

Wissam Nasrallah

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Until Christ Is Formed in Us

As we begin a new academic year, I find myself both grateful and expectant. Grateful for the students God is entrusting to us. Grateful for our faculty and staff who continue to invest themselves in forming leaders for the Church across the MENA region. And grateful for the opportunities before us in a region where faithful theological education remains deeply needed.

We also begin this year at a moment of extraordinary change. Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping the way people learn, write, research, communicate, and work. Around the world, universities are being forced to revisit a fundamental question: What is education actually for?

For us, the challenge of AI is not primarily whether students should or should not use a particular tool. The deeper question is: What kind of leaders are we seeking to form? If theological education is mainly about transmitting information, summarizing books, producing essays, and demonstrating familiarity with theological concepts, then AI presents a serious challenge. But theological education has never ultimately been about information alone.

Our calling is to participate, under God, in the formation of men and women who know God truthfully, love Christ deeply, interpret Scripture faithfully, exercise wise judgment, serve the Church humbly, and live lives increasingly shaped by the gospel. Paul expresses this vision beautifully when he writes, “until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

One of the central concerns in current discussions around AI is the difference between producing a correct answer and actually learning. A student may generate an excellent theological paragraph without wrestling with the text, summarize a doctrine accurately without understanding why it matters, or produce a polished sermon without learning to listen carefully to Scripture or to the people to whom that sermon will be preached.

This is why biblical wisdom is more than knowing the right answer. It is learning to see reality under the lordship of Christ and to live faithfully within it.

In a sense, when answers become cheap, wisdom becomes expensive. Christian formation is also profoundly relational. Paul tells the Philippians, “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things” (Philippians 4:9). They did not merely hear Paul's teaching. They saw his life.

Theological education, therefore, cannot be reduced to content delivery. Students need teachers, mentors, churches, and communities in which theology is lived, questioned, tested, practiced, and embodied.

Perhaps one unexpected gift of this technological moment is that it is forcing theological education to clarify its purpose.

Our goal is not simply that our students become more informed. Our hope is something far greater: that Christ would increasingly be formed in them.



This summer has been a full and joyful season for our family. We were grateful to welcome family members visiting from abroad and to enjoy precious time together. The house was often busy and lively, filled with conversations, shared meals, laughter, and the happy disruption that comes when loved ones gather.

Now, as summer draws to a close, we are preparing once again for the beginning of the school year and looking forward to returning to a more familiar rhythm. The children continue to grow quickly, reminding us how swiftly the seasons of family life pass. Elise is now entering her preteen years, with all the growth, questions, and changes that this new stage brings, while Antoine is also growing and developing his own interests and personality.

We are deeply grateful for God's faithfulness to our family and for your prayers as we enter this new season together.



The beginning of the academic year: Pray for our students, faculty, and staff as we begin a new year, that the Lord would grant us wisdom, energy, and unity, and that Christ would be formed in each member of our learning community.

AI and theological education: Pray that we would respond wisely and faithfully to the opportunities and challenges created by artificial intelligence. Ask God to help us use these tools with integrity while remaining focused on forming godly, discerning, and servant-hearted leaders for the Church.

The Middle East Consultation: Pray for our upcoming consultation on *Doing Theology in Times of War*. May it create space for honest reflection, biblical wisdom, mutual encouragement, and a faithful Christian witness amid the suffering and conflicts of our region.

Lebanon and our family: Pray for peace, stability, and genuine reform in Lebanon. Please also pray for our family as we return to the rhythm of school and ministry, that God would protect us, sustain us, and help us remain attentive to one another

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