

Leadership and Spiritual Maturity

Initially written in response to a request from Evangelical Seminary
By Caroline Crocker, PhD

Several years ago I lost my job teaching cell biology at George Mason University. The trouble started when my supervisor received a complaint from a student whom I had kicked out of class for cheating on an exam. This person falsely accused me of teaching Creationism, but refused to put the accusation in writing. Despite the numerous student letters saying that I had done no such thing, my supervisor arranged for my 3-year contract to be switched to a one-year and my job was over. Shortly thereafter the university arranged things so that the law firm that had agreed to represent me fired me as a client. My lawyer, a partner in the firm, found himself unemployed. And I found myself an [Expelled](#) scientist. Details and proof can be found my book: [Free to Think](#).

This experience thrust me into the most significant leadership responsibilities I have yet experienced. And those require that I do all in my power to attain spiritual maturity. Let me explain.

I have experience as a medical research scientist working on projects funded by pharmaceutical companies, a professor working with students, a tutor of medical and other students and just a citizen. I know that when data are not favorable to the company funding the work, a confidentiality clause can prevent publication. I have seen numerous students cheat in their classes—some professors do not actively discourage this practice. I am a first hand witness of the fact that many universities suppress information that would challenge politically-charged science. And, I have seen what every citizen has seen: science or pseudoscience being used to manipulate the public for financial, political or religious reasons.

The result is a public that has been trained to memorize rather than think, is uninformed about all the facts, and no longer trusts the “establishment.” Innovation and thinking outside the box are stifled by fear, confusion about what science is and is not, and can and cannot do, appears to rule the day, and we have become sitting ducks for charlatans that espouse bunk science. People assumed to be scientific or medical experts say, “this beauty product will make you look younger,” “that alternative medicine treatment will improve your health,” “snow disproves global warming,” and “science has disproven God.” These claims may or may not be true, but many times their veracity goes unchallenged. How are we to know what to believe? This problem, the lack of integrity in science and its use, is what American Institute for Technology and Science Education ([AITSE](#)) was created to address.

What this has to do with my responsibility to lead with integrity is rather obvious. I was a medical research scientist; I was a professor; I was a tutor. In all positions I led some people. But, now I lead AITSE, a nonprofit organization consisting of a growing [number](#) of scientists, engineers and physicians. Together these experts study and analyze recent “scientific” claims and then provide the public clear, reliable and balanced education.

After all, just as a little misdirection can cause an arrow to completely miss the target, a little misinformation can cause a lot of damage to one's health, finances, and even worldview. AITSE is in touch with over 500 people through our monthly email newsletter, is in contact with about 200,000 through social media, and reaches an unknown number through public speaking and radio and TV interviews. That is a weighty responsibility.

But, besides being scientifically trained, I am an evangelical Christian. One who believes that the Bible is inspired by God and, as such, it is very powerful. And so, a little misunderstanding of the Bible can lead to a lot of trouble. One only need observe the many cults. Health, use of finances, and even worldview are even more adversely impacted by incorrect doctrine than they are by bunk science. Some people cope with concerns about misuse and misunderstanding of the Bible by just believing everything the pastor says, even finding excuses for their personal lack of Biblical knowledge. But, just as AITSE's goal is to empower and train people to be able to assess scientific claims for themselves, a real pastor's goal is to empower and train his flock to study the Bible for themselves—and their and my responsibility is to do it. After all, misleading people about Spiritual things is much more serious than misleading them about science.

Therefore, it is vital for believers, especially leaders (and every scientist is a leader to some degree) to be diligent students of the Word. We need to know what Scripture says, having searched it out for ourselves, learning from the Holy Spirit and other believers, and applying it to our lives. The Bible teaches that this will lead us to spiritual maturity. As it says in Ephesians 4:11-14,

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

We need to be sure that we are aiming straight, because being a little way off at the start can lead to missing the target completely.

AITSE aims to inform the public and keep them safe from bunk science. The Bible is there to protect us from bunk. Period. It is designed to keep us from being led astray by our own thoughts, desires, and the spiritual forces of wickedness--or even from being tricked by spiritual charlatans. Good leadership will always encourage people towards maturity, reading, learning, and thinking for themselves, and good leaders, must be in the Word—progressing towards spiritual maturity.