

# what we have loved: memory and the heart of learning

Roger Lundin

**I**F OUR GOAL IS TO “REVISIT THE CONNECTION” between Christianity and liberal learning, then there can be few better places from which to begin our journey than the nineteenth century. There we find Christianity facing bracing challenges of direct relevance to our own spiritual lives and theological concerns, and it is also in the final decades of that century that we witness the emergence of liberal learning as we now define, practice, and defend it. What makes this century so vital to our task of revisiting the connection is the fact that this challenge and this emergence are not coincidental or unrelated, but intimately tied to one another. In the form that we know them, liberal learning and the modern ideal of the humanities were cultivated at that century’s close as a kind of healing balm to repair the wounds inflicted upon Christian belief over the course of that century.

In focusing upon questions of history here, I am in a way going against type. When we gather as Christian educators to reflect upon the connections between the Lord to whom we bear witness and the educational vision we profess, we customarily speak of themes and ideals rather than of narratives of the past. Now to be sure, our contemplations and visions are central to our work as Christian educators. They set us at a distance from our daily labors and afford us a refreshing perspective on our sometimes wearying activities. They are to us what the climbing of trees is to the “swinger of birches” in Robert Frost’s remarkable poem. The speaker in “Birches” tells us that as a boy he liked to climb those branches “Toward heaven.” And so, he says:

I dream of going back to be.  
It’s when I’m weary of considerations,  
And life is too much like a pathless wood  
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs  
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping  
From a twig’s having lashed across it open.  
I’d like to get away from earth awhile  
And then come back to it and begin over.

The speaker in Frost’s poem has his trees to climb to gain his fresh vantage point, while we have our Lilly-funded flights to take, rooms to occupy, and vistas to enjoy so that we may renew our vision for the work before us. Yet as the speaker of Frost’s poem reminds us, he—and we—must return from the treetops and make our way back from Malibu. “May no fate willfully misunderstand me,” he pleads:

And half grant what I wish and snatch me away  
Not to return. Earth’s the right place for love:  
I don’t know where it’s likely to go better.

Love and memory are my themes today. If earth is indeed the right place for love, I can think of no better way of returning to it for our thinking about “Christianity and liberal learning” than through the offices of memory and the work of history. In the account I am about to offer, I am indebted in particular to James Turner, whose work on the rise of unbelief and the growth of the humanities in the nineteenth century provides a framework for my argument. At the heart of this history, however, will be nineteenth-century poets, novelists, and essayists. Each wrote profoundly on memory as well as love, and each speaks to the matters on our minds and in our hearts.

## memory and modernity

We begin with Wordsworth, who has provided our title. The passage comes at the end of *The Prelude*. After having documented everything from the French Revolution to the development of his own “poetic mind,” Wordsworth links memory, love, and learning with the poet’s calling: “what we have loved,/ Others will love, and we will teach them how.”

As it stands, this seems a remarkably concise representation of a Christian understanding of the art of teaching and the heart of learning. These are enterprises of cultural memory and transmission. The present perfect tense—“what we have loved”

—speaks of the passing nature of all experience and implies our need to pass it on.

We will teach them, Wordsworth appears to say, about the objects of our affection, with the goal of having them share the love we hold. It is not a technique for having affections, however, that we will impart; rather, we will teach them to love the proper persons, things, and beings. “He lives in justice and sanctity who is an unprejudiced assessor of the intrinsic value of things,” writes St. Augustine. “He is a man who has an ordinate love: he neither loves what should not be loved nor fails to love what should be loved.” Sinners are not to be loved for their own sake, and all women and men are to be “loved for the sake of God, and God should be loved for His own sake.” While Wordsworth grounds teaching in the act of transmitting the past, he also speaks confidently of what is to come in the future: “what we have loved,/ Others will love.” He delivers this as an assertion that takes on the character of a promise, having connected in two lines of poetry past, present, and future in a narrative of memory and anticipation.

This sounds good, but if we step back and scan the longer passage in which these lines are couched, a somewhat different picture emerges. Wordsworth imagines his age and nation sinking to “servitude, ignominy, and shame.” Still he hopes we may yet be “labourers in a work. . . of redemption.” (Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the other person forming the “we” in these passages.) We will stand as “Prophets of Nature,” Wordsworth asserts, and “speak/ A lasting inspiration.” Then follows the “what we have loved” passage, after which *The Prelude* moves quickly to its conclusion: We will “Instruct them how the mind of man becomes/ A thousand times more beautiful than the earth/ On which it dwells.” The mind dwells above the world, for it is “Of substance and of fabric more divine.”

Written at the dawn of the nineteenth century, *The Prelude* marks a point at which the arcs of two radically different intellectual trajectories cross. The descending line traces the path of a conception of the cosmos deeply etched in western consciousness. This view has many sources, including the

Logos philosophy of the Greeks, the incarnational theology of John’s gospel, and medieval Catholicism’s Aristotelian theology of nature. It entails the conviction that the universe is saturated with a worded significance. Ideas and values are located in the world and not exclusively in human consciousness; they inhere in the nature of things and are not merely ascribed to objects by subjects. In Charles Taylor’s words, in this view of reality “the order of things embodies an ontic *logos*,” and “correct human knowledge and valuation comes from our connecting ourselves rightly to the significance things already have.”

To support his argument, Taylor refers briefly to the work of Walter Ong, the brilliant Catholic literary critic whose book on Peter Ramus examines the linguistic evidence for the transformation of modern conceptions of self, God, and world. As an example of these changes, Ong cites the history of the words honor and praise, which we think of as qualities applied to objects by persons, but to Ramus and his classical and Christian predecessors, “object[s] somehow emanate honor and praise, in this way performing a kind of personal role.” When we praise God, we respond in a secondary fashion to the praise

that flowed from its primary source in God; ours is not a work of creative attribution but one of dependent participation. Ong refers to the Merchant of Venice—“How many things by season season’d are/ To their right praise and true perfection” [V,v, 108-9]—and other works to illustrate his conclusion: “For the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century mind, the value in the object and the praise elicited by the object tend to be viewed as one whole.”

This train of thought is on a descending trajectory by the time Wordsworth writes *The Prelude*. In his lifetime, from 1770-1850—the era of the English Romantic poets and German philosophical idealists—it intersects with a rising belief in the primacy of the mind, consciousness, or imagination.

Wordsworth intended *The Prelude* to be truly a prelude to a longer epic he never finished. He did, however, complete a “Prospectus” to this work. It has a haunting beauty and makes audacious claims on behalf of this mind, which is “A thousand times

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*“He is a man who has an ordinate love: he neither loves what should not be loved nor fails to love what should be loved.” Sinners are not to be loved for their own sake, and all women and men are to be “loved for the sake of God, and God should be loved for His own sake.”*

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more beautiful than the earth. The "Prospectus" piles image upon image to affirm that nothing—not "Jehovah—with his thunder," nor his "choir of shouting angels," nor the pits of hell itself can "breed such fear and awe/ As fall upon us often when we look/ Into our Minds."

The brief prospectus then turns into a wedding verse celebrating the union of "the intellect of Man" and "this goodly universe." In "love and holy passion" this "great consummation" shall make nothing less than Paradise "A simple produce of the common day":

my voice proclaims  
How exquisitely the individual Mind  
. . .to the external World  
Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too, . . .  
The external world is fitted to the Mind;  
And the creation. . .  
which they with blended might  
Accomplish:—this is our high argument.

And this was indeed to be the "high argument" of many of the greatest English-language writers of the first half of the nineteenth century—including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau, among others.

We might make the distinction between this position and the preceding pattern described by Ong and Taylor in the following manner. Then, the "value in the object and the praise elicited by" it were both, in a fashion, dependents of God; subject and object were equal children of the divine, not identical twins yet nonetheless bearers of the same familial DNA. Now, at the dawn of the nineteenth century the human person as subject is one thing, the natural world as object, another; they are exquisitely fitted, like husband and wife, to each other, and it is their offspring that will become the restored paradise, the longed-for kingdom that God has yet failed to bring into being. As Wordsworth's fellow poet, Robert Southey wrote of their era, "Old things seemed passing away, and nothing was dreamt of but the regeneration of the human race."

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, then, many looked for the end of history as we had known it since we began wandering east of Eden. The vision of the new order sprang from the mind of human beings whose task it was, in Emerson's words, to effect "the transformation of genius into practical power." In *The Prelude*, Wordsworth confesses that at the height of the French revolution, the earth had appeared to him as an "inheritance, new-fallen"

appears to one who comes to make his home in it. He "moulds it and remoulds,/ And is half pleased with things that are amiss,/ 'Twill be such joy to see them disappear." The joy of liberation here is palpable, as Jehovah, his choir of angels, and the sordid history over which they have ruled appear about to vanish.

But if Wordsworth's "Mind of Man" was to triumph, if consciousness was to play ascendant husband to nature's submissive wife, memory had to be subdued and chastened. Emerson is a key figure here. In the 1830s, having traded his Unitarian pulpit for a lyceum lectern and the sermon for the lecture, he traced the contours of a cultural life to be established beyond the Christian creeds, the scriptures, and the Triune God. In a series of dazzling essays, he sought to obliterate the distinction between God and human consciousness, for "God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of the world." The incarnation is an exercise in self-development and self-expansion, and God assumes his new and only residence within: "That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen."

For Emerson, no force has a greater power to "show God out of me" than memory. It makes us foolishly concerned about the consistency of our acts and the continuity of our identity; it trains our minds on the dead letter of the past rather than the quick spirit of the present; and it imposes on life's freely flowing forces a pattern our experience neither seeks nor requires. Emerson's disdain for memory is visceral and relentless. The problem with preaching is that it is rooted in tradition and "comes out of the memory, not out of the soul"; "when we have new perception," he writes, we are able at last to discard the "old rubbish" of "memory"; we are burdened not by our sins but by the "monstrous corpse of memory" under whose weight we stagger; and God protects us from our past by drawing behind us a "screen of purest sky." "You will not remember," he seems to say, "and you will not expect. . . All good. . . action[s] come from a spontaneity which forgets. . . Life has no memory."

### love, memory, and the rise of liberal learning

Not surprisingly, this assault on memory is accompanied by a sharp critique of the art of teaching and the work of the American college. As records of past experiences, Emerson writes, books "are for nothing but to inspire." They are for the "scholar's idle times," because when he or she can

“read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men’s transcripts of their readings.” The truth, he told the Harvard Divinity School students in 1838, “cannot be received at second hand,” for “truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul.” The person thus provoked is “the word made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations,” and he or she is ready to begin “tossing the laws, the books, idolatries, and customs out of the window.” Having been a lackluster student at Harvard, Emerson saw little of value in the cloistered life of higher education. After all, “life is our dictionary,” he declared. “Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the work-yard made.”

In the seventh decade of the nineteenth century, that language of the American field and workyard acquired a bloody coloring and took on violent resonances. It is here that our story turns, for as Andrew Delbanco has written, “the Civil War was the great divide between a culture of faith and a culture of doubt. . . . Before the war, Americans spoke of providence. After it, they spoke of luck.” For many in the war’s aftermath, both the long-standing orthodoxies of Christianity and the more recently minted pieties of the Romantic and Transcendental faiths seemed brittle and hollow. Oliver Wendell Holmes, for example, survived his wounds from the bloody battle of the Wilderness in the spring of 1864 but never recovered from the spiritual shocks of those dreadful years. He went on to a distinguished career as a Supreme Court justice, but “he never forgot what he lost. “He told me,” [Albert] Einstein reported, “that ‘after the Civil War the world never seemed quite right again.’”

Ruled by a God of Battles so ruthless, efficient, and indifferent that he had no name but that of “force,” the Civil War particularly confirmed what some writers and thinkers of the day were already beginning to fear generally. For these poets, novelists, and philosophers, the early nineteenth century joys of liberation were being transformed into the terrors of abandonment. This is the point of the dreadful yet gleeful passage on the death of God in Friedrich Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science*—“We have killed him—you and I. All of us are his murderers”—as it is, I believe, one of the reasons for the fascination of the nineteenth-century American and English novel with the figure of the

orphan. Take the orphans out of the novels of Dickens, the Brontë sisters, and George Eliot, and what do you have left? What would *Great Expectations* be if Pip had parents? What is *The Scarlet Letter* but the story of a daughter’s search to find the father who has abandoned her? Who is Huckleberry Finn if not another orphan drifting down the lazy river of aimless American time?

As the nineteenth century moved into its final decades, then, mind and nature appeared to be in the final stages of a divorce brought on by irreconcilable differences, and their abandoned children were the orphans of a brave new world, a strangely different age. In *Moby-Dick*, written a decade before the Civil War, Herman Melville’s Captain Ahab asks about this abandonment: “Where lies the final harbor, whence we unmoor no more?... Where is the foundling’s father hidden? Our souls are like those orphans whose unwedded mothers die in bearing them: the secret of our paternity lies in their grave, and we must there to learn it.” Or as Emily Dickinson was to write in 1882—the same year Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science* was published:

Those—dying then,  
Knew where they went—  
They went to God’s Right Hand—  
That Hand it amputated now  
And God cannot be found—  
The abdication of Belief  
Makes the Behavior small—  
Better an ignis fatuus  
Than no illume at all—

For Melville and Dickinson, the awareness of loss and the terror of abandonment came with a corresponding quest to revivify memory. It was to them no longer a corpse threatening to crush the fresh identity of a people freed from the clutches of history. Instead, memory became the resonant core, the vital body of that identity. Melville’s wrenching account of slavery, race, and the ironies of identity, *Benito Cereno*, concludes with the forward-looking American Amasa Delano admonishing the broken-hearted Cereno: “But the past is passed; why moralize upon it? Forget it.” The sun has forgotten it, “and the blue sea, and the blue sky; these have turned over new leaves.” They have done so, Benito Cereno “dejectedly replied,” “because they have no memory; because they are not human.”

Thus, as the Wordsworthian and Emersonian faith in the transforming force of consciousness

waned, the passion for memory as a resurrection power waxed more strongly. "I cannot tell how Eternity seems. It sweeps around me like a sea," Emily Dickinson wrote to her cousins only days after her mother had died in late 1882. Yet "thank you for remembering me. Remembrance—mighty word. 'Thou gavest it to me from the foundation of the world.'" Several weeks later, she wrote, again in reference to her mother's death: "Memory is a strange Bell—Jubilee, and Knell." It was "Jubilee" because it brought the dead to life and lodged them securely in the mansion of the mind. "My Hazel Eye/ Has periods of shutting—/ But no lid has Memory," Dickinson claimed, for "Memory like Melody,/ Is pink eternally—." Yet at the same time, memory also sounds the death "Knell," tolling the loss of ones she had loved. "Remorse—is Memory—awake," and the mind that raises the dead must also acknowledge that "The Grave—was finished—but the Spade/ Remained in Memory—." For Dickinson, memory's power was without equal as a human capacity, and life without memory was unthinkable. "Dear friend," she wrote to a neighbor in 1879, "I think Heaven will not be as good as earth, unless it bring with that sweet power to remember, which is the Staple of Heaven—here. How can we thank each other, when omnipotent?"

It is hardly a coincidence that in the same decades during which Melville and Dickinson were meditating on memory and the loss of God—from the 1850s through the 1880s—the modern ideal of liberal learning was taking form and then taking hold of American higher education. In a series of compelling books, James Turner has written extensively about this subject for the past twenty years—first in his path breaking *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America*, then in his biography of Charles Eliot Norton, and most recently in *The Sacred and the Secular University*, jointly-authored with Jon Roberts.

"Development may be forecast; revolution cannot," Turner writes in the opening sentence of his section of this latter book. No one could have predicted in 1850 the dramatic new "shapes into which academic knowledge would shift by 1900."

In that half-century, a new congeries of subjects, known as the humanities, came into being and quickly displaced the Greek and Latin centered curriculum that had governed the liberal arts for centuries.

This "rise of the humanities was intimately linked to embarrassments consequent upon secularization," Turner claims. Those embarrassments had to do with the weakening of what the late nineteenth-century Princeton physicist Joseph Henry spoke of as that belief which should animate all research and teaching in the modern university: "all the phenomena of the external universe, and perhaps all those of the spiritual, [may be] reduced to the operation of a single and simple law of the Divine will." According to Turner, this assumption was undermined by the passing of the moral philosophy that had unified college curricula from the Revolution to the Civil War; by the increasingly specialized work of researchers who had neither the need nor the desire "to invoke the creator of any larger matrix of knowledge"; by the influence of graduate training in Germany where ties between Christianity and higher learning "had frayed if not snapped"; by the small, growing cadre of agnostics who appeared in universities after the Civil War; and, finally, by the methodological consequences of Darwin and his system's "shaking of epistemological certainty."

With a few exceptions, late nineteenth-century American universities and colleges moved with what Turner terms "a buoyant zeal to bring Christian learning up to date" and subdue "the threat of disciplinary specialization and of intellectual secularization more broadly." As they fought this good fight, educators of that era deployed the humanities as the main weapon in their arsenal, hoping through the offices of liberal arts education to restore coherence to an increasingly fragmented array of disciplines and to sustain the religious character of learning, even as their schools and curricula shed their allegiances to any particular Christian confession, authority, or creed. This indifference to historic Christianity should not surprise us, for the most vocal proponents of the humanities

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*The doctrine of the Trinity, by contrast, reminds us that persons are essentially in relation. Our relations aren't an "add on," they're at the core of who we are. To the extent that this isn't true for human persons, it's a sign of our failure to be persons in the fullest sense, after the model of the divine persons.*

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and the ideal of liberal learning—such as Charles Eliot Norton on this side of the Atlantic, and Matthew Arnold across the sea—were Protestants who were not necessarily Christians. And within a matter of years their vision was to make the American and British university a safe haven for what George Marsden has memorably phrased “liberal Protestantism without Protestantism.”

At mid-century, however, others had set out not just to recover the *ethos* of a remembered past but to recuperate the living faith that had once animated its long history. For some, like John Henry Newman and Orestes Brownson, this meant a return to the Catholic church from which their ancestors had separated centuries before. Others like John W. Nevin and Charles Hodge, were, as Mark Noll felicitously puts it, “far less convinced that the deliverances of consciousness did as much for theological formation as their American counterparts claimed.” Members of this group sought to counter the vapidities of liberalism through a renewal of creedal Protestantism.

Yet in the main, the scholars and leaders who shaped the American revival of liberal learning in the late nineteenth century had little desire to resist the shift in knowledge that Walter Ong and Charles Taylor have outlined for us. To most of these hesitantly Christian humanists, the world was a domain of objects without qualities faced by an array of human subjects who invented and ascribed to these objects what values they could. In most cases, those educators, whom Taylor calls “our Victorian contemporaries,” longed to believe that an increasingly nebulous and ineffable mind of God held these objects and subjects together within a single purpose, a single law, a single destiny.

Nevertheless, as Taylor points out, the Victorian humanists also found it ever more difficult to hold together the “split-screen vision of nature” they bequeathed to us. On one side of the screen we view the vast universe of modern science, “huge and in some ways baffling . . . indifferent to us and strangely other, though full of unexpected beauty and inspiring awe.” On the other side we scan what Taylor calls our “inexhaustible inner domain”; from it flows the values that give our life meaning and the visions that drive us to goals beyond the needs of the moment. How the inner world is to relate to the outer one is, in Taylor’s words, “deeply problematical.” This makes our

“cultural predicament utterly different from what existed before the eighteenth century, where the scientific explanation of the natural order was [still] closely aligned with its moral meaning. . . . For us, the two have drifted apart, and it is not clear how we can hope to relate them.”

#### re-membering love: the mysteries of the Incarnation

How the Catholic and Protestant institutions that make up the Lilly Fellows network have gone about the task of “relating” these disparate pictures for the past century is another story, and in general it is a narrative with clearer visions and brighter prospects than Charles Taylor may have considered possible. But it is by any standard a story with many diverse and distinctive strands. No single Christian tradition, let alone a solitary Christian observer, could possibly comprehend the whole on this question. We are Baptists and Catholics, Lutherans and Mennonites, Methodists and Christian Reformed, members of the Churches of Christ and adherents to the free church and independent church traditions. If Tertullian puzzled over what Athens had to do with Jerusalem, it perhaps should not surprise us that we struggle at times to determine precisely what Dordt has to do with Trinityn Mennonite, or Wheaton with Wittenberg, for that matter.

So, rather than attempt a quick synthesis of the best elements of our many different traditions of higher education, I want to round off these remarks with a brief meditation on something we all share, in which memory, love, and learning come together in extraordinary ways. I refer to the sacrament that has many names—the Lord’s Supper, the Eucharist, or Holy Communion—but one object, one subject, and one Lord.

And here I will call again on the poets. Near the end of his life, W. H. Auden wrote of what he called “the significance of the Mass.” “As biological organisms,” he observed, “we must all, irrespective of sex, age, intelligence, character, creed, assimilate other lives in order to live.” And in his words, “as conscious beings, the same holds true [for us] on the intellectual level: all learning is assimilation.” Because we are children of God who are made in God’s image, Auden concludes, “we are required in turn voluntarily to surrender ourselves to being assimilated by our neighbors according to their needs. The slogan of Hell: Eat or be eaten. The slogan of Heaven: Eat and be eaten.”

This idea of “surrendering ourselves to being assimilated by our neighbors according to their needs” has always struck me as a wise and deft definition of teaching. We give ourselves up in the service of the texts, formulas, theories, scores, and narratives that have nourished us, and, in turn, we surrender ourselves to our students so that they may make use of us according to their needs. Yet at the same time, is it not often the case that we as teachers assimilate some remarkable things from our students? This was the case for me in my first year of college teaching. We had gotten to Dickinson, and as I worked my way through the material somewhat stiffly, we came to a poem that had me stumped. It begins:

A Clover's simple Fame  
Remembered of the Cow  
Is sweeter than enameled Realms  
of notoriety—

I uttered something unmemorable about the idea of memory, but what one student said I have never forgotten. He brought us back to the imagery of the poem and implored us to think simply of how a cow turns clover into milk. He urged us to think of “remembered” not just in the sense of “being brought back to mind,” but of something being “remembered” in the sense of its having been broken, its having died, and its having been transformed.

It was the brokenness of Jesus the Son that drew Dickinson to him, even as she shunned the sovereign serenity of God the Father. Late in life she wrote to a neighbor that “when Jesus tells about his Father, we distrust him,” just as “when he shows us his Home, we turn away, but when he confides to us that he is ‘acquainted with Grief,’ we listen, for that also is an Acquaintance of our own.” As one of her several powerful and moving poems about Christ phrases it, his “acquaintance” with death “justifies Him” and makes him that “Tender Pioneer” who leads and guides us every step of the often difficult human way. Here in the life and death of this one “acquainted with Grief,” Dickinson the subject found an object whose qualities she could praise, honor, love, and grasp. As she wrote to a friend as they both grieved the death of a man they honored and loved, “the crucifix requires no glove.”

In writing about the tensions marking modernity, between love and knowledge, between memory and hope, Charles Taylor notes, “Augustine holds that in relation to God, love has

to precede knowledge. With the right direction of love, things become evident which are hidden otherwise.” As we consider the connections between Christianity and liberal learning, are we not asking how our love of God and God’s world might guide both our pursuit of knowledge and our teaching and thereby make evident so many things otherwise hidden?

As Christian scholars and teachers, we most effectively uncover and disclose those truths by remembering in our thoughts as Christian scholars and re-membering through our deeds as worshipers in the body of Christ that “the Word became flesh and lived among us.” In the incarnation, mind and body, God and man, subject and object come together as one through the sacrificial freedom of a creative, long-suffering God. In the light shed by the incarnation, we can see new ways of looking at ourselves as subjects, as well as fresh ways of perceiving the loveliness of objects, even those objects we once found most unlovely.

Only a month after her mother died, Emily Dickinson confessed to a friend, “we were never intimate Mother and Children while she was our Mother—but Mines in the same Ground meet by tunneling and when she became our Child, the Affection came.” As we strive to teach others to love what we have loved, we do well to remember that the connections between Christ and the life of the mind may be more readily discovered in Emily Dickinson’s tunnels than glimpsed from Robert Frost’s treetops. As he dreamed of heaven and thought of his own art at his life’s close, William Butler Yeats concluded, “I must lie down where all the ladders start/ In the foul rag and bone shop of the heart.” Or as one of his own earlier poems had asserted, “Love has pitched his mansion in/ The place of excrement;/ For nothing can be sole or whole/ That has not been rent.” We begin where our own affection, our own love came—with our memory of that child who became a man and whose body was rent, broken out of love, first, so that it might be re-membered by us and, then, so that we might live with the hope of that day when God will re-member us wholly, body, mind, and soul, for eternity. That is a love worth teaching. That is a truth worth remembering. †

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