



## **CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS: FORMING IDENTITY, BUILDING COMMUNITY**

As Christian scholars, we have our common faith in Jesus Christ and our shared commitment to scholarship in our respective fields of knowledge. Furthermore, we accept as true and commit ourselves to living out what the Scripture declares: that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1:7), and all things were created through and for Christ and in him all things hold together (Col. 1:16-17).

How then are we to relate the scriptural truth about the foundation of knowledge and the centrality of Christ in all things to our teaching and research?

We believe that this question about the relation between our faith in Christ and our life as scholars lies at the base of our identity formation. Our answers will affect the way we approach our work and understand our role in the world. We hopefully expect that our answers will become richer and fuller as we grow in maturity, both as Christians and as scholars. Moreover, this identity-forming inquiry challenges us to seek answers together if we desire to be faithful to God's call.

As God's people and co-partners in the mission of God, our identity ought to be communal. We are to mutually help, encourage, and edify by joining our efforts and sharing our experiences in communion with our contemporaries as well as with our predecessors in faith and learning. By seeking our identity together, we can build and strengthen the community of Christian scholars in our generation and over many generations. Institutions of Christian higher education will find this togetherness particularly challenging as they search for a renewed mission in our fractured time.

The conference promises to be a valuable occasion for all participants as they consider, individually and together, how to form identity and build community as Christian scholars.