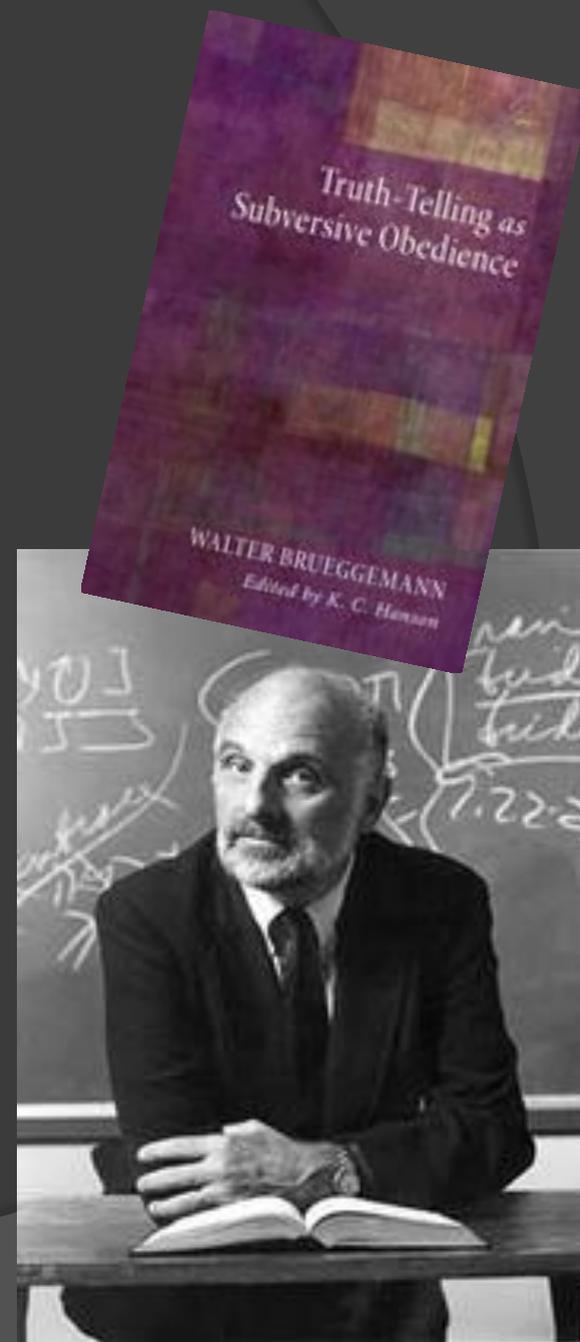
- “Our discordant epistemological schemes do much to create this dullness....Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel was keenly aware that wonder had been compromised in the modern world and needed to be restored and renewed. In his view, the presumption of the enlightenment, that everything advances and progresses, has fostered the decline of wonder among humankind. ...‘As civilization advances the sense of wonder declines. Such decline is an alarming symptom of our state of mind. Mankind will not perish for want of information; but only for want of appreciation.’”

● Robert M. Frazier



Modernist Epistemology

- ⦿ “A substantive decision is required of us, for modernity has eroded even our readiness to hold to the miraculous scandal [of the Resurrection].”
- ⦿ “But the matters of life and faith cannot be expressed in the tongues of modernity, for its technical epistemology, incapable of doxology, has consigned us to death and despair.”
 - ⦿ Walter Brueggemann



EPIS  EMOLOGY

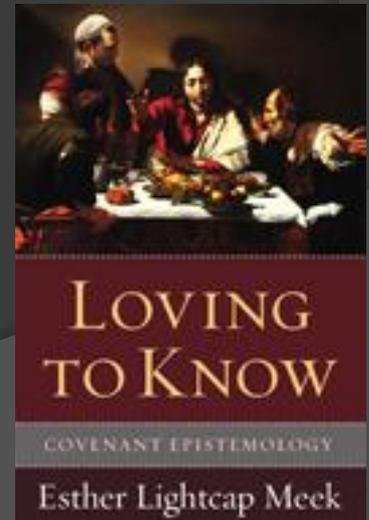
Hope for knowing

- ⦿ Theoretical paradigm
- ⦿ No place for hope
- ⦿ Covenant epistemology
- ⦿ Runs on hope



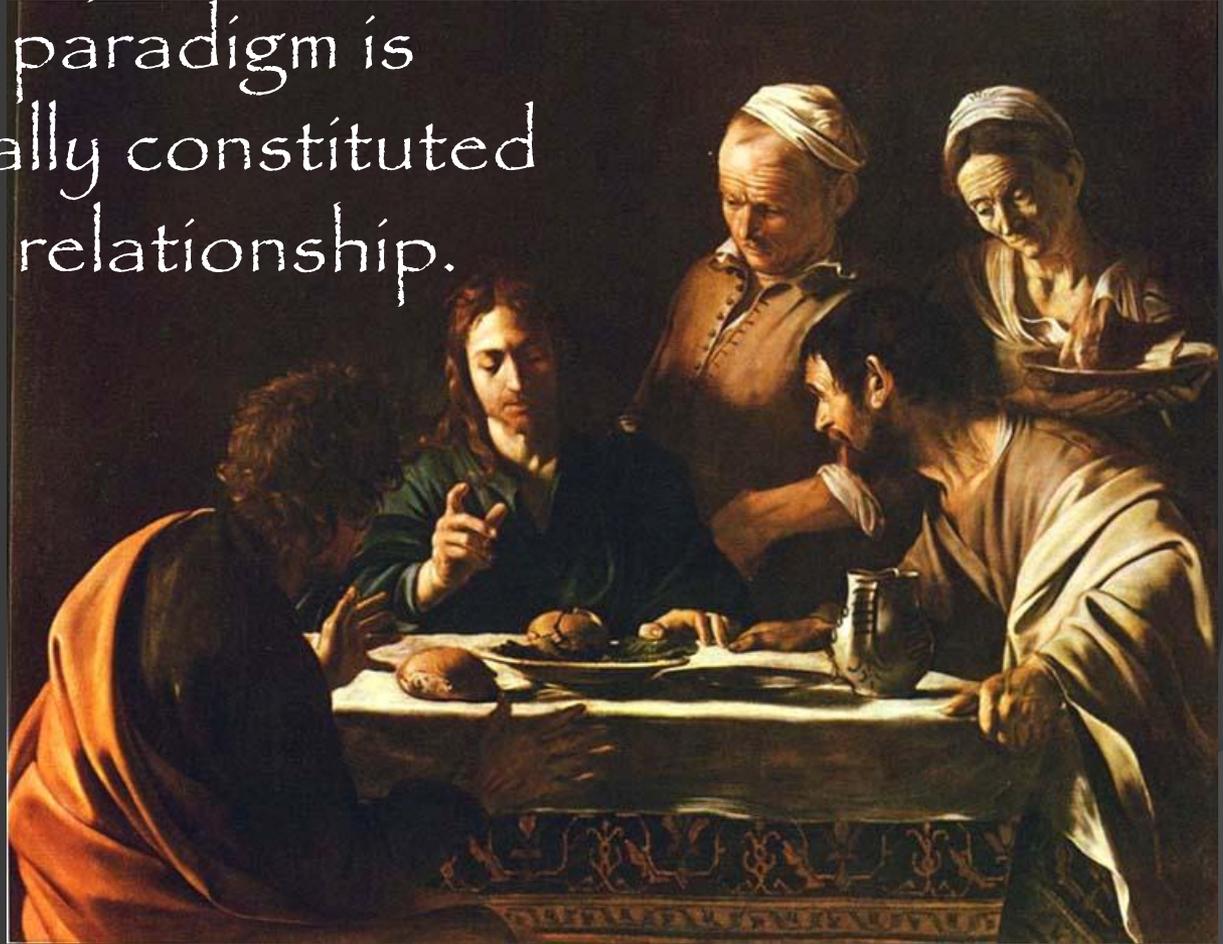
Hope *in* Knowing: introducing covenant epistemology

- ◎ Subsidiary-focal integration
 - (Relying on subsidiary clues
 - Integrating to a focal pattern
 - (Unspecifiable future prospects)
 - Hope in subsidiary-focal integration
- ◎ Covenant and interpersonhood (Day 2)

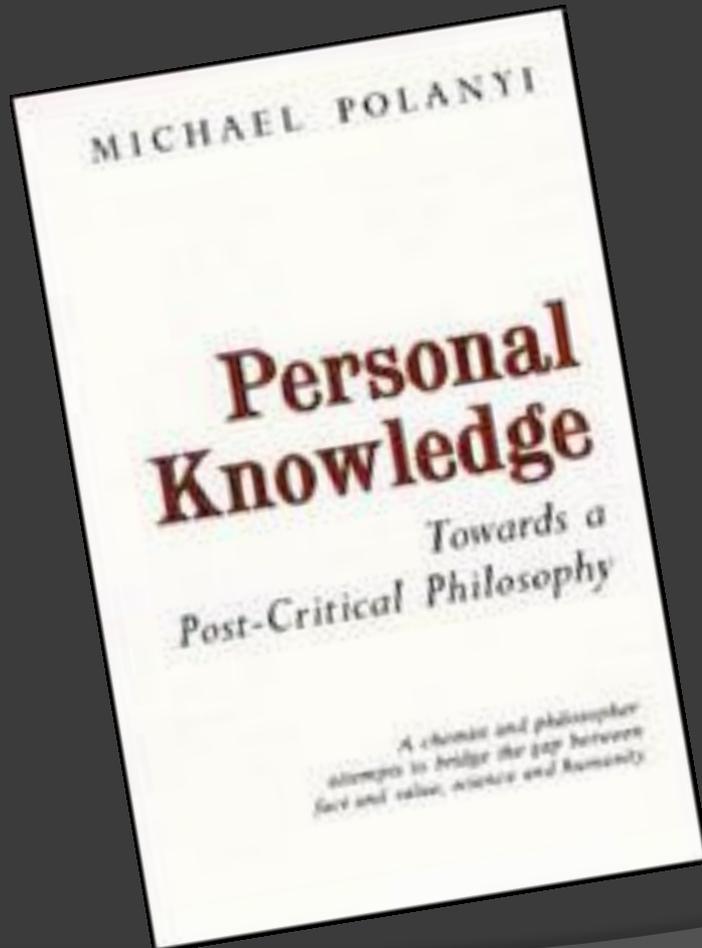


Covenant epistemology:

the epistemic paradigm is
the covenantally constituted
interpersonal relationship.



Michael Polanyi





“We know more than we can tell.”

—Michael Polanyi

Knowing:
"Subsidiary-focal integration"

*Indeterminate
future prospects*

integration

...hope

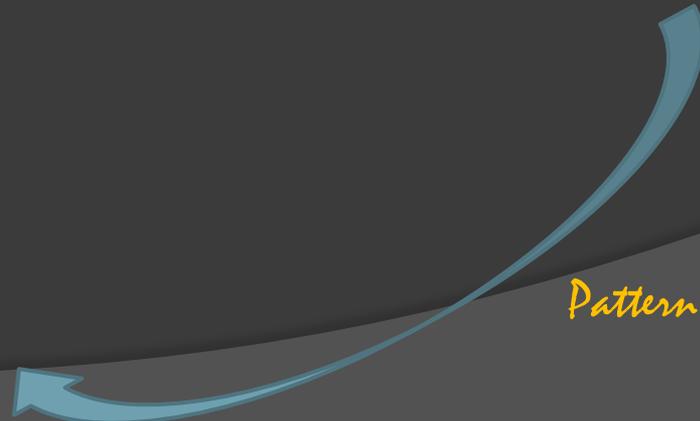
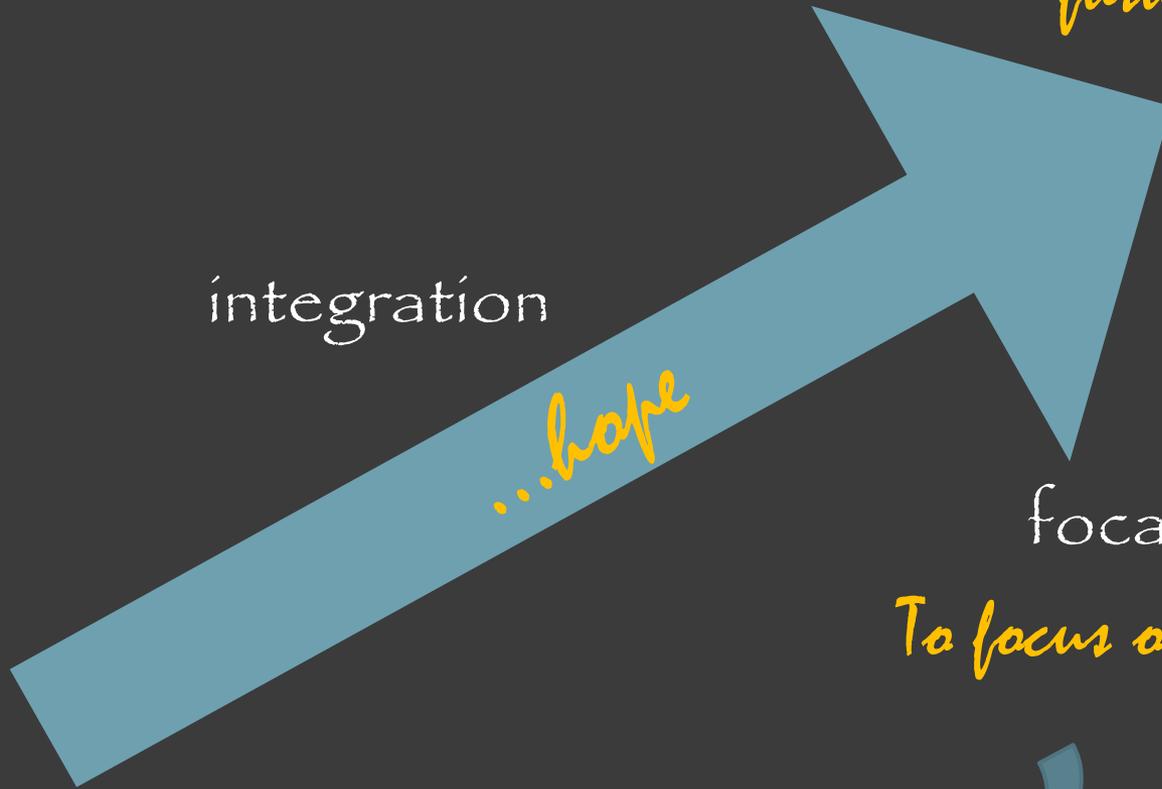
focal

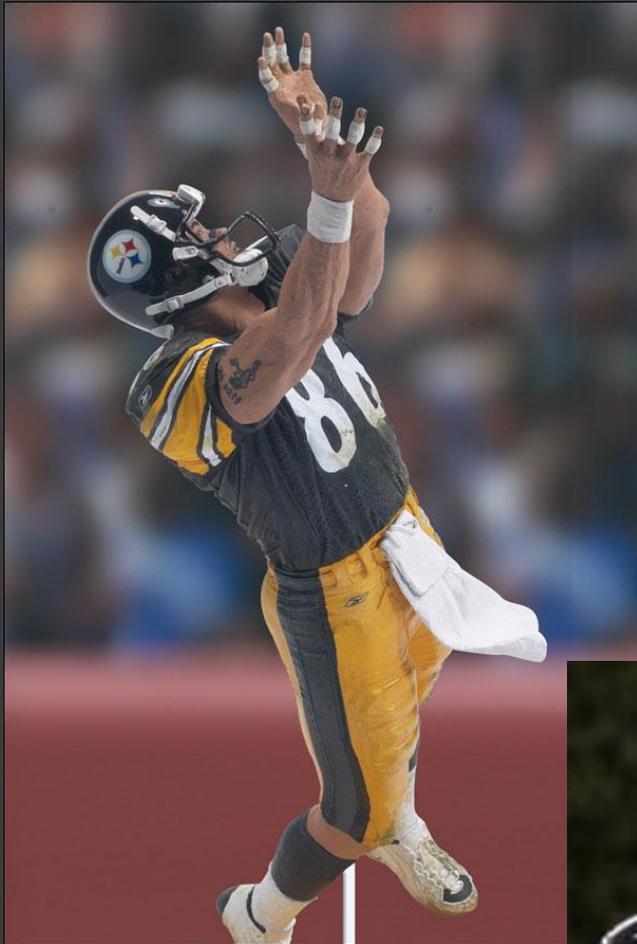
To focus on a pattern

subsidiary

Relying on clues

Pattern transforms clues





Knowing is...
...the profoundly
human struggle...

⦿ = integration



Knowing is the profoundly human
struggle...
...to rely on clues...

◎ = subsidiary



Knowing is the profoundly human
struggle to rely on clues...
...to focus on a pattern...

⦿ = focal

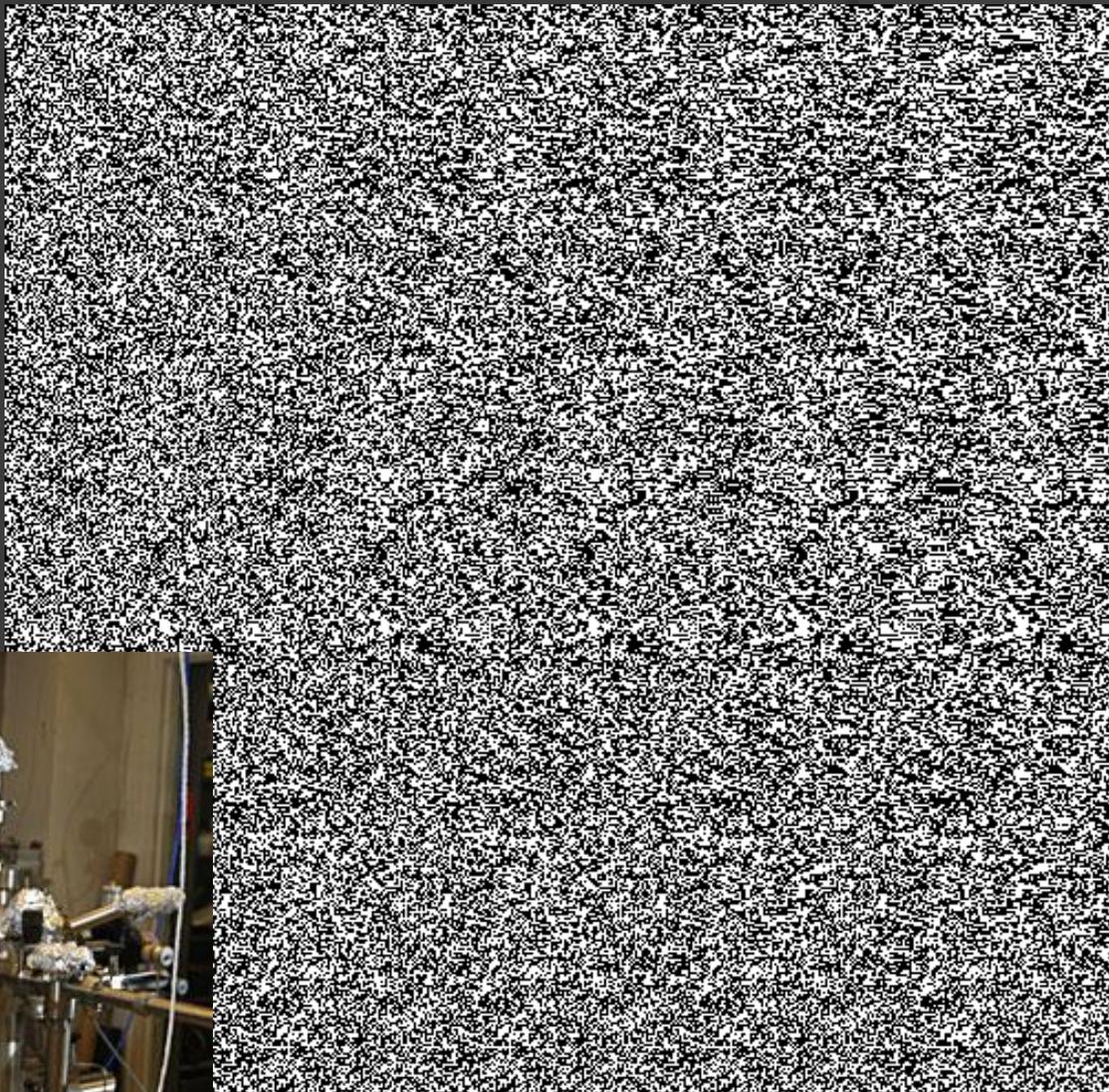
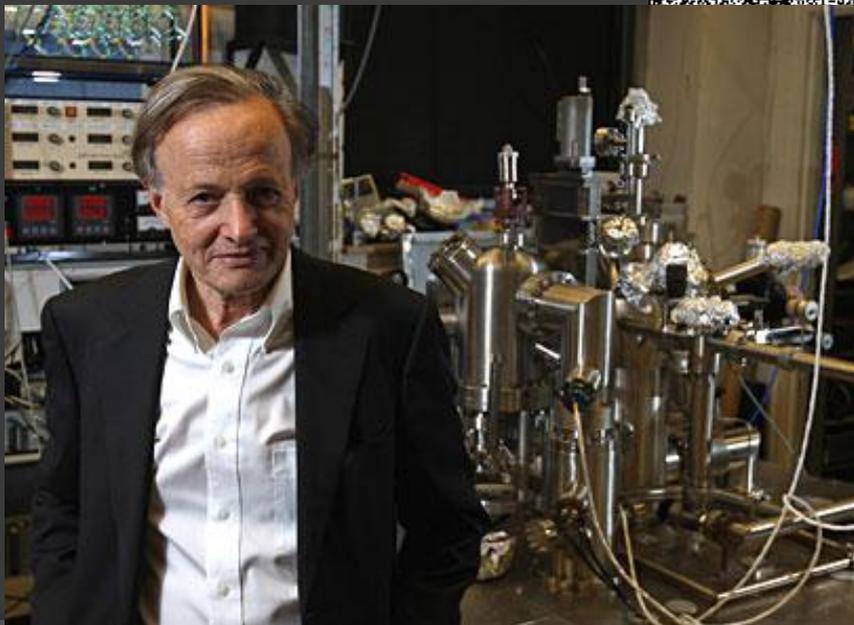


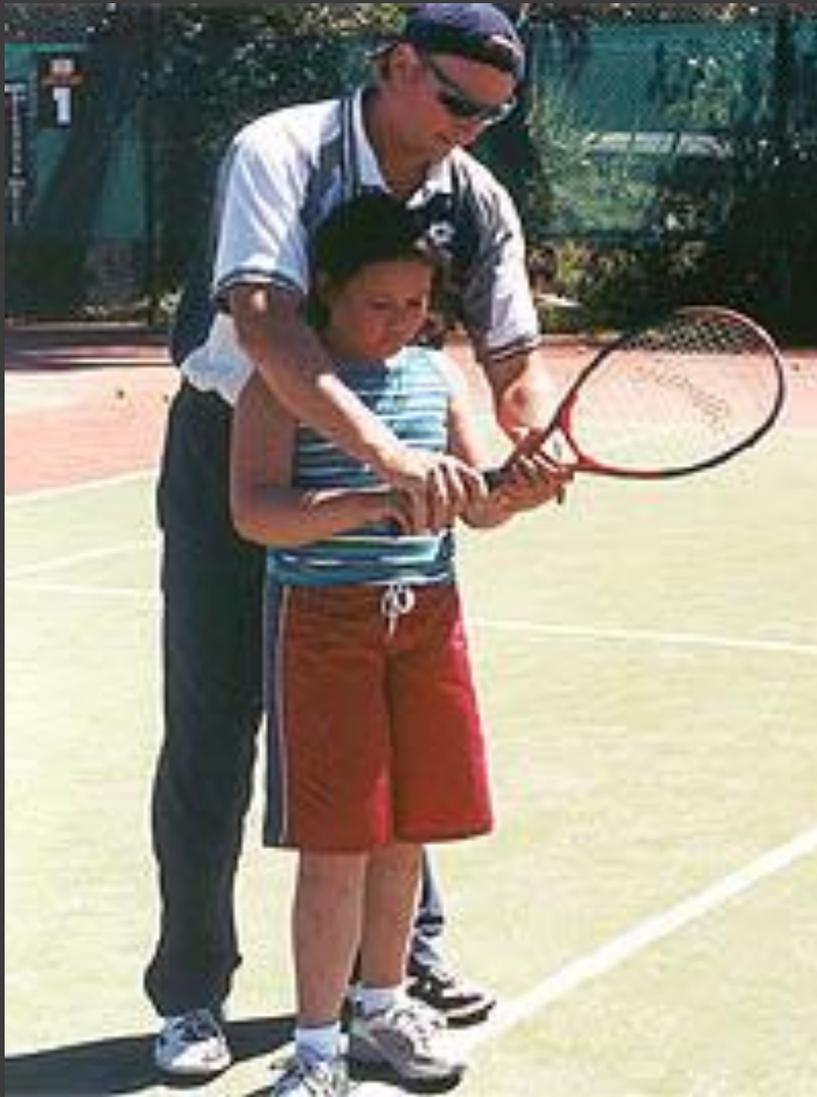
Knowing is the profoundly human
struggle to rely on clues to focus
on a pattern...
...which we submit to as a token of
reality.





John Polanyi,
Michael Polanyi's son
Nobel Prize, 1986





- ⦿ Existential:
 - my lived body feel of swinging the racket
- ⦿ Normative:
 - coach, authoritative guide
- ⦿ Situational:
 - the world of tennis

Unspecifiable future possibilities



Longing to Know

THE PHILOSOPHY
OF KNOWLEDGE FOR



ORDINARY
PEOPLE

Esther Lightcap Meek



Subsidiary-focal integration



Hope

in subsidiary-focal integration



- ⦿ Discovery, not explanation.
 - ⦿ Responsible, risky commitment.
 - ⦿ A long scrabbling struggle.
 - ⦿ Openness, orientation toward future.
 - ⦿ *We long to know.*
 - ⦿ No necessary linear connection between clues and pattern.
 - ⦿ No guarantee of insight.
 - ⦿ Hope of truth graciously revealed.
 - ⦿ Future prospects.
 - ⦿ Hope of truth.
- ⦿ Ct. the theoretical paradigm.

Hope in Knowing: introducing covenant epistemology

- ◎ Subsidiary-focal integration
- ◎ Covenant and interpersonhood (Day 2)
 - The personal in knower, known and knowing
 - Covenant as relationship
 - Interpersonhood
 - Signature features of knowing
 - Hope in knowing



LOVING
TO KNOW

COVENANT EPISTEMOLOGY

Esther Lightcap Meek

Hints of interpersonal reciprocity: knower, known, knowing

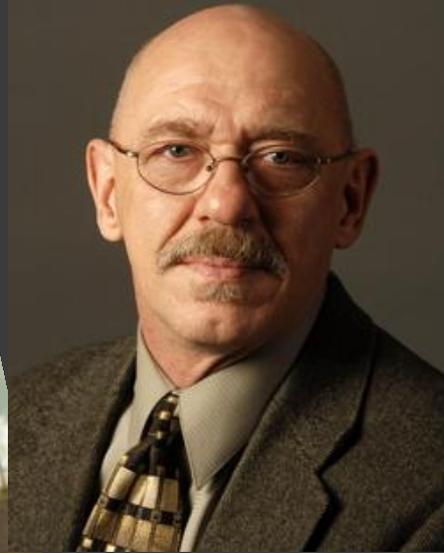
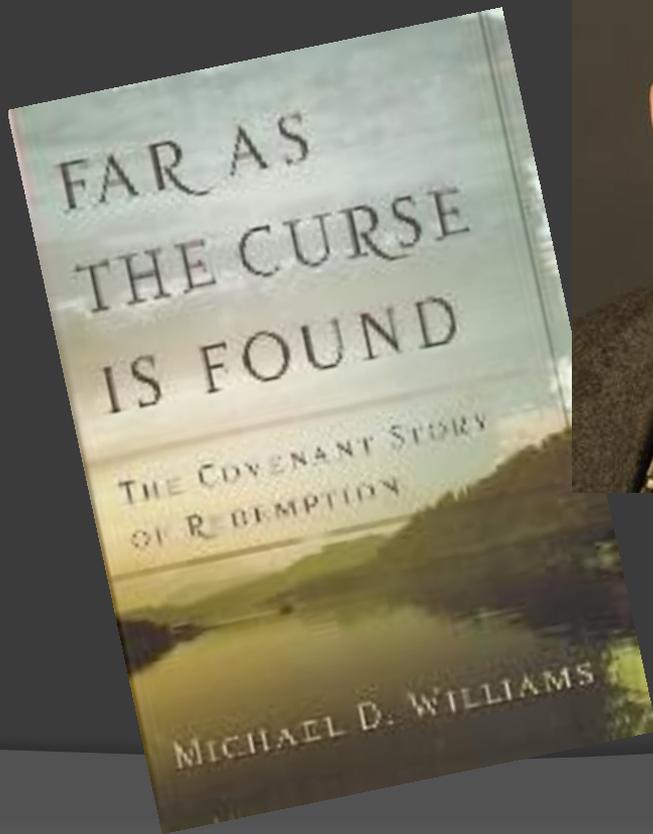


Annie Dillard: "Stalking muskrats"
Lesslie Newbigin: "Another kind of knowing"
Parker Palmer: "Truth as troth"

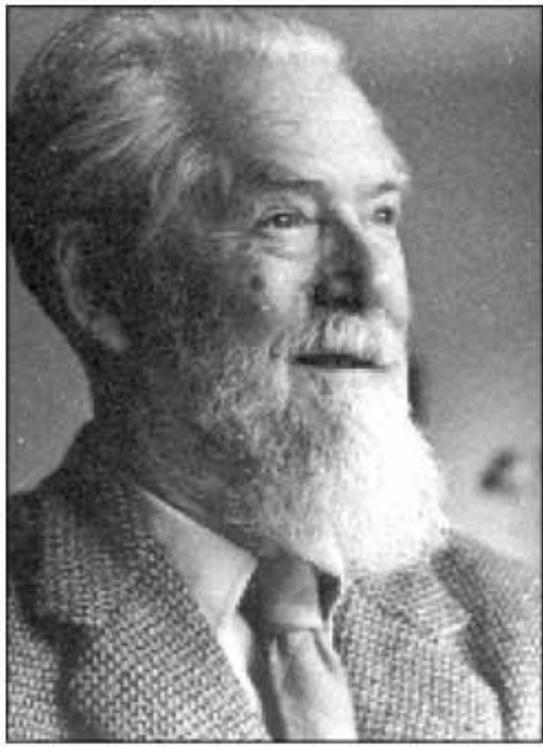


Covenant as relationship

--typified by promises and obligations, and mutuality; unfolding historically; to the end of the descent of God, and communion



John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation*

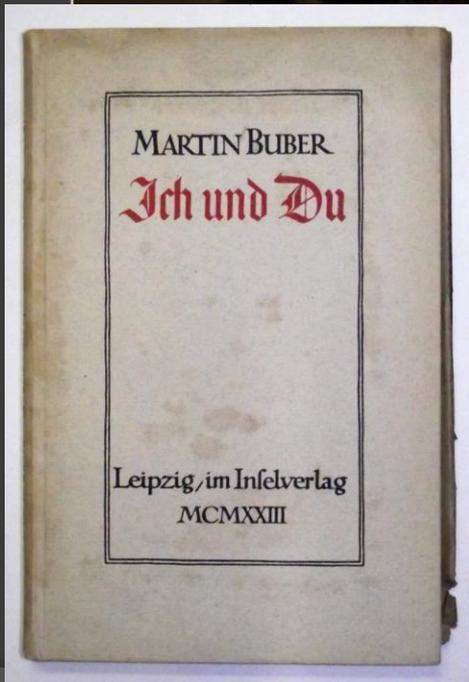
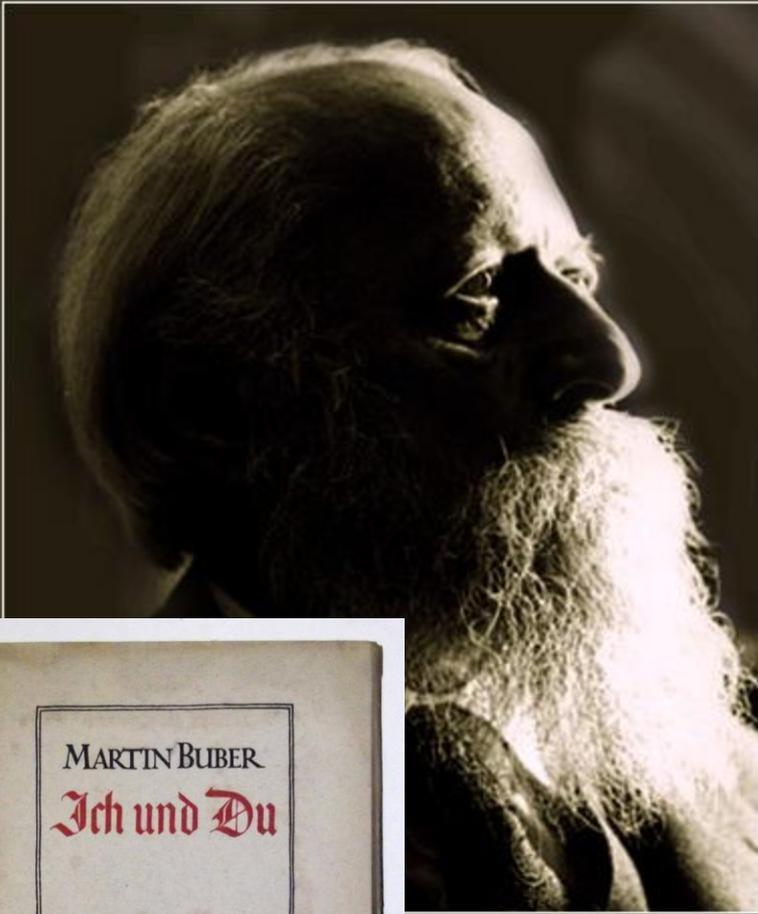


- To be a person is to be in communion.

person

person







The Holy

The Self

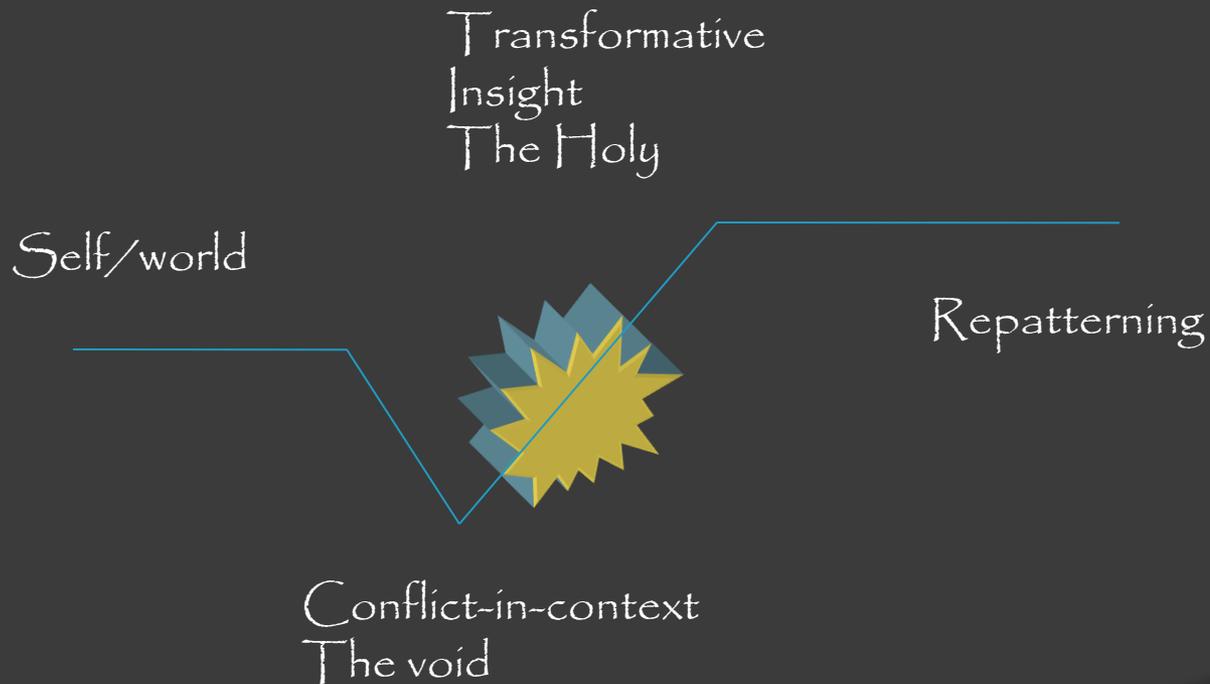
Lived World

The Void

James E. Loder,
*The Transforming
Moment*

Knowing as
transformative event.
The four dimensions
of humanness.

Knowing taps into the Void-Holy dynamic



- The knowing event:
 - Conflict in context
 - Struggle
 - Aha! moment of insight
 - Transformation of self and world
 - Shift from active to passive
 - Knower is being known
 - “The truth always exceeds the proof.”

Being on the way



- ⦿ Adventure, quest, pilgrimage.
- ⦿ Disposing ourselves in commitment and hope to the yet-to-be-known.
- ⦿ We do not know in order to love; we love in order to know.
- ⦿ Anticipative knowing.

Inviting the real

- ◎ Relationship as paradigm for all knowing



Epistemological etiquette

- “Love, honor and obey...”



Put yourself in the way of knowing



Live life on the terms of
the yet-to-be-known



Noticing Regard



- ◎ “Delight is the premise of any sound Christian epistemology.”
—David Bentley Hart

Knowing for Shalom



- ◎ Creative attention
- ◎ “Love sees what is invisible.”
- ◎ —Simone Weil

- ◉ Saying “You” and listening

- ◉ --Buber

- ◉ “Is anyone there?”

- ◉ --Newbigín



- ◉ LISTENING beyond preconceived categories.

- ◉ Vulnerable openness to being known.

perichoresis



Knowing as transformation

- ◎ The Greeks learn in order to comprehend. The Hebrews learn in order to be apprehended.

- ◎ Heschel







the descent of God



Hope

in covenant epistemology

- ⦿ Knowing as pilgrimage.
 - ⦿ Involves the void.
 - ⦿ Crying out for deliverance by the Holy
 - ⦿ Embrace risk courageously.
 - ⦿ Hope : imagined new reality
 - ⦿ Covenantal self-binding to invite the yet-to-be-known
 - ⦿ *We love to know.*
 - ⦿ Seeks to be apprehended and transformed by inbreaking reality.
 - ⦿ Hope of shalom for knower and known.
 - ⦿ A dance of mutuality.
 - ⦿ Hope of a person, the face of the Holy.
- ⦿ Ct. the theoretical paradigm.



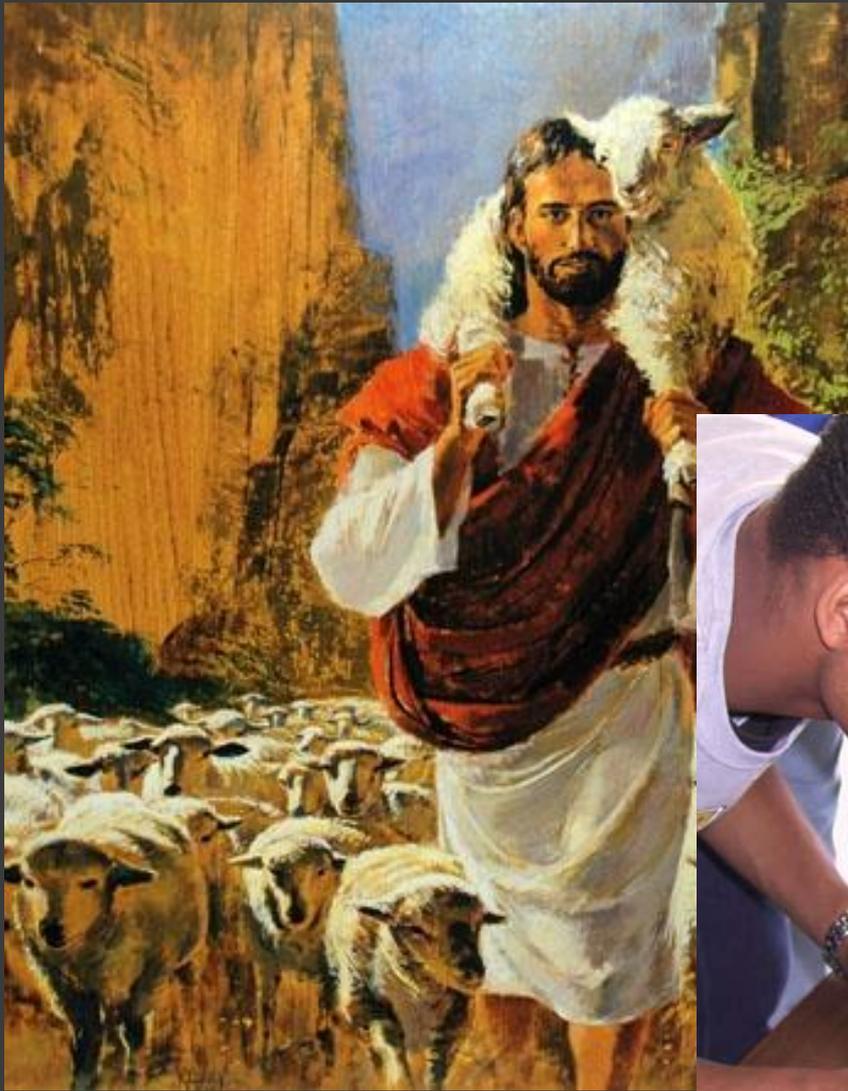
Hope through Knowing: stories of knowing for shalom

- ◉ Knowing and being known by God
- ◉ Knowing ourselves
- ◉ Knowing the world



Androcles and the Lion

Knowing and being known by God





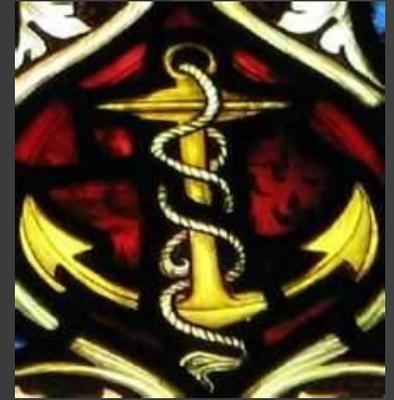
- ◎ “The healing path must pass through the desert or else our healing will be the product of our own will and wisdom. ... The desert shatters the soul’s arrogance and leaves body and soul crying out in thirst and hunger. In the desert, we trust God or we die.”
- ◎ “Valleys strip us of the presumption of independence.”
- ◎ Allender, *Healing Path*

The healing path

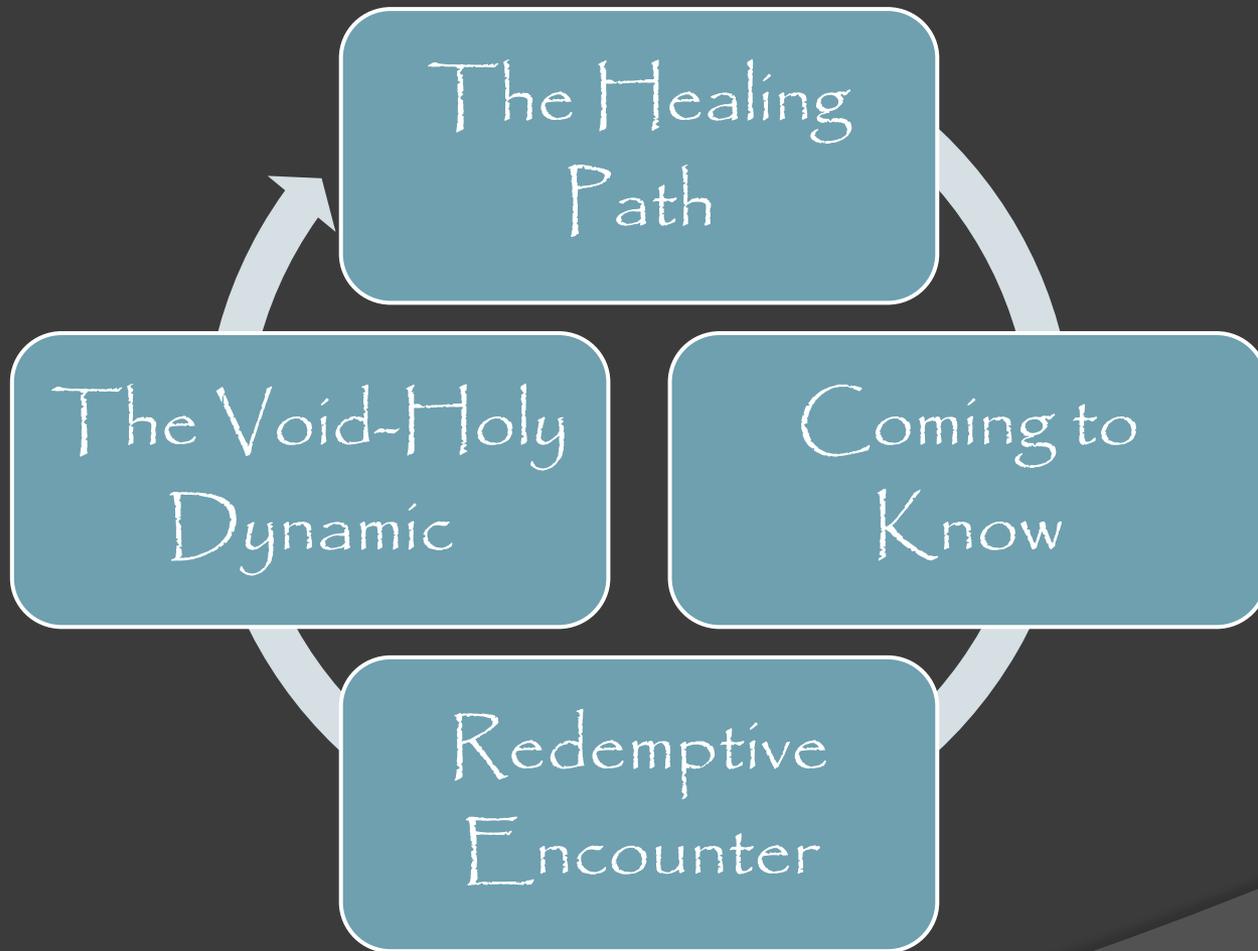
- ⊙ Begins with the cry of hope
- ⊙ Embracing life: 4 elements
 - Opening your heart
 - Waiting with anticipation
 - Encircling the other
 - Letting go



Hope is critical for the healing path...

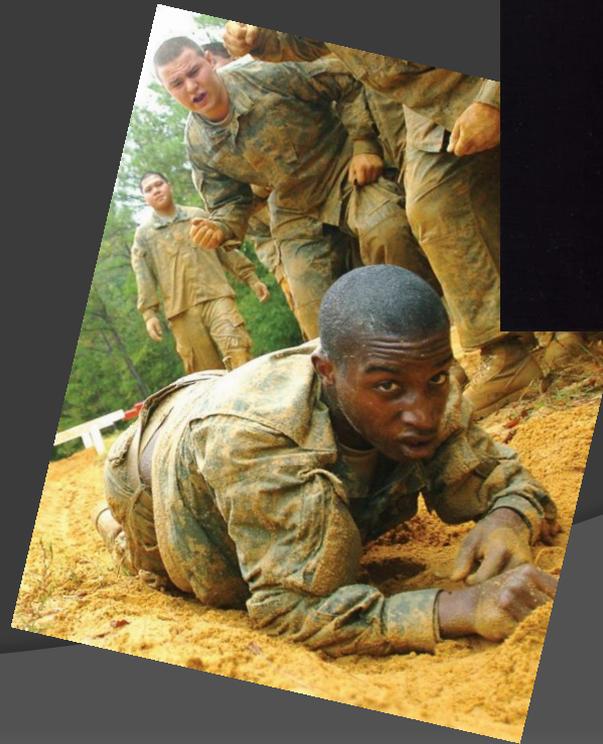


- “Hope is crucial for the capacity to anticipate and shape the future of the good. Our imagination grows in the soil of hope. To imagine what does not yet exist—to see into the future—is necessary for planning a vacation, investigating neurochemistry, writing a book, or even cooking a meal. Hope requires a sense of sacred discontent, innocent anticipation, and playful risk.”
- We need our imagination to see the unseen, to invite us to posit a world that is there beyond what we know that has yet to be revealed, “to give ourselves to the future through the labor pains of creative struggle.” But to do this is just what it means to be human.
- --Dan Allender



Becoming better knowers

- ⦿ Becoming the I of I-You (Buber)
- ⦿ Creative attention (Weil)
- ⦿ Looking the world back to grace (Capon)
- ⦿ Noticing regard
- ⦿ A sense of personal beauty



Semper transformanda



Hope through knowing ...for knowing...for the world

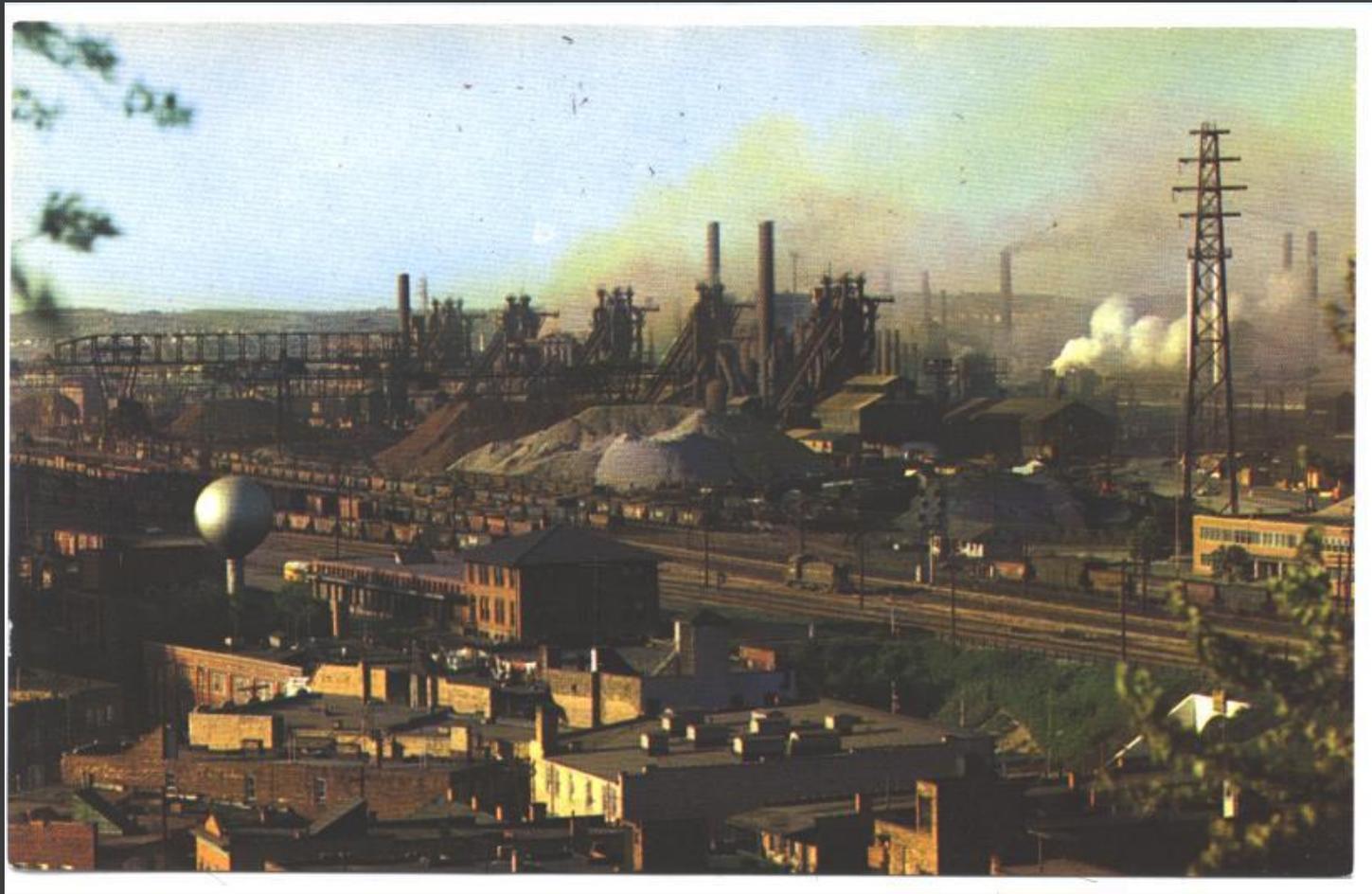
- ◎ David Finnamore, recording engineer
- ◎ Dr. Bruce Vojack, Dean of Admin,
College of Engineering, Univ. of IL
(<http://epistemology-of-innovation.com/>)
- ◎ Former student in the FBI
- ◎ Former seminary student



Knowing for shalom ...in Aliquippa



















Knowing for Shalom in the Cafe

- ⦿ Long trajectory of coming to know
- ⦿ Love sees what is invisible
- ⦿ Putting yourself in the way of knowing
- ⦿ Indwelling
- ⦿ Climbing into the clues
- ⦿ Notice, care, delight
- ⦿ Loving in order to know



Listening

- ⦿ Numbness →
- ⦿ Grief →
- ⦿ Crying out →
- ⦿ Embracing hope →
- ⦿ Imagining an alternative future



What would heaven look like on Franklin Avenue?



Dorian Stevens,
rap artist, founder
Aliquippa Studios

Listening



Covenantal self-binding to invite the real



Listening space
for story, truthful self-disclosure,
relationship, taking personal responsibility,
crying out in grief, embracing hope...the
descent of God in newness...forgiveness,
reconciliation, justice

Listening

- To invite the real in the person's responsibility
- To invite God
- To invite God's work in yourself



Geneva College
Spring Break Mission Team
to Aliquippa, 2011

From Outcast
to
Daughter of Israel

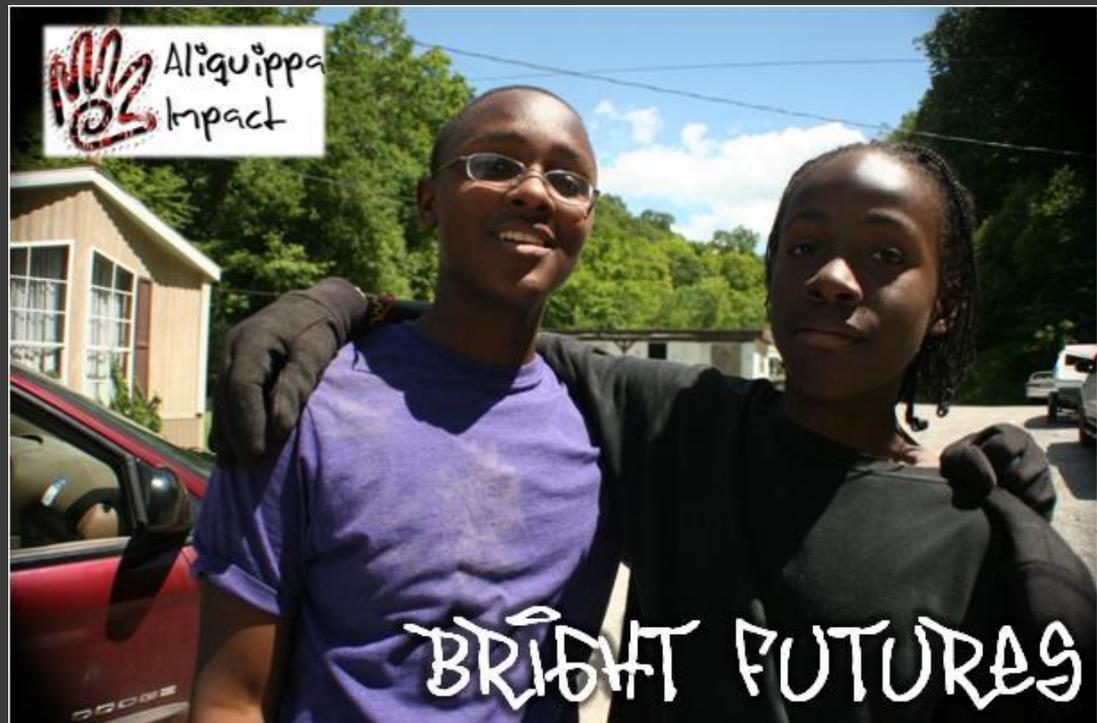


Art and Open Mic at the Café



“No hopeless people; no
hopeless communities.”

—Aliquippa Impact



Covenant epistemology is an epistemology of hope.

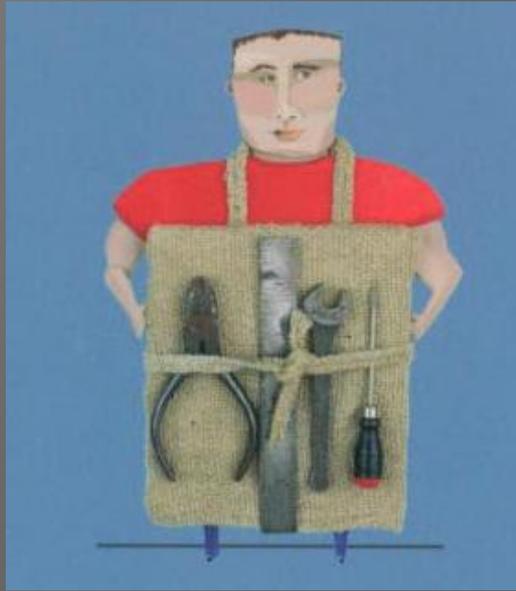
- ◉ It opens every corner of knowing to accommodate hope and to be fueled by hope.
- ◉ It woos us into hope and brings into the heart of the epistemic paradigm the vision of Christ our soul's great hope.
- ◉ In this it restores us to hope—hope of truth, hope as persons and knowers, hope in inviting the real, hope of knowing for shalom.



LOVING TO KNOW

COVENANT EPISTEMOLOGY

Esther Lightcap Meek



Longing to Know
Loving to Know

Welcome to the conversation.
www.longingtoknow.com