

BEESON

PREACHING THE REFORMATION

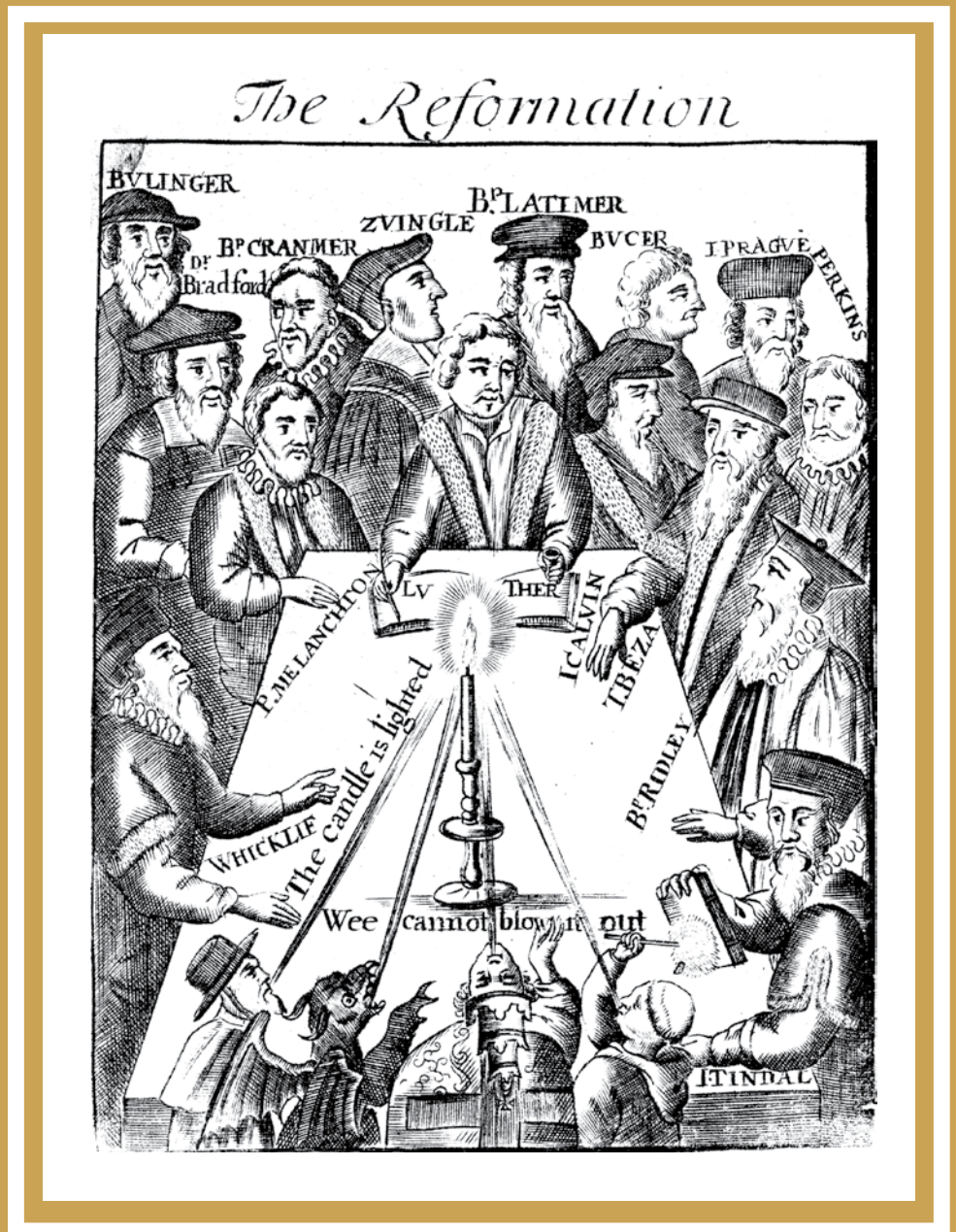
2017



Amore et studio
elucidande veritate
subscripta disputata
Wittenberge. Pro
R. B. Martino Lutero
Dominum
magister
Jesus chris
tendo. Penite
agite. et omne v
fidelium penitentia
esse voluit.

Candle of Reformation

Called the *Candle of Reformation*, the image to the right is of a woodcut by John Shirley (1680-1702), which depicts Protestant reformers sitting around the “lit candle” of the Reformation. The reformers depicted are: John Wycliffe (1320-1384), Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575), John Bradford (1510-1555), Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Martin Luther (1483-1546), Hugh Latimer (1487-1555), Martin Bucer (1491-1551), John Calvin (1509-1564), Jan Hus (1372-1415), Theodore Beza (1519-1605), William Perkins (1558-1602), Nicholas Ridley (1500-1555) and William Tyndale (1494-1536). Below the candle are the pope, a monk, a Jesuit priest and Satan, who attempt to blow out the candle, symbolizing attempts to suppress the Reformation.



Pitts Theological Library, Emory University.

In This Issue

This issue of **BEESON** magazine commemorates the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. As a school that trains “pastors who can preach,” we are particularly interested in the Reformation’s influence on preaching. The theme for this year’s issue is “Preaching the Reformation,” which features an article written by Dean Timothy George on the history of Reformation preaching (pp. 2-3) and an article written by faculty member Piotr Małysz on how to preach the

Reformation and an actual sermon he preached on Reformation Day 2015 (pp. 4-8). Also included are an interview with Beeson alum David Riker on English Baptist Reformer Benjamin Keach (pp. 12-13) and an article by faculty member Doug Webster on how the Reformational principles apply to pastoral preaching (pp. 14-17). This issue is made possible in part by the generosity of the Lilly Grant and the Initiative to Strengthen the Quality of Preaching.

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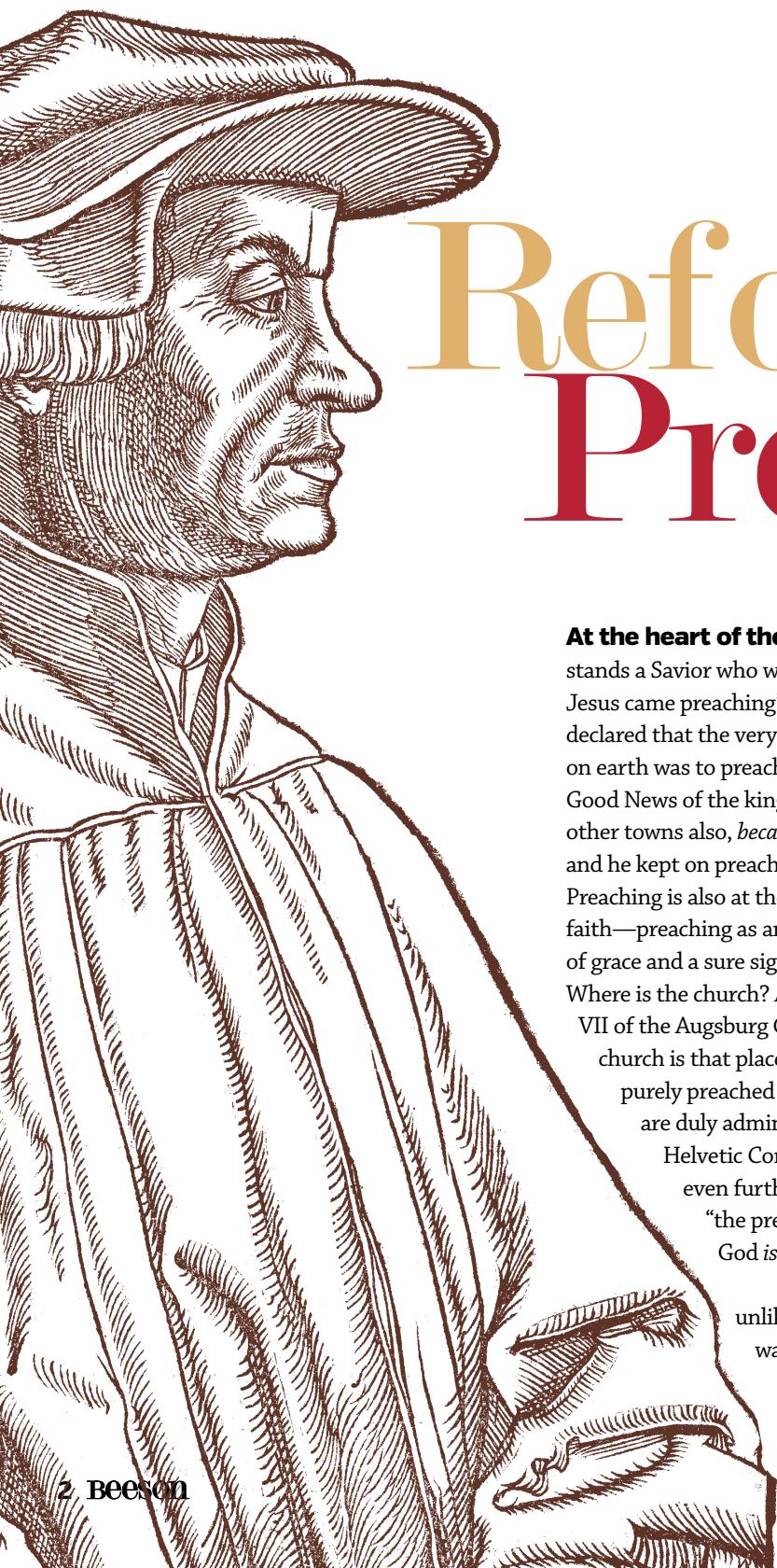
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Reformation Preaching

by Timothy George

At the heart of the Christian faith stands a Savior who was a preacher. “And Jesus came preaching” (Mark 1:14). Jesus once declared that the very purpose of his mission on earth was to preach: “I must proclaim the Good News of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, *because that is why I was sent,* and he kept on preaching ...” (Luke 4:43-44a). Preaching is also at the heart of Reformation faith—preaching as an indispensable means of grace and a sure sign of the true church. Where is the church? According to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession (1530), the church is that place where the Word is purely preached and the sacraments are duly administered. The Second Helvetic Confession (1566) went even further when it declared that “the preaching of the Word of God is the Word of God.”

Of course, preaching—unlike the printing press—was not a new invention of the Reformation era. Think of St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom

in the early church, Bernard of Clairvaux, John Hus, and the many mendicant friars who fanned out across Europe in the Middle Ages. St. Francis preached the gospel to a Muslim sultan, and Savonarola declared God’s judgment on the sinful leaders of Florence. The Protestant reformers knew this tradition and built upon it, but they also transformed it in two important respects.

First, they made the sermon the centerpiece of the regular worship of the church. Prior to the Reformation, the sermon was mostly an ad hoc event reserved for special occasions or seasons of the liturgical cycle, especially Christmas and Eastertide. Most sermons were preached in town squares or open fields. The reformers brought the sermon back inside the church and gave it an honored place in the public worship of the gathered community. The central role of preaching in Protestant worship can be seen in the way the pulpit was raised to a higher elevation as families gathered around with their children to hear the Word proclaimed.

Second, the reformers introduced a new theology of preaching. They were concerned

Left: A painting depicting the Protestant Church in Lyon, France, called *The Paradise*. The image shows the centrality of the pulpit and preaching and the welcoming of the entire community, even pets, into the worship service. Art Resource, NY. **Right:** John Calvin's pulpit in St. Pierre Cathedral, Geneva, Switzerland. **Bottom left:** Woodcut of Reformer Huldrych Zwingli. Pitts Theology Library, Emory University

that the Bible did not take deep root in the lives of the people. The Word of God was meant to be not only read, studied, translated, memorized and meditated on. It was also to be embodied in the life and worship of the church. This embodiment of the Bible was most clearly expressed in the ministry of preaching. Luther believed that a call to the preaching office was a sacred trust and should not be used for selfish purposes. "Christ did not establish the ministry of proclamation to provide us with the money, property, popularity, honor, or friendship," he said.

Preaching was no less important in the Reformed tradition. When one visits the Great Minster Church in Zurich today, the following inscription can be read over the portal: "The Reformation of Huldrych Zwingli began here on January 1, 1519." That date, no less than October 31, 1517, can be given as an answer to the question, "When did the Reformation begin?"

For on that first day of January, which happened to be Zwingli's birthday, the new pastor began his pulpit ministry by announcing his intention to dispense with the prescribed texts of the traditional lectionary. He would follow a new paradigm: preaching expositional sermons, chapter by chapter, starting with the Gospel of Matthew. After completing Matthew, Zwingli resumed the same *lectio continua* method by taking up Acts, then the letters to Timothy, Galatians, 1 and 2 Peter, Hebrews, the Gospel of John, and the other Pauline letters. He then turned to the Old Testament, beginning with the Psalms, then the Pentateuch and the historical books. Thomas Platter, a young student in Zurich in the 1520s, tells of hearing a sermon by Zwingli that was "expounded so powerfully that I felt as if someone was pulling me up by my hair."

From the pulpit of St. Pierre in Geneva, Calvin followed the preaching pattern established by Zwingli. His pulpit work was



marked by sequential, text-driven preaching. In the course of his ministry at Geneva, Calvin delivered more than 4,000 such sermons, and many have survived for us to study.

In an important essay from 1961, Heiko A. Oberman set forth the distinctive marks of Reformation preaching in terms of three interrelated aspects. First, the sermon is an apocalyptic event, not quite in the sense of Savonarola's preaching of impending doom to the people of Florence, but in the sense that the sermon unveils and makes present the last judgment here and now. Without demythologizing the coming of Christ in the future, gospel preaching existentializes the final will of God for every hearer by calling for a decisive response here and now. "In the sermon, Christ and the Devil are revealed, Creator and creature, love and wrath, essence and existence, 'Yes' and 'No.'"

Second, the sermon is not meant to be an isolated speaking part in an otherwise sterile liturgy. The sermon is a vital and integral part of corporate worship. Praying, singing, confession of sins, declaration of forgiveness, baptisms, weddings, the congregation gathered around the Lord's Table to receive in faith the body and blood of Jesus Christ "in with and under" (Luther) and "exhibited by" (Calvin) the earthly elements of bread and wine—all of these activities presuppose, and are supported by, the lively preaching of the Word of God. Woven into the texture of the complete worship event by the dynamic operation of the Holy Spirit, the Reformation

sermon is "not legalistic but redemptive, not only directed to individual souls but especially to the corporate existence of the congregation, not elevating but mobilizing, not a refuge but a starting point and, finally, not holy and vertical, but secular and horizontal: time, space, and dust."

Finally, the event of preaching in Reformation theology is similar in one respect to the role of the Eucharist in medieval Catholic theology. It has an utterly objective character that transcends the weak and sinful status of the preacher. Whenever God's Word is proclaimed, the Lord truly speaks and is truly present in judgment and in grace. There is, to say it boldly, an *ex opere operato* presence of God's Word in the preached Word. For this reason, God has chosen what St. Paul called "the folly of preaching" to bring sinful men and women to new life in Jesus Christ, to nourish the flock of God and to sustain the pilgrim church on its way to the heavenly city. ♦

Adapted from Timothy George, Reading Scripture with the Reformers (InterVarsity Press, 2011).



Timothy George is dean of Beeson Divinity School and general editor of the Reformation Commentary on Scripture.

Living in God's Faithfulness

Preaching the Reformation

By Piotr J. Małysz

Martin Luther's *Ninety-Five Theses*, published in 1517, were a protest against the sale of indulgence letters. Luther draws attention to the damage that indulgences cause to piety and the Christian life. The faithful, concerned about their standing with God, are goaded to purchase indulgences at the expense, for example, of providing for their families. But Luther's *Theses* are more than polemical.

Luther above all highlights what he considers to be the true treasure of the church, the gospel of Jesus Christ (Thesis 62). It is to the gospel that anxious believers must be directed. In the merits of Christ—as Luther will repeatedly emphasize throughout his career—they will find not only the much desired peace of conscience but also the freedom to be and act toward their neighbor the way Christ has been and acted toward them. When the gospel is allowed to shine, the Christian life, too, will flourish.

To proclaim the gospel, Luther insists, is the church's privilege and non-negotiable task. Without the gospel at its center, the church loses its identity. How is the gospel proclaimed? In no other way than by telling Christ's story, whether briefly or more elaborately, yet always in a manner that invariably zeros in on his passion and resurrection victory over death. This telling may happen through the gestures of sacramental action: the baptismal burying of the person into Christ's death and resurrection (Romans 6:4) and the

Eucharistic eating, which conveys Christ's death until he comes again (1 Corinthians 11:26). Above all, the telling takes place through the spoken word. What Luther, followed by other 16th-century reformers, underscores is that the word not only narrates the events of salvation in some general God-is-in-control way. Importantly, and more than that, the word explicitly brings out Christ's ministry's personal—"for you"—dimension. It addresses the hearer.

To proclaim the gospel, therefore, is to bestow Christ with all his work on the believer. It is to invite the person to believe that "Christ himself, with his deeds and suffering, belongs to you," in a manner that is utterly dependable, "as if you had done it yourself; indeed as if you were Christ himself," Luther writes.¹

The gospel, in other words, conveys Christ as a gift to be grasped. One grasps this gift in no other way than by taking God at his word, that is, by believing that he has indeed done it all and done it for you and for me. Preaching is thus basically a word of

absolution which roots one—one's entire identity—in Christ.

The gospel, when trusted, when embraced in faith, sets aside one's sin and relieves one of self-absorption. It relieves one of being the sum total of what one has done, and it relieves one of still having to make something of oneself. The gospel brings Christ to us with all his benefits. And that is infinitely more than we could ever make of ourselves.

For Luther, as well as for John Calvin, proclamation of the gospel must be preceded by proclamation of the law. The law can take many forms, from God's commands, through natural law written on the heart, to the more existential law that each person is to him- or herself. The point of preaching the law is to awaken the conscience, to undercut false confidence in oneself or one's idols and to bring the person—even Christians, sinners that they still are—face to face with their own fundamental insufficiency and inability to rely on God.

Only a despairing person, a person willing to clutch at straws, a person ready



Martin Luther [1483-1546]

to be renewed in the very core of his or her being is ready to take shelter in the cross of Christ and find hope in his resurrection. For the gospel does not merely supply what one lacks; it makes one into a new creation! To let go of one's old self and to grasp one's self as Christ's workmanship is what faith in the gospel ultimately is. It is for the sake of this faith that all proclamation takes place.

Here one may ask: If the gospel is this singular story, how does it relate to the rest of Scripture? Can one preach the gospel from all of Scripture? The Reformation's answer was a resounding yes. To be sure, Reformation preaching—for all its attentiveness to the biblical text, or rather because of it—strove never to lose sight of the singularity of the gospel story as well as the need to preach the Law.

But it did this with the confidence that Jesus Christ is the meaning of *all* Scripture. He constitutes the culmination of God's history with his creation. Christ shows the gospel to be truly a many-splendored thing, in that it embraces Israel in its continued striving with God and reaches out to all humanity in its alienation from God. The Law is thus never clichéd for the entire arc of Scripture testifies to the many facets of human faithlessness and waywardness. Even more so, the gospel is never boring, for in it the Triune God outpaces and sets aside, outshines and transfigures the worst of human waywardness.

What does all this mean for us as heirs of the Reformation? Given the Reformation's central focus on the gospel, it would be a mistake to celebrate the Reformation in any other way than by proclaiming the gospel. We remember the Reformation because of its witness. We do not remember it as a thing unto itself. To do that would be to turn the Reformation and its witness into a law that could only tell us how we do not measure up to our forefathers' faith. So perceived, the Reformation would then condemn our lukewarmness, our insipid testimony, our failure to speak up and so on. But the lesson is different.

To celebrate the Reformation, indeed to preach the Reformation, is to remain faithful to its focus, to look where it looked and to be refreshed time and again by the gospel of Jesus Christ. In this gospel we also, like the reformers, find forgiveness and peace of conscience; and by its power we also, like the reformers, can be the face of Christ to the world. Why? Not because of the Reformation, but because God is faithful. And he invites even us to take him at his word.

A Sermon for Reformation Day

Matthew 11:12-19

What do we hope for? A new car? A less taxing job? A better paying job? A job?! Appreciation from bosses? Health? A long life? Loving children? – To be human is to hope. More than that, to be human is to allow yourself to dream. But who will help my hopes to come true? Who is the hope for all my hopes? The next president? The lottery? Who will underwrite and save my hopes for me?

The people of Israel had their hopes, too. They hoped for freedom, freedom from occupation by a foreign power; they hoped for a land flowing with milk and honey; like us, they hoped for health, loving spouses, devoted children; they hoped for justice and mercy in public life. God was to be the savior of their hopes. God was their God, and they were his children, “the sheep of his pasture and the people of his hand.”

The history of Israel is a history of blessing...and of unfaithfulness. It has its roots in a promise God made to Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars of the sky. It begins – as a history of the Israelite people – when God liberates the Hebrews from Pharaoh’s slavery. There is a parted sea, and the spoils of Egypt, and a mountain full of smoke and fire, brimming with God’s majesty and God’s zeal for his own. There is God’s presence in a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day, and God’s provision of quail and manna during their desert sojourn. And there is a beautiful land ahead, beyond the Jordan. God blesses his people; he blesses them beyond all measure! God’s blessing guarantees that their hopes for a better and abundant life will come true.

But Israel doubts God. The people doubt whether God can really be taken at his word and provide like he said he would. From Israel’s side, the story is one of unfaithfulness, repeated betrayal and adultery (Hosea 1:2; Jeremiah 3:8). It is a story of complaining, hankering

after the cucumbers that the Israelites ate in Egyptian slavery: “We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost – also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic” (Numbers 11:5). “We want the juicy cucumbers, cucumbers now, not a land flowing with milk and honey ahead!” (Can you believe it?! I’m afraid, I can. Disgruntlement runs deep in human psyche.)

Israel’s story is a tale of wanting to be not God’s unique people, but just like the surrounding nations (1 Samuel 8:4-8): a story of chasing after foreign gods and ways, more glittering gods and more attractive ways. Israel’s is a story of not hoping in God, but of hoping in yourself, your own idea of a better life – at the expense of the community and of the neighbor. “They sell the innocent for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as on the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed” (Amos 2:6-7).

And so, in a series of God’s acts, Israel’s story is also one of judgment. It is a story of the loss of the kingdom, a story of the loss of the temple, of exile, of foreign occupation. It’s a story of self-made glory turned all too quickly into a self-inflicted tragedy. A story of divine blessing exchanged for delusions of grandeur, of God’s gift rejected because “we know better, thank you very much.”

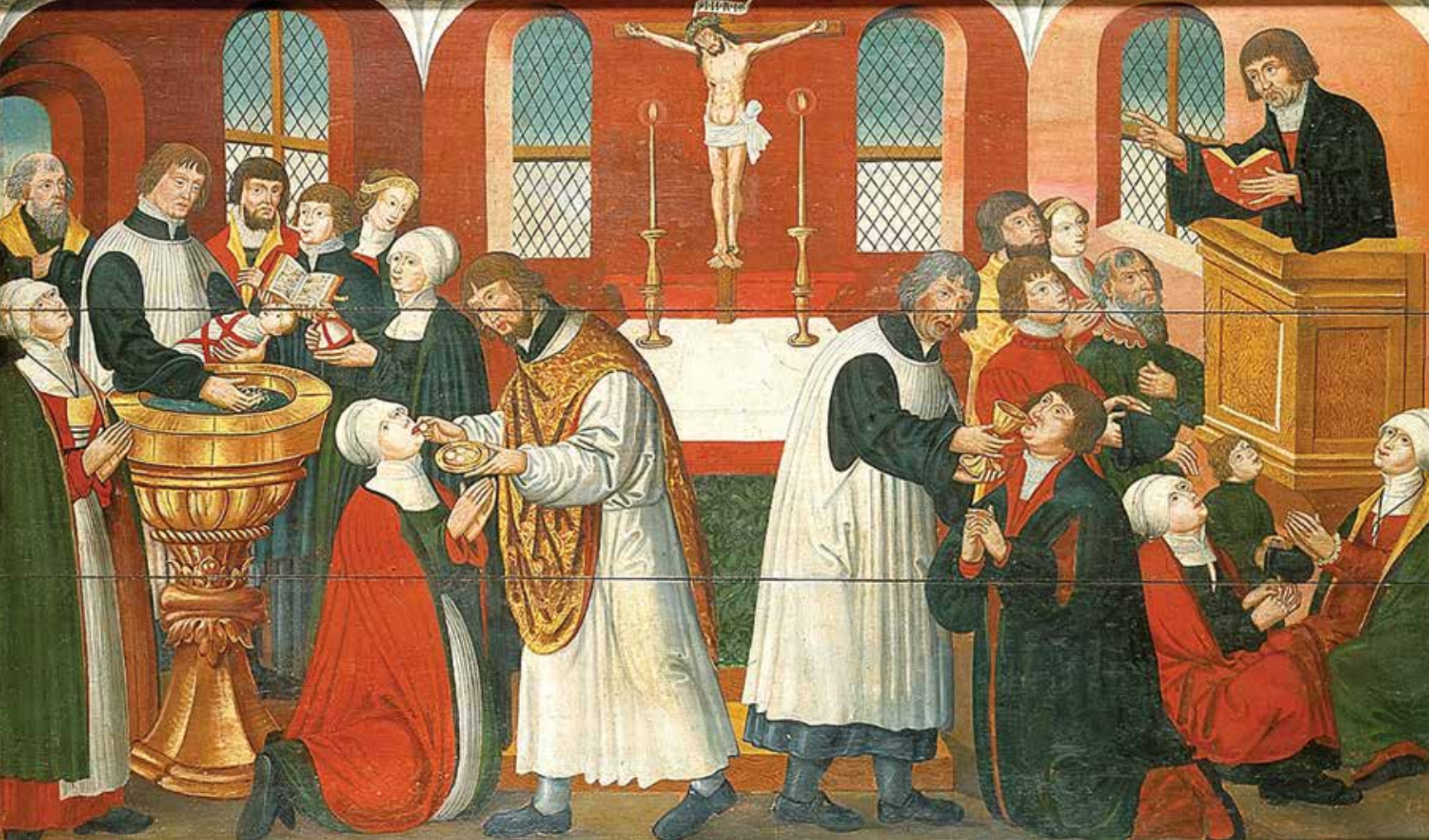
Enter the Pharisees. They appear late in the story, but they think they have the answers. “If only we can keep the covenant, if we can be observant *even more* than what God originally required of us – we could still be what God originally wanted us to be.” What the Pharisees advocate amounts to trying to get spilled milk back into the bottle. “Let’s grit our teeth and be what we should have been in the first place. Let’s do our best to preserve our identity amidst hostility and tragedy. Let’s make every effort to not be overcome by the forces of disintegration around us. Let’s dot our i’s and cross our t’s. Let’s redouble our efforts, observe all observances, purify our purity, identify our identity and sanctify our sanctity!” Too late, too late! Too late

for the unfaithful people. Too late for the adulterous spouse. For what is there to be done other than merely putting on an appearance of faithfulness, make-up over decay, a façade to hide a wayward heart? Too late!

But it is not too late for God! Enter John the Baptist. John’s voice is that of a prophet rather than a motivational speaker. He doesn’t say, as do the Pharisees, “Pull yourself together. Pull yourself together because there’s nothing else you can do. It’s too late for anything else.” John is no motivator. He is the expected Elijah, a prophet of these last days. Instead of motivating, John announces, in a loud and clear voice, “Repent for the *kingdom of heaven* has come near” (Matthew 3:2). John points to *God’s* blessing, God’s faithfulness, God’s righteousness.

God has not abandoned his unfaithful people, his adulterous spouse. God will yet be the salvation of Israel’s hopes. God will yet again disregard the people’s lack of trust, the dirt they sweep under the carpet like nothing has happened. He will disregard their pretense, their disfigured fasting faces, their self-righteous piety, and their belated observances (Matthew 6:1-18). And he will renew them, renew them yet again. But now he will renew them in the depth of their hearts – by wiping their slate clean. “Repent! And for God’s sake stop all that foolishness!” says John. “For the Christ – the Christ! – is coming!”

The response is amazing and wild. It is Jesus who comments on this response in our Gospel lesson. He makes his comment in yet another confrontation with the Pharisees; Jesus the Son of God in confrontation with the would-be spokesmen for God. “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.” Look! There is thirst for righteousness. Not the paste-over, paint-over and gloss-over righteousness of the Pharisees, but for God’s righteousness, for God’s Spirit hovering over dry bones, for living water, for nothing short of a miracle. There is thirst not for a new coat of



Lutheran worship depicted on an altarpiece of the Church of Torslunde, Denmark, 16th century.

whitewash to beautify a tomb but thirst for a resurrection! Like all the prophets before him, John understands the people's need, even when they are foolish and misguided, misled by their leaders and self-absorbed. When all hearts are open, all desires known, and no secrets are hidden – when we are honest with ourselves – then in all honesty God, and God alone, can be our hope. The salvation of all our hopes. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

The Pharisees are offended. “But we offered such a great program of national and self-improvement! We made the bones look so lively. The tomb so dazzling. The purity so pure. The identity so identifiable. We played the flute. It's the people's fault they didn't dance. We did sing a dirge, but nobody mourned. Can we be blamed? We did everything right. Is it our fault that it all fell on deaf ears?! Surely not.” The Pharisees go even further: “John the Baptist is undermining our program! He has a demon!” (Some of them, though, did actually go and get baptized. More out of

curiosity than out of repentance, it seems.) “It is Jesus who is sabotaging our mission! He cares not about purity, identity and pious effort. He is a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners! Look at us! Given enough time, we can be the force of renewal from within, a true spiritual reformation and rebirth of Israel.” The Pharisees are touched to the raw. And how far they are ready to go to justify and defend themselves, only the Cross will tell.

But God will have none of it. In his faithfulness to his wayward people, God will have none of it, none of the posturing and whitewashed grandeur. John's call to repentance – to faithful remembrance of God's promise – was intended to underscore that. “The kingdom of God is on its way. He,” John then said of Jesus, “will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:11-12). Don't ignore God and don't

underestimate God. For with God, you may – and you should – dream big again.

God is love. His is a zealous love. He is love with his whole being. Love that even out of lifeless stones can raise children for Abraham (Matthew 3:9). And herein lies hope, even for the Pharisee. “Repent for the *kingdom of heaven* has come near!” Herein lies hope even for us who so often grit our teeth and try harder and completely forget about God's faithfulness. Hope even for us who so often believe *we* are the only hope for all our hopes, that without us things will not come out right, that we must be gods and guardians and saviors of our world.

It is a sobering thought to recall that Jesus Christ died at the hands of those who called themselves the saviors of the people. “It is better for one man to die than an entire nation perish,” they reasoned (John 18:14). And they crucified the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8). Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds. In spite of their crime, God the Father raised his Son from the dead! God defied our pragmatism, our

self-righteousness, our petty calculating realism. He says, "Behold, I am faithful to you. And I will make *all things* new." And he calls us not to belated effort, feats of piety and displays of righteousness. No. God invites us to take him at his word; he invites us to dream big and to bring our hopes before him in prayer. *The faith that lets God work for us and for our salvation is what makes us truly righteous.* It makes us righteous even when it seems too late.

Today we celebrate the Reformation. Martin Luther was born into a culture that had also lost sight of God's overabundant faithfulness. Christians were encouraged, instead, to do their best, to try harder and to hope for God's grace. To see that this was a rather tall order, we need look no further than the popularity of indulgences. What Luther came to realize was that God's righteousness is not beyond our reach, a standard that we need to measure up to, or are left to realize in our lives.

¹Martin Luther, "A Brief Instruction on What to Look for and Expect in the Gospels," Luther's Works 35:119.

Instead, God's righteousness is what God shares with us by renewing us, accepting us and making us his own people. God shares his righteousness and overwhelms our sin – again and again. It is we who often blind ourselves to this many-splendored gift. God's righteousness becomes ours by faith. It becomes ours when we take God's faithfulness, his promises, his zeal, his works for us seriously, when we take his love seriously. And when we take God seriously, we are righteous in his eyes for we have done the righteous thing: we have taken him at his word that "he who watches over his people will neither sleep nor slumber" (Psalms 121:4). A person who through such faith is righteous shall live (Romans 1:16-17) – not as a whitewashed tomb but as a child of the heavenly Father.

This may be beyond even our wildest

dreams – beyond hope as we think of it and as it often seems best to us. But it is no less true. Trust him! And may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus unto life everlasting. Amen. ♦

This sermon was given at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Birmingham, Alabama, where Piotr Malysz is a pastor, on Reformation Sunday 2015.



*Piotr Malysz, assistant professor of history and doctrine at Beeson Divinity School, is an ordained Lutheran pastor, author of *Trinity, Freedom and Love*, and editor of and author of *Luther Refracted: The Reformer's Ecumenical Legacy*.*

Below: Woodcut of Martin Luther preaching the gospel with the cross in one hand and the Bible in the other hand. Pitts Theology Library, Emory University



500 BEESON DIVINITY SCHOOL REFORMATION

THE REFORMATION AS A SENSORY EVENT 29TH ANNUAL REFORMATION HERITAGE LECTURES

Featuring Timothy George
Founding Dean of Beeson Divinity School
11 a.m., Hodges Chapel

Oct. 31—Nov. 2

Join us each Tuesday this fall semester
as we celebrate the 500th anniversary
of the Protestant Reformation.



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The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a movement of tremendous spiritual and ecclesial renewal, and it touched and changed the lives of men and women alike. While the closing of convents deprived many women of the option to pursue a religious life within the cloister, the Protestant rejection of clerical celibacy and the new championing of marriage and family life opened avenues of service hitherto unavailable for women. Katarina von Bora, a former nun, married pastor Martin Luther and together they established the first Protestant manse. The translation of the Bible into the vernacular meant that the Bible could be read and studied by any literate person—the milkmaid at her pail as well as the farm boy at his plow, as Erasmus put it.

The Reformation established schools for girls as well as boys, and both were taught to pray, sing and worship. Both girls and boys were catechized

and both were welcomed to the communion table. Some women took a much more active role in the development of the Reformation. They wrote hymns, offered prayers, memorized the Bible and defended the faith. Some of them became martyrs, including one-fifth of those put to death under Mary Tudor in England. Calvin wrote many letters to French noblewomen who played a major role in the spread of the Reformed faith in France and elsewhere. In the midst of a traditional society, and against great odds, the Reformation's gospel message touched the lives of many women who in turn contributed to the renewal of the church and transformed the spirituality of the rising generation.



WOMEN *of* the Reformation

by Timothy George

Argula Von Grumbach

Argula was born into Bavarian nobility around 1492. At the age of 10, she received the Koberger Bible printed in German from her father, but she didn't read it because clerics said she "would be led astray." Eventually, Argula began reading the writings of Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon and made many contacts with reformers, even meeting Luther in 1530. She's most famously known for her open letter to the rector and general council of the University of Ingolstadt decrying the university's coercion of a young student to both recant his evangelical faith and condemn the teachings of Luther and

Melanchthon. Her letter met such swift acclaim that within two months it was reprinted 14 times. Argula would continue writing letters, including poetry, but this letter of protest was by far her most popular.

"I beseech you for the sake of God, and exhort you by God's judgement and righteousness, to tell me in writing which of the articles written by Martin or Melanchthon you consider heretical. In German not a single one seems heretical to me. And the fact is that a great deal has been published in German, and I've read it all. ... Although of late I have not been reading any, for I have been

occupied with the Bible, to which all of [Luther's] work is directed anyway—to bring us to read it."

"I'll say again, what I've said before They (Luther and Melanchthon) plainly write God's word, no more. Why then abuse such Christian men Who've never done you any harm. Through God's word I've been reborn However your angry heart may scorn. Through them—and others—you defame. Their teachings dear to me remain!"

Anne Askew

Anne was an English noblewoman. She was first arrested, in 1545, for her religious views, particularly for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation, which Henry VIII's *Six Articles* made mandatory. During her second arrest, she was so severely crippled by torture that she had to be carried around in a chair. She was burned at the stake in 1546. The record of her examination shows both her biblical literacy and her refusal to be intimidated by the authorities. It also demonstrates the refusal of the authorities to treat her as an equal conversation partner.

"My Lord laid unto my charge that I should say that the Mass was idolatry. I answered him. No, I said not so. Howbeit (I said) the [previous] questioner did ask me, whether private Masses did relive souls departed [from purgatory], or not? Unto whom I then answered, O Lord, what idolatry is this? That we should rather believe in private Masses, than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God. Then said my Lord again. What an answer was that? Though it were but mean (said I) yet was it good enough for

the question. ...

Then my Lord went away, and said he would entitle somewhat of my meaning. ... Then he read it to me, and asked me, if I did agree to it. And I said again, I believe so much thereof, as the holy Scripture does agree to. Wherefore I desire you, that you will add that thereunto. Then he answered, that I should not teach him what he should write."

Katharina Shutz Zell

Around 1521 to 1522, Katharina converted to the Evangelical faith after reading Martin Luther's works and listening to Protestant sermons. A pious yet daring woman, Katharina was embroiled in controversy after marrying a priest, Matthew Zell: one of several priests excommunicated from the church for taking a wife. Shortly after reformer Martin Bucer officiated their wedding in 1523, Katharina wrote a public, biblical defense of all clerical marriages to

the bishop William von Honstein, who was responsible for the excommunications.

She was affectionately known by many as the Church Mother of Strasbourg, a fitting title as her letters reveal unbridled care for the women and children of her community. As a lay theologian, Katharina's writings combined pastoral care and ecclesial concerns to form a Reformation vision consistent with her convictions about the gospel. Unhindered by gender roles of her time, the authority of Scripture led Katharina to fill a unique, prophetic role as a leader of the Reformation.

"That is my glory...in God and Christ,

not in myself. I glory that God the Father gave me the gift of faith in His Son (which is not given to everyone), solely out of His gracious love, without any ability or merit on my part [see Ephesians 2:4-8, 19].

"I am not usurping the office of preacher or apostle, I am like the dear Mary Magdalene, who with no thought of being an apostle, came to tell the disciples that she had encountered the risen Lord."

Interview

with David Riker by Kristen Padilla

David Riker (M.Div. 1997) is pastor of First Baptist Church in Pará, Brazil. A graduate of Beeson Divinity School, Riker formerly served as the president of Equatorial Baptist Theological School in Belém do Pará, Brazil. Riker wrote his doctoral dissertation on Baptist Reformer Benjamin Keach and published it in 2010 with Wipf and Stock. It's called, *A Catholic Reformed Theologian: Federalism and Baptism in the Thought of Benjamin Keach, 1640-1704*.



K You wrote your dissertation on a Baptist theologian from the Reformation period in England, Benjamin Keach. Who was Benjamin Keach and how did he embody the pastor-theologian role?

DR It is lamentable that Benjamin Keach (1640-1704), a first-generation shaper of the Baptist tradition, is largely unknown to Protestants and to Baptists in particular! As the most preeminent voice of the Baptist tradition in the 1600s, Keach was the most important defender of the early Baptist tradition. By 1660, Keach was a leader in a General Baptist congregation, and by 1664, he wrote *The Child's Instructor* in which he argued that baptism should not be applied to children, that laymen could preach the gospel, and that at the second coming Christ would return to reign on earth. Soon after, Keach was sent to jail and his book was burned. Once out of prison, he rewrote *The Child's Instructor* from memory, a book so successful that it had run through 30 editions by the second half of the 18th century. With the curtail of intolerance, this pastor-theologian began to publish profusely, penning almost 40 works from 1689 to 1702. Keach also had a pivotal role in establishing the great tradition of hymn singing among evangelical Christians. He wrote about five hundred hymns and fought for the establishment of this practice during the rise of an opposing Reformed praxis that rejected set forms of singing. On account of his efforts, the great General Assembly of 1689 of the Particular Baptists approved the singing of hymns, leaving each congregation free to practice or abstain. On the whole, Puritanism owes to Keach's pioneering work, the "privilege of holding a hymnal in hand and singing forth praises and prayers" corporately.¹

Left: David Riker pictured in England. **Right:** Called *The Unjust Sentence*, this woodcut depicts Benjamin Keach placed in the stocks after writing *The Child's Instructor*, a catechism for children.

K What does Keach have to teach us about preaching today?

DR Benjamin Keach was a typical Puritan in his style of Bible teaching. He preached using the *lectio continua* method, i.e, the sequential, verse by verse, exposition of Holy Scripture. If the verse or the "preaching unit" (several verses containing a complete thought) was loaded with meaning, it could take several Sundays to explain the whole meaning of the text. This style of preaching brings to mind Paul's ministry in Ephesus. Based on his extensive and thorough preaching of God's word, Paul could say to the Ephesians, "Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27, English Standard Version). Like Keach and Paul, I cannot think of a better manner to teach Christian doctrine today or at any time and age.

K When did you first feel called to preach?

DR I was in my late twenties when I had my first experience with preaching. The 'youth group & young adults' of my church held services at the local jail on Sunday afternoons. Usually, someone played the

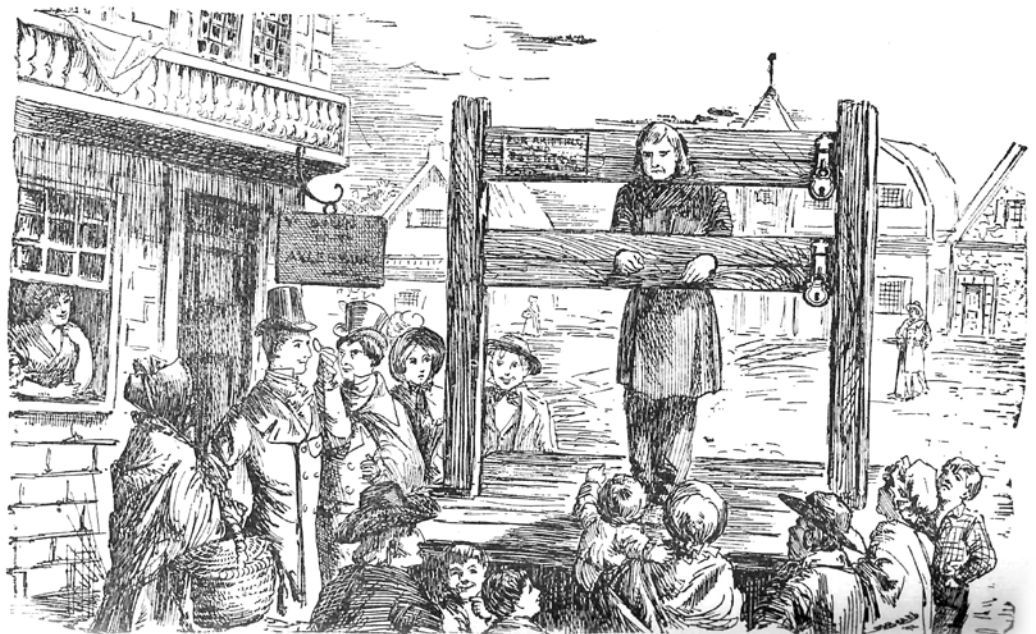
guitar while we all sang a few choruses and one of us shared a word. The environment, an open-air large plaza right in the middle of the prison, was often indifferent and sometimes hostile. Around the same time, I also began to preach for several small congregations without pastors in and outside the city where I lived in northern Brazil. The more I preached, the less joy I had at my secular work. (I was a manager of the tire department at a large dealership.) Eventually, I decided to leave my job and went to Beeson Divinity School.

K What advice would you give pastors about how to continue in the great tradition of the Reformation, especially in regard to preaching?

DR I would encourage young ministers to use *lectio continua* in their ministries. The method is not original to the Reformers, but it became one of the marks of the Reformation. It is worth repeating: I do not know a better way to preach, a better way to teach Christian doctrine, than through the systematic exposition of the Bible. ♦

Interview has been edited for length.

¹ Hugh T. McElrath, *Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music*, 4.





The Preaching *challenge*

by Doug Webster

Applying reformational principles to today's pulpit

Passion for the Truth

When Agatha Christie's fictional detective Hercule Poirot, played by David Suchet, was asked if he was an artist, he said, "No, no, my friend. I'm not an artist. I have known crimes that were artistic, supreme exercises of the imagination. But the solving of them, no, not the artist, the creative power is not what is needed. What is required is a passion for the truth."¹ It is this passion for the truth that compels preachers to delve into the biblical text.

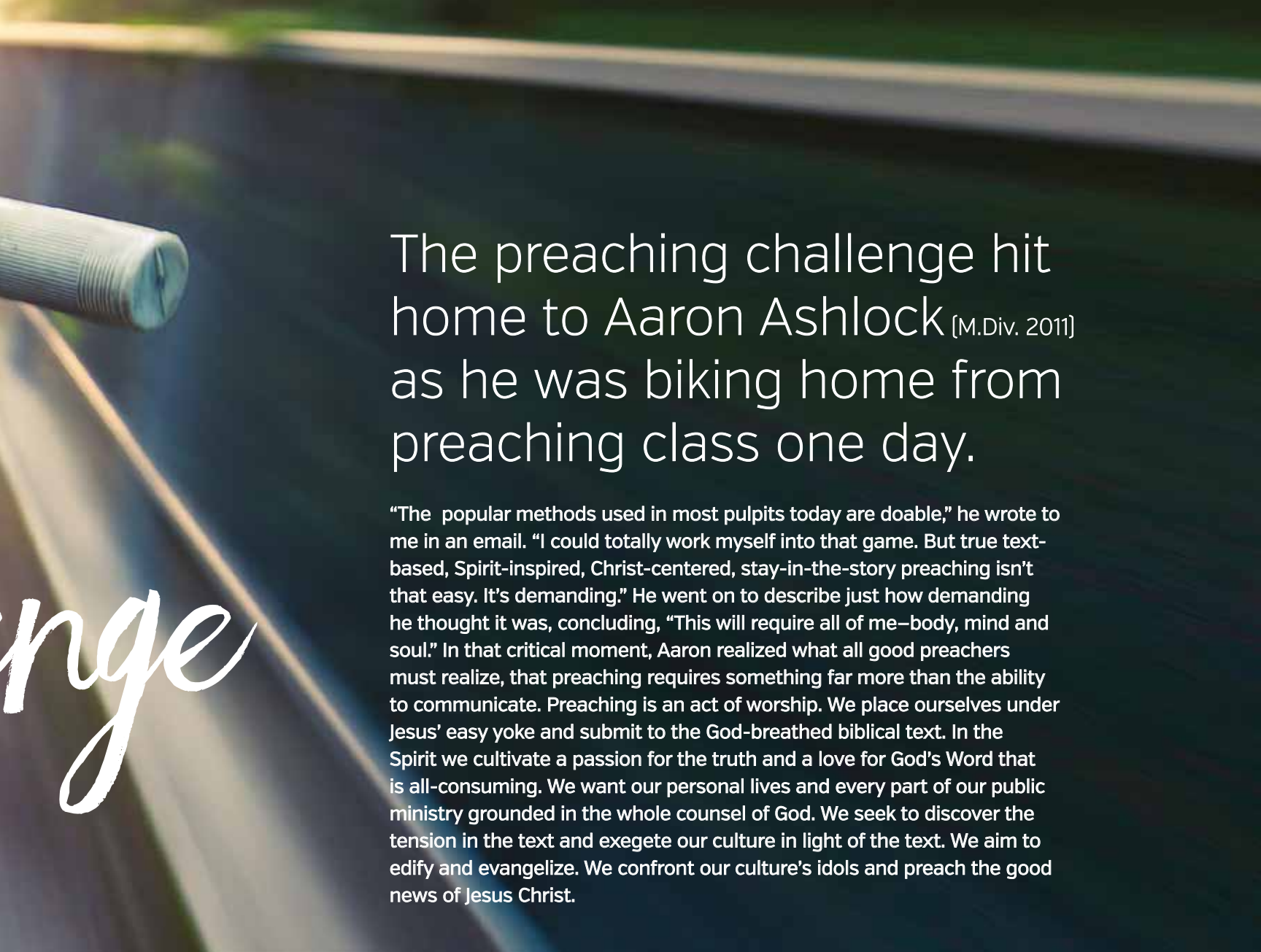
Imagine yourself in a first century household of faith praying the psalms, studying the prophets, meditating on the gospel narratives and hearing the epistles for the first time. If you have studied Greek in

seminary, open your Greek New Testament and study the text along with your English version. Embrace your mother tongue. Meditate on the biblical text. Mull it over in your mind. Memorize it. If you know another language, like Spanish or Chinese or Russian, read it in your second language. Pray out the meaning of the text. Read it for information. Read it for formation. Note the textual weave of exposition and exhortation.

Country singer Johnny Cash reportedly said, "I read the Bible to understand the commentaries." That's good advice. But if you are inclined to write commentaries off as dull and boring, it might be wise for us to reconsider. Commentaries help us poke around in the text. They challenge our preconceived

notions and our easy familiarity with the text. We have a wealth of resources from which to choose. A careful study of these commentaries will answer basic questions, stimulate fresh insights and lead us deeper into the text. Instead of using commentaries the way we use a dictionary or an encyclopedia, it would be beneficial to read commentaries cover-to-cover. Pastor Eugene Peterson reminds us that "exegesis is not in the first place a specialist activity of scholars." Yes, we need the help of scholars, but exegesis is mainly about paying attention, "simply noticing and responding adequately (which is not simple!) to the demand that words make on us."²

There is an unnecessary mystique that surrounds the Bible that keeps even earnest



The preaching challenge hit home to Aaron Ashlock [M.Div. 2011] as he was biking home from preaching class one day.

“The popular methods used in most pulpits today are doable,” he wrote to me in an email. “I could totally work myself into that game. But true text-based, Spirit-inspired, Christ-centered, stay-in-the-story preaching isn’t that easy. It’s demanding.” He went on to describe just how demanding he thought it was, concluding, “This will require all of me—body, mind and soul.” In that critical moment, Aaron realized what all good preachers must realize, that preaching requires something far more than the ability to communicate. Preaching is an act of worship. We place ourselves under Jesus’ easy yoke and submit to the God-breathed biblical text. In the Spirit we cultivate a passion for the truth and a love for God’s Word that is all-consuming. We want our personal lives and every part of our public ministry grounded in the whole counsel of God. We seek to discover the tension in the text and exegete our culture in light of the text. We aim to edify and evangelize. We confront our culture’s idols and preach the good news of Jesus Christ.


believers from grasping its meaning. We make the text out to be unwieldy and complicated. We have parsed, translated, exegeted, researched, debated and interpreted the text to the point of abstraction. Paradoxically, we have reduced the drama of the text to three points and anecdotal illustrations. Good preachers know that the Bible is not a moralistic story-book or a guide for self-help or a resource for motivational speakers. Too many church-goers see the Bible as a huge undifferentiated mass of ancient material designed to inspire devotional daily thoughts, or they see it as The Good Book with secrets for success and stories of courage.

“For most people in our culture, the Bible is an opaque book whose truths are hidden in an endless maze of difficult words, unfamiliar history, unpronounceable names,

and impenetrable mysticism.”³ Bryan Chapell counters this common fallacy by insisting that “the best preachers guide in such a way that their listeners discover that the labyrinth is a myth. There are no dark passageways through twisted mazes of logic to biblical truth that require the expertise of the spiritually elite. There is only a well-worn path that anyone can follow if a preacher sheds some ordinary light along the way.”⁴ Explanation and understanding are not as elusive as they are made out to be. Through the careful work of meditating on the text, asking basic questions and hearing the text, we can grasp the biblical message. “Excellent preaching makes people confident that biblical truth lies within their reach, not beyond their grasp.”⁵

Tension in the Text

Exegetical clarity is essential if we hope to discover the tension in the text. Text is an old Latin word with roots in the textile industry. It comes from the root word *tex-ere*, to weave. *Texture* literally means the process or art of weaving. The idea of weaving a garment and weaving a sermon are linked linguistically. There is a connection between weaving strands of yarn together and weaving a message out of verbs, nouns, prepositions and adjectives. The exegete is on a quest for the truth. We are committed to discovering what the text actually means. New Testament scholar Bruce Metzger used to say to his seminarians, “The text doesn’t mean what it says; it means what



it means.”⁶ Like words in a love letter, the depth of meaning is not always obvious on the surface. Biblical scholar Adele Berlin is right, “We don’t know *what* a text means until we know *how* it means.”⁷

The meaning of the text is tied to the tension in the text. Every biblical passage deals with the clash between the mystery of God and the mess of the human condition. The tension lies between humanity’s fallen condition and God’s work of redemption. To the degree that we identify with Jesus, his person and his work, we live in that tension. Sermons miss the mark when they shrink the text down to a self-help life principle and edit out the tension. Conventional sermons may tell a clever opening story, plow through a text, make a few points and draw a conclusion, but in the process miss the passion of the passage. Good exegesis discovers the tension in the text, and good preaching brings out the passion of the passage.

Poor preaching can be used mightily by the Spirit of Christ to preach the gospel and make disciples. It happens every Sunday, but that’s no excuse for poor preaching. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was right, “There is something radically wrong with dull and boring preachers.”⁸ We can be thankful however that, “God in his ordinary providence makes use of means, yet is free to work without, above and against them, at his pleasure”—and for his glory!⁹ Yet how much better when the preacher is standing on the fault line between the mystery of God and the mess of the human condition and preaches the Word of God in the Spirit as it was intended to be preached. Good preaching requires discernment and

hard work. Someone needs to pay attention prayerfully and thoughtfully to God’s overarching salvation history, the original intention of the passage, the context of the text and the people to whom one is preaching.

Hidden Work

Before we feel at home in the biblical text, a fair amount of reading, prayer, study and reflection is required.

Coming to terms with a biblical text is a long, slow process that requires patience and perseverance. We also want to pay attention to what the biblical text is saying to our culture. Simply explaining what the Bible says does not proclaim the impact of God’s Word for Christians today. We must find ways to bridge the Word of God and contemporary culture. Barbara Brown Taylor writes, “All the parts of preaching can be taught: exegesis, language, metaphor, development, delivery. What is hard to teach is how to put them all together, so that what is true is also beautiful, and evocative, and alive.”¹⁰

The depth and beauty of the biblical text can be likened to a well-made instrument. In the hands of a skilled violinist, a lightweight, fragile piece of finely crafted maple or mahogany can fill a concert hall with music. Preachers are like musicians. Congregations don’t listen to hours upon hours of practice time. They listen to well-crafted, prayerfully focused sermons. Good preachers draw out the meaning of the text the way a skilled violinist plays music.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Colossae, he compared good

preaching to manual labor, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom meant hard work (Colossians 1:28-29). He compared it to exhausting physical work, commonly associated with farming and construction. Good preachers always make preaching look easier than it actually is. What is hidden is all the hard work and prayer. The listener benefits from the fruit of the skilled preacher’s labor without being constantly reminded of the effort behind the finished message.

Much of the preacher’s work is unseen by the congregation, and that’s how it should be. Our sermon is not meant to impress people with our hard work, but rather with how wonderful the gospel is. My father was a mathematician, but his avocation was wood-working. His tools and workbench were in the basement of our home. When he was running his power saw or turning wood on a lathe, he produced a lot of sawdust, but he made sure that the sawdust never made it upstairs. Only his finely finished hutch or hand-crafted desk made it upstairs. Good preachers make a point of not tracking their exegetical sawdust into the sanctuary. Their hard work remains hidden and their finished work speaks for itself.

Preaching-in-Community

The prophet Isaiah has a line that helps me understand the meaning of preaching. The Lord says to the people, “Come now, let us reason together” (Isaiah 1:18). In the Spirit, preachers are part of a conversation between the Triune God and the people of God. Sermon preparation and



understanding is a community effort. The idea that the pastor prepares a sermon in secret and springs it on an unsuspecting congregation is a prescription for failure. The idea that the solitary pastor emerges from his study with an authoritative word from the Lord may sound more spiritual than it really is. The truth of God's Word belongs to the body of Christ and is shared, nurtured, proclaimed, preached, mentored, modeled and discussed in the matrix of the household of faith.

The church has been entrusted with the authoritative Word of God. Reading good commentaries factors into this dialogue, but so also does discussing the biblical text with brothers and sisters in Christ. I can't imagine preaching without gaining the perspective of "many advisors" (Proverbs 15:22), including men and women, older people (like myself), college students and young people. Often when I preach in multiple Sunday morning services I will go for coffee between services with one or two people who were in the early service to discuss the sermon. I'm convinced that we need conversational partners that will stimulate our thinking, inform our perspectives, deepen our discernment, correct our grammar, hold us accountable and pray for us. My friend and colleague Robert Smith says it well, "Preachers preach, for one reason only, so that their congregations will preach!"¹¹ The apostle Paul had this goal in mind when he taught the Lord's Supper: "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim [Preach!] the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

Text-to-Table

Whether or not your church practices the Eucharist weekly, a good test for all sermons is how well they transition to the Lord's Table. If the message is ill-suited to Eucharistic worship, then chances are it is a moralistic sermon that casts the burden of trying harder on the believer or it may be a self-help sermon that sends the spiritual consumer out with a to-do list. All Christ-honoring, gospel-centered sermons transition to Holy Communion beautifully. Every sermon that ends at the Table is bound to witness to the redeeming work of Christ.

On the road to Emmaus, Jesus told the story of salvation history. In seven miles, he drew out its salvation-making, history-changing, life-transforming significance. The two disciples felt the impact of the Word of God rightly divided: "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32). This is what good preaching does.

Ironically, the risen Lord was perceived as an ignorant stranger. Their delayed recognition gave them the opportunity to absorb the message intellectually. They met the risen Lord by grasping the truth of the Savior. Their eyes were opened, and they recognized him because the Lord opened the Scriptures for them. The moment of personal recognition came at the table when Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. In that Eucharistic moment, they discovered the Person of Christ because they understood the Work of Christ. But for all this tension between identification and recognition, there was no tension between text and table!

Good preachers are text-driven not pulpit-driven. The pulpit doesn't drive preachers to the text; the text drives preachers to the pulpit. Good preachers ask, "What does the Word of God say to the congregation this week?" Not, "What do I say to the congregation this week?" Peter's challenge echoes in their souls, "If you speak, you should do so as one who speaks the very words of God" (1 Peter 4:11). The question on their mind is, "Did Jesus have to die to preach this sermon?" And they wonder along with Martin Luther, "How will the devil be defeated by this sermon?" ♦



Douglas D. Webster, an ordained Presbyterian minister, is professor of Pastoral Theology and Christian Preaching at Beeson Divinity School and a prolific author. Learn more at douglasdwebster.com.

¹ From the PBS series, "The Hollows."

² Eugene Peterson, *Eat this Book*, 51.

³ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon*, 103.

⁴ Chapell, 103.

⁵ Chapell, 110.

⁶ M. Craig Barnes, *The Pastor As Minor Poet*, 74.

⁷ Bruce Waltke, *Old Testament Theology*, 114.

⁸ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers*, 87.

⁹ Westminster Confession, on Providence, V, 3

¹⁰ Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life*, 83.

¹¹ Robert Smith, Jr., *Doctrine that Dances: Bringing Doctrinal Preaching and Teaching to Life*, 44.

"preach the word"

Beeson's partnership with the Lilly Endowment, Inc. continues
to enhance the quality of preaching

By Grant Taylor

The apostle Paul exhorts Timothy, "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2).

The "word" corresponds with the Scriptures upon which Paul and Timothy rely for their faith and ministry. The Scriptures must be preached because they are "God-breathed" and therefore profitable for the ministry of the church, indeed for "every good work" (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Preaching the word, then, describes Timothy's job description as Paul's apostolic delegate in Ephesus. Timothy must remind the churches of Jesus Christ of the "mystery of godliness"

Beeson have taught new elective courses in preaching. In spring 2016, The Rev. Phillip Jensen, former dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney, Australia, and Dr. Todd Wilson of Calvary Memorial Church led preaching workshops in preaching for Beeson students and other area pastors. In 2017 Beeson welcomed Dr. Cleophus LaRue of Princeton Theological Seminary to teach a January elective, "Preaching in the African American Tradition," and Dr. Christian George of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, who delivered the Conger Preaching Lectures.

The heartbeat of the initiative is the six peer groups of Christian



(1 Timothy 3:16). The propagation of the gospel and the health of the church depend upon faithful and persuasive preaching of the Scriptures.

Ralph Waldo Beeson, the founding donor of Beeson Divinity School, shared this vision of the primacy of preaching in and for the church. Mr. Beeson believed that the divinity school that now bears his name should train "pastors who can preach." In observance with his vision, Beeson's faculty teaches the exegetical, historical, theological, homiletical and pastoral knowledge and skills required to form "pastors who can preach." Beeson's recent partnership with the Lilly Endowment, Inc. enhances this vision.

In 2013, Beeson was awarded a five-year grant by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., as part of its pilot Initiative to Strengthen the Quality of Preaching. This project is designed to strengthen preaching using new course offerings, conferences and lectures, web resources and quality peer groups of pastors and current Master of Divinity students.

Through the partnership with the initiative, Beeson is able to host many renowned preachers. The Rev. Liam Goligher of Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia and Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi of Jos, Nigeria delivered lectures on preaching. Dr. Scott Gibson of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Dr. Douglas Webster of

ministers who are actively engaged in preaching ministries (one of which is pictured here). These groups meet monthly for discussion and prayer related to strengthening their own preaching. The initiative also supports conferences, retreats and cross-cultural preaching experiences. Mrs. Hayden Walker, Beeson alumna and former recipient of the James Earl Massey Preaching Award, serves as assistant project director and coordinates the peer groups.

"Our greatest success comes from hearing that pastors have been encouraged to think more carefully about how they communicate the gospel," she says. Personal relationships and deepening convictions about the centrality of Christian preaching reflect the vision and mission of Beeson.

In addition to Walker's role, a committed team leads the initiative at Beeson. Dr. Grant Taylor, associate dean for academic affairs, and Dr. Robert Smith, Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity, serve as co-directors. Mr. Hunter Upton, Beeson M.Div. student, serves as communications coordinator.

Beeson Divinity School thanks the Lilly Endowment, in particular Dr. John Wimmer, for their support in this vibrant initiative. The current issue of *Beeson* magazine offers more evidence of this good partnership. Beeson looks forward to continued success in this initiative shaping "pastors who can preach." ♦



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committed to the principles of the Reformation.

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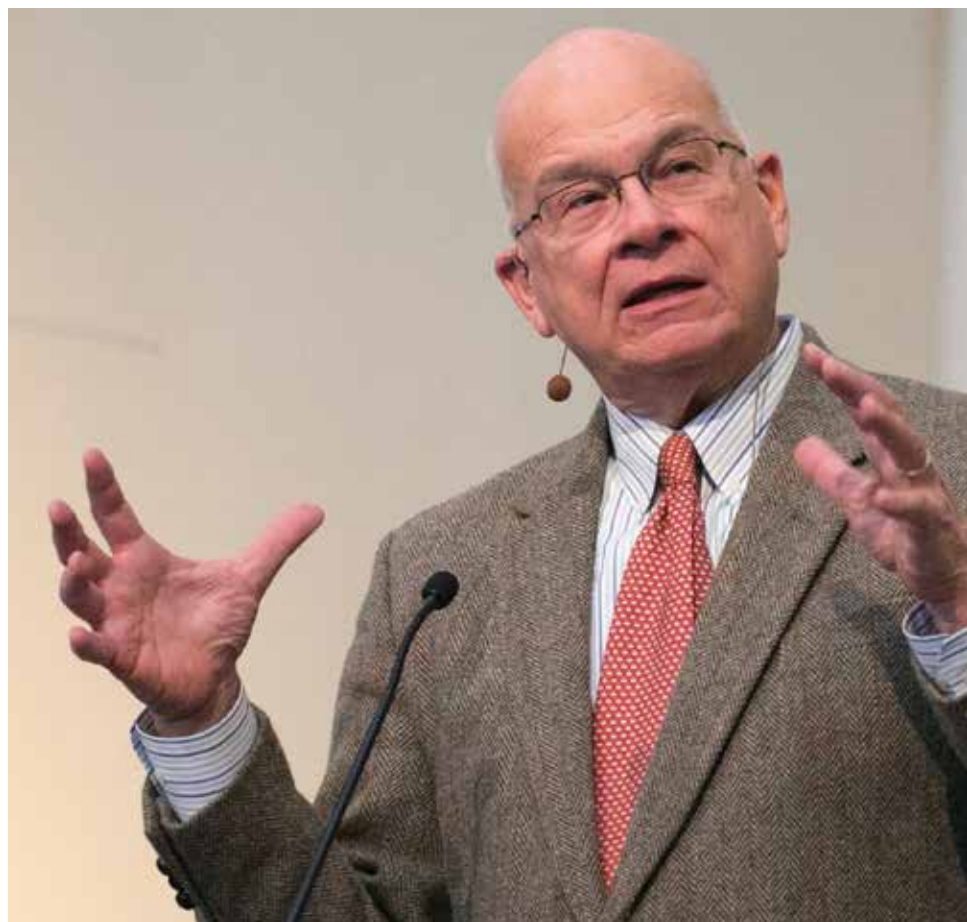


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New York City pastor and *The New York Times* best-selling author Timothy Keller made his first visit to Beeson Divinity School on Nov. 8, 2016, as part of Beeson's Faith and Work Lecture series.



New York City Pastor, Author **Timothy Keller** Makes First Visit to Beeson



Left: Keller speaks with Timothy George for the Beeson podcast during a special luncheon. **Above:** Keller addresses the Beeson community during a private worship service.



Top left: Keller greets guests during a luncheon. **Top right:** Keller lectures to a large crowd at the Wright Center.

Keller, who is the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, spoke to a crowd of about 1,750 at Samford University's Leslie S. Wright Center on the topic of his book, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work*.

"How does the gospel transform your daily work?" he asked. Keller, who also co-founded The Gospel Coalition, responded with five principles.

First, Christian faith gives you a new identity without which work can sink you.

Second, faith gives you a new concept of dignity of all work without which work can bore you.

Third, faith gives you a moral compass without which work could corrupt you.

Fourth, the Christian faith gives you a new worldview without which work will be your master not your servant.

Fifth, Christianity gives you a sophisticated hope without which work will frustrate you.

"When you make your work your identity, if you're successful, it goes to your head, and if you are unsuccessful, it destroys your heart," Keller said in discussing his first principle.

If you do not want work to sink you, then your identity must rest in the person and work of Jesus Christ, not your work, Keller explained.

"We live in a culture right now in which everyone wants to change the world and make lots of money while they are doing it," he said about his second principle. But "all work that helps people is God's work."

Do your work as "unto the Lord," Keller urged the crowd, and be encouraged that "the vision God has given you he will one day bring to pass."

The audio and video of the Faith and

Work Lecture, which is made possible by the Kern Family Foundation and directed by Associate Professor D. Mark DeVine, is made available on the website, beesondivinity.com.

Prior to the lecture, Keller preached on "The Temptation of Ministry" from 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, during a private service of worship for Beeson faculty, staff and students. Speaking from 42 years of experience in ordained ministry, Keller said there are at least three ways the ministry can "make you conceited unless God intervenes with your cooperation."

First, you can become conceited in theological knowledge. "Knowing the truth has the tendency to inflate you," Keller said.

Second, you can become tempted to take on a false identity. "You will tend to identify personally with your ministry so that if your ministry fails or succeeds it reflects on you," he said.

Third, ministry can tempt you to fake it. "Either ministry will make you a far better Christian or a far worse Christian than you are," Keller said. "It's either going to drive you to him or drive you away from him."

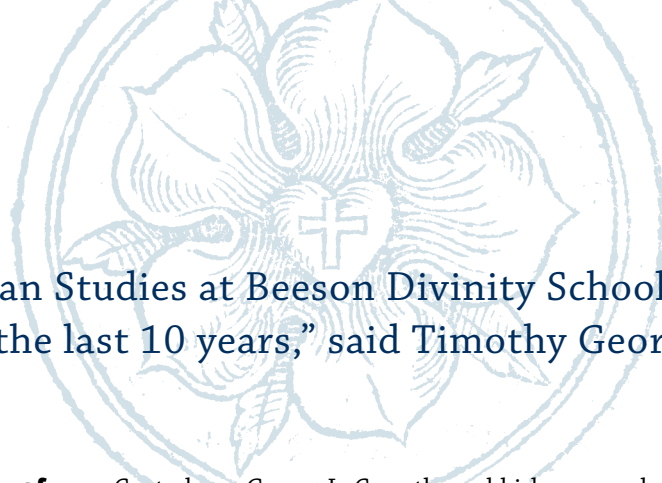
"Look at all the things God has done to bring you to your knees. Look at all the ways in which he has broken your pride. Look at all the ways he has brought you to the end of yourself so that you have to cling to him because you got nothing else to cling to."

The audio and video from Keller's sermon is also available on Beeson's website.

Keller ended his visit by giving a podcast interview with Dean Timothy George during his visit. You can find the podcast conversation on Beeson's website or on iTunes. ♦

A man with glasses, wearing a black academic gown with a red stole and red stripes on the sleeves, is speaking at a wooden podium. In the background, a large logo of Beeson Divinity School is visible, featuring a red heart with a black cross inside, set against a white and blue circular design. The scene is set in a formal, well-lit room.

Beeson Divinity School's
The Institute of
Anglican Studies
Continues Rapid
Growth, Reach



The Institute of Anglican Studies at Beeson Divinity School is one of the school's "major innovations in the last 10 years," said Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School.

Founded in response to an influx of Anglican applicants who were looking for a program with both academic rigor and practical ministry preparation, the Institute of Anglican Studies began in 2013 with the goal to prepare men and women for gospel ministry in Anglican parishes. The institute awarded its first Certificate of Anglican Studies to graduating M.Div. student, Peter Smith, in December 2013.

Under the leadership of Gerald R. McDermott, Anglican chair of divinity, Samford University's Beeson Divinity School is now one of three non-Anglican seminaries in the United States recognized by the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) to train Anglican clergy. ACNA approved the school's Certificate of Anglican Studies in May 2016, only one year after McDermott was hired, in part, to oversee the institute.

Now in its third year, the institute includes around 15 Anglican students in the certificate program, and a larger number—including non-Anglican students—who participate in some of its offerings. In the last year, McDermott has begun a weekly evensong service, a monthly Anglican theology night and a monthly luncheon with Anglican speakers. The institute also plans an annual Anglican theology conference with the first one scheduled for Sept. 25-26, 2018, on the theme of "What is Anglicanism?"

"We are so blessed to have a world-renowned scholar of Dr. McDermott's caliber to lead this new program," George said. "His leadership and vision have already proven to be invaluable to the institute and our school."

A major contribution of the institute has been the formation of partnerships within the Anglican Communion. During the 2016 academic year, the divinity school welcomed the 103rd archbishop of

Canterbury, George L. Care; the archbishop of ACNA, Foley Beach; and the archbishop of Jos, Nigeria, Benjamin Kwashi, to preach in Andrew Gerow Hodges Chapel. Also in 2016, the institute's first Advisory Council was formed with 10 members who represent the Episcopal Church USA and ACNA. The institute also has official partnerships with churches in the greater Birmingham area: Christ the King Anglican Church, St. John's Anglican Church, St. Peter's Anglican Church and the Cathedral Church of the Advent.

"One of the things we are doing through the institute is cultivating good relationships with Anglican churches and bishops," George said. "In the same year, we had both Archbishop George Carey and Archbishop Foley Beach. They spoke at convocation—one spring, one fall, same academic year. I think it shows something about the breadth of our reach and of the fact that we have attracted this kind of support from leaders within the worldwide Anglican Communion."

Beginning in September 2017, the institute will offer a new program, Anglican Intensives. This program is designed for those who have already completed a M.Div. or equivalent in a non-Anglican denomination, and who now desire to study Anglican theology and ministry.

"After we announced that Beeson's Institute for Anglican Studies was accepted officially by ACNA as a place for training future Anglican ministers within ACNA, we received requests from people around the country who wanted to pursue various levels of ordination within the Anglican Communion," McDermott said. "They wanted to know where they could get their Anglican training post-M.Div. So this is why we have started the Anglican Intensives program: to teach Anglican theology and ministry to those who are wanting to

become Anglican priests and deacons."

Anglican Intensives is a two-year noncredit program that will be comprised of a directed study and two weeklong on-campus residencies, the first residency taking place in May 2018. Those who complete the program will receive a certificate. Cost for the program is \$1,200/year plus travel, lodging and book expenses.

To request an application form or for other questions, contact McDermott at gmcdermo@samford.edu. Applications for the 2017-18 academic year are due July 1, 2017.

"We are excited for what this institute will mean for students around the world who want to go into Anglican ministry and for the theological enrichment of the Anglican Communion worldwide," McDermott said.

The institute is one more way that Beeson Divinity School continues to fulfill the vision of its benefactor Ralph Waldo Beeson. In his will, Beeson wrote that he wanted Beeson Divinity School to be "Christian, Protestant, evangelical and interdenominational."

"The Institute of Anglican Studies is a major advance in the effort of Beeson Divinity School to prepare God-called men and women for the service of the Church. This helps us to do that," George said. "There is a great need for it now, and the need for it and the response to it will only increase in the years to come if we continue to have the kind of quality faculty and programs that we now have in place.

"I'm very excited about it," George continued. "The future of the Institute of Anglican Studies is as bright as the promises of God."

For more information about the institute or the new Anglican Intensives program, go to beesondivinity.com/anglican-institute or email gmcdermo@samford.edu. ♦

Faculty Staff

Beloved Beeson Divinity School professor Patricia A. Outlaw retires in May 2016 after 15 years

Patricia Outlaw, professor of pastoral counseling at Beeson, retired last May after 15 years. She said the highlight of her tenure was “the privilege of working with a community of believers who frequently prays together in their offices, in their classroom settings and in community worship services.” It has been a joy and a privilege to work in a context “where prayer is the norm and not the exception,” Outlaw added.

An ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal church, Outlaw serves as pastor of Bethel A.M.E. Church-Rising in Birmingham, Alabama.

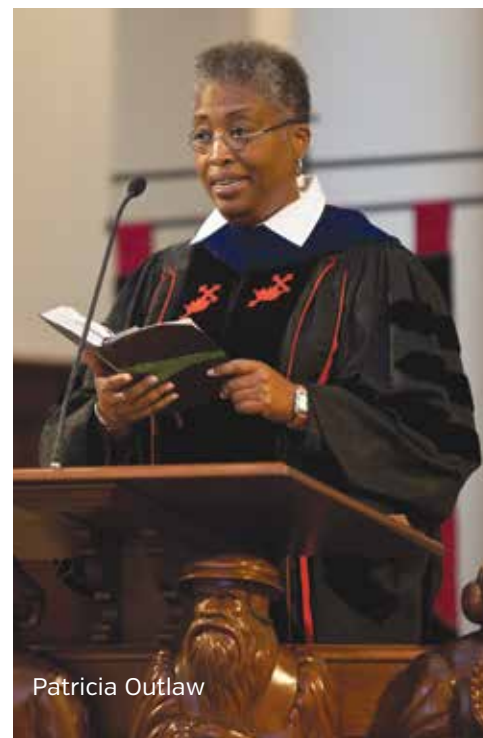
“I don’t think I would have survived as long as I did at Beeson had I not been able to combine my teaching and ministry in the classroom setting,” she said. “My training as a psychologist, preacher, professor and pastor equipped me to teach with passion from an academic and pragmatic approach. It is one thing to teach from a

mere academic perspective, but it is another thing altogether to teach from the pulpit of a seasoned pastor.”

Outlaw said the most significant changes in the field of pastoral care and psychology have been the ongoing effort to integrate spirituality and psychology. Thirty years ago, it would have been considered outside the norm for psychologists to give consideration or merit to the spiritual orientation of his or her clients, she said.

Outlaw was the first woman to graduate from Beeson’s Doctor of Ministry program (2002). She also holds degrees from Towson State, St. Mary’s Seminary and University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland.

“In the African tradition, ‘to dance’ is ‘to breathe.’ To everything there is a season,” she said, including “a time to dance. Having been bivocational for the majority of my working life, I am looking forward to the days ahead to dance.” ♦



Patricia Outlaw

Global Center

New missions certificate to 'provide maximum impact for cross-cultural ministry'

In fall 2016, Beeson began offering for the first time a missions certificate to students interested in intentional training in cross-cultural ministry and who pursue a M.Div. To complete the certificate, students will be required to take three missions courses and complete two cross-cultural practicums, in addition to meeting all other components of the M.Div. This certificate will be accepted by mission agencies such as the International Mission Board and Launch Global.

“The missions certificate is designed to work within Beeson’s existing curriculum to provide maximum impact for cross-cultural ministry,” said David Parks, director of Beeson’s Global Center. “We aim for this certificate to help students better bridge the gap from seminary to the mission field.”

Associate Dean Grant Taylor said, “We are confident that Beeson’s faculty, evangelical convictions and personal approach will prepare students for a lifetime of effective cross-cultural ministry. The missions certificate reflects that confidence.”

Those pursuing a missions certificate also will be able to take advantage of Beeson’s Global Center, a hub of resources to equip the student for missions and to build awareness of the global Christian cause and community. The Global Center does this in many ways, most notably through its two annual, mission-focused lectures: Go Global and World Christianity Focus Week. The center also provides weekly opportunities to learn about missions through Global Voices and to build relationships with internationals

through International Lunch Club.

For more information about the missions certificate, contact Parks at daparks@samford.edu. ♦



Beeson student Jonathan Smith teaches the Bible in Oaxaca, Mexico.



“My dream and my prayer is that Beeson Divinity School will be able to support with generous scholarship funding the rising generation of theological students God is sending our way.”

—Timothy George, Dean

Beeson Participating in the *Forever Samford* Capital Campaign

By Carolyn Lankford

Samford University announced the launch of a \$300 million capital campaign called *Forever Samford* during Homecoming Weekend, November 2016. Beeson Divinity School is pleased to participate in this ambitious six-year effort.

Beeson Divinity School’s targeted goals for the *Forever Samford* campaign include the Timothy George Scholarship for Excellence; The Gary and Alta Faye Fenton Student Scholarship; and the Student Scholarship Fund, a permanent line item in the annual budget. The heart of all fundraising efforts at the divinity school are directly or indirectly focused on increasing financial aid for every student, both through endowed funds and annual funds.



The Timothy George Scholarship for Excellence was established two years ago by a member of Beeson’s Advisory Board with the intention of honoring Beeson’s founding and current dean, Timothy George, for his influence on the Christian church through his ministry of writing, teaching and preaching. This scholarship is also designed to attract top-tier students who might otherwise choose a sister institution due to greater financial assistance.

The Gary and Alta Faye Fenton Student Scholarship was established to both honor the ministry of Dr. and Mrs. Fenton, who served at Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Homewood for 25 years, and to provide greater financial resources to future students so they may receive a Master of Divinity from Beeson Divinity School and graduate debt free.

The general Student Scholarship Fund is a part of Beeson’s annual operating budget and the internal resource for awarding

scholarship assistance. Every Master of Divinity student receives some level of financial assistance, and the goal is to forever grow this source of revenue, thereby increasing the amount of assistance for students.

Beeson asks much of its students in terms of time commitment, physical location, required academic hours and a whole-person membership in a real community. We invite your prayers for a continued provision of financial gifts so that Beeson may be affordable to its students while they are preparing for God-called ministry within Christ’s church.

All financial donations made to Beeson Divinity School will further the *Forever Samford* campaign. For more information about these funds or how to give, contact Carolyn Lankford at clankfor@samford.edu. ♦

Beeson Happenings

1 Finkenwalde Day II

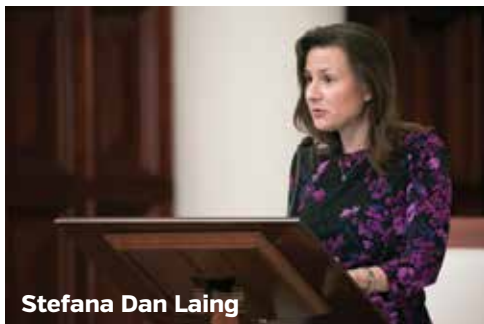
Beeson celebrated its second annual Finkenwalde Day on Oct. 11, 2016, a day set aside for spiritual, academic and recreational retreat.

Beeson held its first Finkenwalde Day in fall 2015 during its semester-long chapel series on German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer's seminary vision. The daylong retreat was patterned after a day in the life of Bonhoeffer's underground seminary in Finkenwalde, Poland during Nazi Germany, which included prayer, meditation, worship, lectures, singing, recreation and fellowship at table.

"I had a number of students approach me after we did Finkenwalde Day last fall about doing this again," said Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School.

Stefana Dan Laing, adjunct assistant professor of theology at Houston Graduate School of Theology in Texas, lectured on "Prayer in the Early Church," and Beeson professor Carl Beckwith lectured on "Prayer in the Reformation."

New to Finkenwalde Day II, participants walked around the entire Samford University



campus praying for the Samford employees and students.

"From the time Beeson Divinity School was established in 1988, the life and witness of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and especially his book *Life Together*, have informed our vision of theological education," George said. "Theological education is not just about information but about transformation. I think we learn a lot by being in community. This is really what seminary should be about."

The third annual Finkenwalde Day is scheduled for Oct. 31, 2017, which will be held in conjunction with Reformation Day in celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.



2 Global Center News

On Sept. 15, 2016, Beeson's Global Center hosted a special Global Voices with documentary filmmaker Cliff Vaughn and retired Samford professor Bill Cowley and his wife, Audrey, discussing the new documentary, *The Disturbances*. This new documentary tells the story of the Nigerian genocide of 1966, the role the Cowleys and other missionaries played in evacuating students to safety, and the reunion the Cowleys had decades later with one of those students, Jonathan Ikerionwu, at the Global Center in spring 2016. You can learn more and find dates for screenings at thedisturbances.com.

During Go Global in October 2016, one mission agency representative shared the gospel with a Chinese Samford student, who in turn placed her faith in Jesus Christ.

In 2016, Beeson students served for at least two weeks doing mission work in places such as Germany, Mexico, Ecuador, Czech Republic, Brooklyn, New York and the Middle East for their cross-cultural ministry practicums.

3 New viewbook

In fall 2016, the Office of Admission produced its first-ever viewbook. This 28-page book highlights Beeson distinctives, curriculum, faculty, graduates, Samford University and Birmingham. To request a copy, please email Sharon Head at shead@samford.edu.



New website

Led by Todd Cotton, executive director of web and digital marketing of Samford University, and Kristen Padilla, Beeson's marketing and communications coordinator, Beeson has redesigned its website to now become mobile-ready and



friendly. Explore the newly designed site at beesondivinity.com.

5 Beeson podcast

The Beeson podcast marked its sixth year in 2016, including its 300th episode. Special guests this year included Beeson alumni Dennis Aggrey, Betsy Childs Howard, Chris Baker and Jake Hanson; Beeson faculty Carl Beckwith, Lyle Dorsett, Paul House, Piotr Malysz, Gerald McDermott and Osvaldo Padilla; and notable guests such as Lord George Carey of Canterbury, Timothy Keller and Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi. A new podcast episode is published weekly on Tuesday mornings. Twice a month the podcast features an interview, once a month a sermon and once a month a lecture. You can subscribe to the Beeson podcast on iTunes or listen to episodes on our website at beesondivinity.com/podcast.



6 New staff member

In 2016, Beeson Divinity School welcomed Melanie Van Laningham (M.Div. 2013), who joined the Beeson staff as the program assistant of the Global Center in August, overseeing events and assisting Director David Parks in fulfilling the center's mission. An Alabama native, Van Laningham served in Eastern Europe as an International Mission Board (SBC) journeyman missionary for two years prior to studying at Beeson. Van Laningham is a member of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, where she has been involved with an international congregation for the last two years.



7 Media Center

Beeson now has more than 750 YouTube subscribers. Beeson's media center is continually adding new content to its YouTube page, including chapel sermons, special lectures and professors answering the question, Why Beeson?. The Media Center also live streams each week's chapel service on its YouTube page. Join us for community worship each Tuesday at 11 a.m. CST in person or on the web at

YouTube.com/BeesonDivinity.

In addition to Beeson's free resources, the media center has audio CDs of lecture series, classes and more available for purchase. These are great resources for church or personal libraries and make excellent gifts that will have lasting gospel impact.

8 Beeson trip to Israel

A group of Beeson students, led by faculty and staff members Dr. Osvaldo and Kristen Padilla, went to Israel, Dec. 31, 2016-Jan. 11, 2017 through a newly-formed organization called Passages. Passages offers young Christian leaders the opportunity to visit the Holy Land and learn about modern Israel at a very minimal cost to the student.

In January 2016, Beeson was one of four schools of Passages' inaugural winter trip to Israel. In conjunction with the 2017 trip, Beeson students took a course with Osvaldo that focused on the sermons of Jesus. For instance, students learned about the Sermon on the Mount while visiting the site. This course was made possible by the Lilly Grant. Beeson hopes to continue its partnership with Passages so that more of its students will be able to visit the Holy Land. The 2017 group is pictured here standing in front of the Jordan River. ♦



Beeson Portrait

Yannick Christos-Wahab

Yannick Christos-Wahab is a third-year Master of Divinity student at Beeson Divinity School

When Yannick Christos-Wahab was 10 years old, his father changed his family's surname.

Previously, Yannick's last name was Wahab, a common Muslim surname that means "servant of the Giver." But years after his father's conversion from Islam to Christianity, he added the Greek word for Christ, "Anointed One," to Wahab, making his son Yannick one of five people in the world with that surname.

Christos-Wahab smiled as he retold the story. His dad did not know Greek but "he knew I was going to end up studying theology."

But for Christos-Wahab, studying theology was a bit of an anomaly given his African Pentecostal context. He grew up in a Nigerian home in a Nigerian community in a borough of London. While worship services were vibrant and its people zealous for the Lord, the prosperity gospel (the belief that the ultimate sign of God's blessing is health and wealth) had taken root in some forms of African Pentecostalism. According to Christos-Wahab, the ministers he knew had no theological training and feared that being academic meant a loss of faith. When Christos-Wahab went to the University of St. Andrews in Scotland to study theology for his undergraduate work, he was the first person he had known to do so.

While at St. Andrews, he took a New Testament and Greek class from Scott Hafemann, a professor whom Christos-Wahab credits to having changed how he now reads and interprets Scripture. For the first time, he began seeing that the Bible was not a collection of isolated stories and thoughts, but rather one large narrative of Jesus Christ redeeming the world.

"All of a sudden I was realizing, 'Wow!



This fits,' and what he's saying is actually biblical," Christos-Wahab said about Hafemann's class. "It helped me to recover my Bible because I've always read my Bible but now I was reading my Bible in a different way."

It was also Hafemann who first encouraged him to go to seminary and mentioned Beeson Divinity School.

Christos-Wahab was impressed by Beeson Divinity School's stress on biblical languages, studying theology historically and not just systematically, studying in an interdenominational setting, and on personal education.

"I wanted to learn theology in a setting where people were being trained for ministry," he said. "I just prayed about it, and in the end, Beeson was the only place I applied to. I was really certain that's where God wanted me."

Now in his third year at Beeson, Christos-Wahab continues doing what he wanted

to do as a boy: study theology. But now he is tapping into his other passion: teaching theology to those who need it.

Through the newly formed School Ministries of Birmingham, Christos-Wahab teaches a Biblical Worldviews class to 16- and 17-year-old Spain Park High School students weekday afternoons, except Thursdays. School Ministries of Birmingham is a released time education program that offers a Bible class to public school students off campus during a class period. On Saturdays, Christos-Wahab teaches Hebrew at a Jewish Messianic Center to people in their 40s and older.

Christos-Wahab says it's a great privilege to be able to teach what he is learning during his classes at Beeson.

"The professors have been great examples, not just in their knowledge, but in how they teach," he said. "It's refreshing to be in a setting with believers, to be in an interdenominational setting where I get to have conversations with Anglicans and Lutherans, to be in a setting where I can have great relationships with my professors and to learn from their teaching."

Christos-Wahab is so "passionate about theological education" that he feels called to teach theology to people who have not been taught, people who, once like himself, grew up with the prosperity gospel and who do not know anything different. One day, he hopes to go to Nigeria to teach theology to his people.

"I'm very passionate about theological education among people who don't have it," Christos-Wahab said. "I cannot imagine not teaching."

To support students like Christos-Wahab, consider giving to one of the scholarships listed on page 25. ♦

Beeson Divinity Award Winners

Wayne and Mary Splawn are co-recipients of the 2017 Master of Divinity Distinguished Alumnus award. This is the first time Beeson has given this award to a married couple. Previously, they also were the co-recipients of Beeson's Distinguished Student Award in 2007. Wayne and Mary were presented their award on Feb. 28 during community worship in Hodges Chapel.

Wayne Splawn (M.Div. 2007) is the associate minister of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, where he works with young professionals, young married couples and associate deacons. Wayne also preaches once a month in the contemporary worship service and is a staff liaison for the church's missions committee. A graduate of the University of South Carolina, Wayne is currently working toward a Doctor of Ministry from Beeson. He and his wife, Mary, have two children.

Mary Splawn (M.Div. 2007) is the minister of connections of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, where she provides leadership for the varied women's ministry programs, helps new members connect with service and discipleship opportunities, and manages the Christian Life Center and family life programs. She is a graduate of the University of South Carolina and a former journeyman missionary with the International Mission Board (SBC). Mary has served on Beeson's Alumni Advisory Board since 2013 and as a peer group mentor for the supervised practicum component of Beeson's curriculum. Mary and her husband, Wayne, have two children.

"Wayne and Mary Splawn are both God-called ministers of the gospel who serve the Lord's church with integrity and compassion," said Dean Timothy George. "I am delighted that they have been chosen to receive and to share Beeson's prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award for this year." ♦

Jason R. McConnell (D.Min. 2011) is the 2017 D.Min. Distinguished Alumnus award winner. He will be presented his award on April 18 during community worship in Hodges Chapel. McConnell is the pastor of Franklin United Church in Franklin, Vermont, where he has served since Jan. 1, 2004. Prior to moving to Franklin, McConnell served in various pastoral roles at the Chapel of Hope in Josephine, Pennsylvania; Parkview Presbyterian Church in Oak Park, Illinois; and Peoples Evangelical Congregational Church in Ashburnham, Massachusetts.

Before earning his Doctor of Ministry from Beeson Divinity School, he graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago (B.A.) and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts (M.Div., Th.M.). Franklin United Church recently received a Lilly Endowment grant to enable McConnell to participate in the 2016 National Clergy Renewal Program, which will allow him to be on sabbatical from May to August of 2017. McConnell and his wife, Jennifer, have four children.

Dr. Mark Searby, director of D.Min. Studies, said McConnell is a pastor who has a heart for other pastors, especially those serving in rural areas or small churches.

"Jason is a solid preacher and teacher of God's Word who practices serious theological reflection on the practice of ministry. His D. Min. project and dissertation was on rural ministry, and it has provided a resource for others who serve in that context."



Wayne and Mary Splawn

M.DIV. DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI



Jason R. McConnell

D.MIN. DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS



“Pray for a reconciled world” is on Carolyn Maull McKinstry’s stationery and business cards. The appeal reflects her passionate commitment to help love triumph over hate.

Carolyn McKinstry (M.Div. 2008) was one of two outstanding Samford University graduates to receive the new Humanitarian of the Year award during Homecoming activity in November 2016.

The Humanitarian of the Year award was established in 2016 to recognize Samford graduates who have made outstanding contributions to better the lives of those around them by staying true to the Samford University mission.

“Carolyn’s life is a testimony of choosing to offer forgiveness and hope in a broken world, and to commit her life to serving others,” wrote her nominator for a Samford Humanitarian of the Year Award.

McKinstry was present at Birmingham’s Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in September 1963 when the church was bombed, killing four of her young friends. “I spent 20 years after the bombing trying to understand it,” said McKinstry, who has spent her adult life encouraging others to fulfill God’s great

commission, “to love him and to love one another.”

“I feel strongly that God has called me to the ministry of reconciliation, and that means carrying the message of love everywhere I go, whether it’s in words or by actions. We have opportunities every day,” McKinstry said, adding that it’s not always about money. “Sometimes, a kind word is all somebody needs.”

McKinstry chronicled her life experiences in a memoir, *While the World Watched* (Tyndale Publishers). The book is required reading in Georgia schools and in other common core curricula.

A graduate of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, she earned a Master of Divinity from Beeson Divinity School in 2008 and received an honorary degree honoris causa from Samford in 2013. She is the vice chair of the Samford board of overseers and is a member of the Beeson Divinity School advisory board.

McKinstry shared her testimony on video as part of Beeson’s Spring community worship series on Ephesians, “In One Body Through the Cross.” You can watch this video on [YouTube.com/BeesonDivinity](https://www.youtube.com/BeesonDivinity). ♦

Clay Hallmark (M.Div. 1992) is the senior pastor at First Baptist Church in Lexington, Tennessee. He is married to Leslie, and they have two daughters, Cassie and Kayla.

J. Norfleete Day (M.Div. 1993) published *Daring to Speak for God* in March 2016. The book is a select collection of sermons, meditations and devotions during her years of ministry and teaching. Day was a member of the Beeson Divinity School faculty from 1992 until 2009.

In summer 2016 **Ed Stetzer** (D.Min. 1998) became the executive director of the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College, where he also holds the Billy Graham distinguished chair for church, mission and evangelism. Stetzer is also the executive editor of *The Gospel Project* and co-hosts the radio broadcast *BreakPoint This Week*.

Michael MacCaughelty (M.Div. 1998) is the assistant pastor of outreach and mercy at Altadena Valley Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Birmingham, Alabama. Previously he served as the pastor of Monroeville Presbyterian Church. MacCaughelty is married to Amy, and they have four children.

Beginning in June 2016 **Riley Green** (M.T.S. 1999) assumed the role of senior director of homes for Winshape Foundation. Before this Green served for many years at the Alabama Baptist Children’s Homes and Family Ministries, where he was the vice president for administration.

In 2015 **Morris Murray, Jr.** (D.Min. 1999) assumed the role of associate pastor at New Life Baptist Church. Previously Murray served in pastoral ministry within the Church of the Nazarene denomination. He is married to Betty, and they reside in Jasper, Alabama.

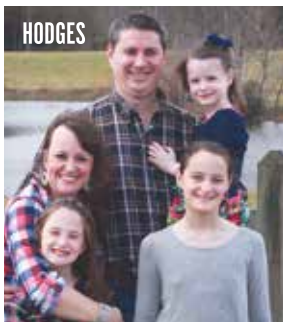
Oleg Turlac (M.Div. 1999, D.Min. 2006) is the founder of Turlac Mission, an organization focused on world missions. Committed to preaching the gospel and reaching the nations, some areas of ministry include anti-trafficking, supporting the persecuted church, refugee aid and equipping ministry leaders. Turlac and his wife, Natalia, are based in Toronto, Canada, and they have two children.

Randy (M.Div. 2000, D.Min. 2014) and Melody Hemphill lead LIFE Ministries and have written a new book for pastors to use as a resource in counseling hurting couples. *30 Days of Hope for Hurting Marriages* (New Hope Publishers) is now available on Amazon.

In spring 2016 **Naomi Reese** (M.Div. 2000) completed her Ph.D. in systematic theology from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. She teaches as an adjunct instructor at Belmont University, and is contributing four entries to Zondervan's *The Dictionary of Christianity and Science* (forthcoming, 2017). Reese is married to **Chris** (M.Div. 2000) and they reside in the greater Nashville area.

Anna Gissing (M.T.S. 2003) was recently named the new associate editor for IVP Books. Previously she served as the editor of *The Well*, an online publication designed for women in higher education. Anna is married to **Jeff** (M.Div. 2002) an ordained minister in the Presbyterian church, and they have two children.

Brad Hodges (M.Div. 2003) is the discipleship pastor at Temple Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He is married to Raegan, and they are the parents of three children.



Chris Brooks (M.Div. 2004) is pastor of Kairos, a campus of Brentwood Baptist Church designed to reach urban young adults in Nashville, Tennessee. Prior to this, he served for seven years as the pastor at The Well, the college ministry of Calvary Baptist Church at the University of Alabama. Brooks is currently pursuing his Doctor of Ministry



in spiritual formation at Fuller Theological Seminary.

In 2016 **Chad Raith** (M.Div. 2004) published *After Merit: John Calvin's Theology of Works and Reward* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht). Raith is assistant professor of religion and philosophy at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, where he also directs the Paradosis Center for Theology and Scripture.

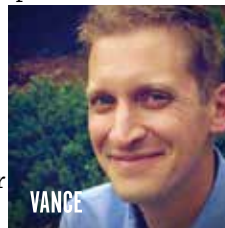
Wyman Richardson (D.Min. 2004) is the editor for the forthcoming series entitled *The Collected Writings of James Leo Garrett, Jr., 1950-2015*. The eight-volume series will consist of articles, lectures, book chapters and privately published pieces by Dr. James Leo Garrett, Jr., distinguished professor of theology emeritus at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Richardson serves as pastor of Central Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

Awon Shanglai (M.Div. 2004) is the regional training center director of Project Light, a ministry she has led since its formation in 2012. Project Light focuses on mentoring and educating children and young adults from rural communities in Shillong, India.



In summer 2016 **Jimbo Tucker** (M.Div. 2005) became the lead pastor at Redstone Church in Birmingham. Tucker previously served Mountain Brook Community Church as its missions pastor. He and his wife, Hayley, have four children.

Garland Vance (M.Div. 2005) is the leadership development pastor at Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church in Katy, Texas. In May of 2016, he received his D.Min. in spiritual formation from Denver Seminary. He blogs at www.garlandvance.com on the theme of "With God Leadership."



In March 2016 **Jamie Greening** (D.Min. 2006) assumed the role of senior pastor at Fellowship Baptist Church in Marble Falls, Texas. Greening is the author of several books, most recently *How Great is the Darkness*, published in May 2016. He and his wife, Kim, are the parents of two daughters.

Jennifer Rash (M.T.S. 2007) is the newly appointed executive editor of *The Alabama Baptist*, a weekly print, digital and social media publication. She has held various roles with the publication office since 1996 and has helped it receive nearly 200 national awards. In addition to editing *The Alabama Baptist*, Jennifer is also the vice president of Associated Church Press.

Gregory Smith (M.Div. 2007) is the associate pastor of First United Methodist Church in New Albany, Mississippi. He is married to Helen, and they have one daughter, Megan.

Dan Stockum (M.Div. 2008) is the young adult pastor at Bridges Community Church in Los Altos, California. Prior to this new role he served as a campus minister at Georgia Tech. Stockum is married to Beth, and they have two sons.



Brian Argo (M.Div. 2009) and his wife, Sarah, have been appointed as career missionaries with Reaching and Teaching International Ministries. They are currently raising support to do full-time ministry in Oaxaca, Mexico. The Argos are the proud parents of four children.

Randy Eaton (D.Min. 2009) is the senior pastor at Cross Community Church in North Palm Beach, Florida. Eaton also serves as an adjunct professor at Palm Beach Atlantic University's School of Ministry and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. from Biola's Cook School of Intercultural Studies. He and his wife, Deana, have five children: Grace, Tess, Jackson, Scott and Emma.



alumni

Jacob Gerber (M.Div. 2009) has served as senior pastor of Harvest Community Church in Omaha, Nebraska since fall 2015. He is the author of *That You May Know: A Primer on Christian Discipleship*, and wrote the first volume of a daily Bible study devotional called *Free Daily Bible Study*, which is available via podcast and email. Gerber is married to Allison, and they have three children.



In spring 2016 **Brian Oaks** (M.Div. 2009) relocated to Roswell, Georgia, to plant Christ Fellowship, a church plant within the Presbyterian (PCA) denomination. He is married to Heather, and they have three children.

Ryan Adams (M.T.S. 2010) joined the staff at Christ Fellowship Church in Birmingham, Alabama as the associate pastor. He is married to Laura, and they have two children, Rose and Luke.



Chris (M.Div. 2010) and **Elizabeth Baker** began serving as missionaries with Africa Inland Mission (AIM) in October of 2016. They are ministering in the northern region of Madagascar, primarily to the Malagasy people group. The Bakers have three children: Michael, Lydia and Lucas.

Noel Forlini (M.Div. 2010) accepted a full-time faculty position at Baylor University in Waco, Texas to teach biblical studies. She and alumnus **Spike Burt** (M.Div. 2009) married in fall 2015.



Chris McCaghren (M.T.S. 2010) is the vice president of academic affairs at the University of Mobile. Previously he held administrative roles at Anderson University and Samford University. McCaghren is married to Lauren, and they have one daughter.

In January 2016 **Ben Richey** (M.Div. 2010) along with his wife Heather and their children Mikaela, Topher and Calvin, moved from Heritage Baptist Church in Prattville, Alabama to begin a new ministry at First Baptist Church of Kernville, California. Kernville is located in the Sierra Nevada mountains, and the Richey family looks forward to many years of ministry among the people of the Kern River Valley.



J. Ralph Wooten (M.Div. 1993, D.Min. 2010) is the pastor of First United Methodist Church in Phenix City, Alabama. In addition to pastoring, Wooten serves on the board of Ordained Ministry for the Alabama-West Conference of the United Methodist Church. He is married to Janet and they have two children, James and Rebekah.

Aaron Ashlock (M.Div. 2011) and his wife, Diana, welcomed the birth of their son, Baylor Coleman, in April 2016. Ashlock is currently completing doctoral studies at B.H. Carroll Institute and continues to serve as senior pastor at Oak Knoll Baptist Church in Haltom City, Texas.



Hope Gray (M.T.S. 2011) is a systems analyst in the information technology department at Children's of Alabama Hospital. She also recently completed the board of chaplaincy certification through the Association of Professional Chaplains.



Robbie Crouse (M.Div. 2011) received his Ph.D. in theology from Wheaton College and teaches systematic theology at Knox Seminary in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Crouse is married to Becky, and they have one daughter Susanne Abigail.

John MacTaggart (M.Div. 2011) is the student ministry pastor at Austin Ridge Bible Church in Austin, Texas. He had previously served at Grace Church in Tracy, California, for four years. MacTaggart is married to Brooke, and they have two young children, Everly and Elijah.

Jason McConnell (D.Min. 2011) is the pastor of Franklin United Church and East Franklin United Church in Franklin, Vermont. He recently received a sabbatical grant from the Lilly Endowment's National

Clergy Renewal Program, which he will take from May to August 2017. In addition to pastoring, Jason serves on the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference's national board of directors and teaches seminary courses in rural ministry. He is married to Jennifer, and they have four children.

In summer 2016 **Joel Oliver** (M.Div. 2011) and his wife, Deidre, moved to Honduras to do full-time mission work with The 600 ministry. The Olivers live in a community near La Ceiba, where they teach sustainable farming and serve as parents to teen and adult orphans.

In spring 2016 **Brett Brandewie** (M.Div. 2012) became the high school pastor at Ingleside Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia, where he joins several Beeson Divinity School alumni on staff. Prior to serving at Ingleside, Brandewie was a student pastor at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Franklin, Tennessee. Brandewie is married to Laura, and they have one son, Bobby Cash.

Matt Harber (M.Div. 2013) is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Old Testament at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. He and his wife, Katie, have two children, Richie and Kari Beth.

In fall 2016 **R.J. Voorhees** (M.Div. 2013) became the college minister at First Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He was previously the college minister at First Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina. Voorhees and his wife, Casey, have a daughter, Emerson, and a son, Everett

Brandon Bennett (M.Div. 2014) joined



the staff at Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, Alabama in April 2015. He currently serves as the young adult and college minister, helps lead the 5 p.m. service and coordinates the church's arts and culture series throughout the year.

In April 2016 **Jason Cook** (M.Div. 2014) accepted a position as an editor for The Gospel Coalition, with a focus on pastoral ministry and integrating faith and work. He also serves as associate pastor of preaching at Fellowship Memphis. Previously Jason served as the pastor of Iron City Church in Birmingham, Alabama. He and his wife, Courtney, have two children, Charlie and Cager.



Kyle DeBoer (M.Div. 2014) was ordained as a deacon in the Anglican Church (ACNA) in February 2016. He and his wife, **Rebekah** (M.A.T.S. 2016) have two sons, Luke and Caleb.

Kyle Logan (M.Div. 2014) was ordained to the priesthood in October 2016 and serves as assistant priest at Eucharist Church (ACNA) in San Francisco, California. Eucharist Church seeks to connect ancient forms of worship and classic Christian faith to the lives of 21st century people.



In July 2016 **Joseph Weaver** (M.Div. 2014) was called to the pastorate at Pleasant Oak Baptist Church in Placerville, California. He is married to Piper, who serves alongside him in ministry and is a freelance graphic design contractor.

Betsy Childs Howard (M.A.T.S. 2015) authored *Seasons of Waiting: Walking by Faith When Dreams are Delayed*, which was published by Crossway in 2016. Howard

works as an editor for The Gospel Coalition, and she and her husband, Bernard, are in the process of planting an Anglican church in Manhattan's Upper West Side.



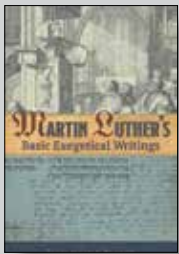
Ryan Martin (M.Div. 2015) and his wife, Aubry, are preparing to move to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as missionaries with World United Mission. Martin will train pastors in theological education, and Aubrey will teach primary school.

Bruce Persons (M.Div. 2015) is currently serving with the mid-Atlantic district of the Christian and Missionary Alliance as the pastor of deaf ministries. His ministry involves reaching deaf and hard of hearing people in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and the Washington D.C. area. Persons is also the chaplain at Gallaudet University.

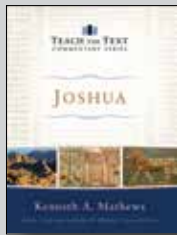
In April 2016, **Hunter Van Wagenen** (M.Div. 2015) began serving as curate at Church of the Redeemer in Greensboro, North Carolina. He is married to his high school sweetheart, Stephie. ♦



Faculty Bookshelf



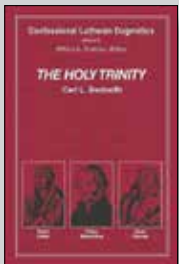
▶ *Martin Luther's Basic Exegetical Writings*
Carl L. Beckwith
(Concordia Publishing House, 2017)



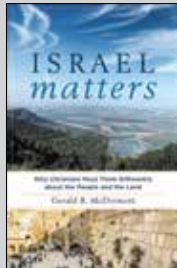
▶ *Joshua*
(Teach the Text Commentary Series)
Kenneth A. Mathews
(Baker Books, 2016)



▶ *Malachi Then and Now: An Expository Commentary Based on Detailed Exegetical Analysis*
Allen P. Ross
(Weaver Book Company, 2016)



▶ *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics: The Holy Trinity*
Carl L. Beckwith
(Luther Academy, 2016)



▶ *Israel Matters: Why Christians Must Think Differently about the People and the Land*
Gerald R. McDermott
(Brazos Press, 2017)



▶ *The God Who Comforts: A Forty-Day Meditation on John 14:1-16:15*
Douglas D. Webster
(Cascade Books, 2016)



▶ *Romans 9-16*
(Reformation Commentary on Scripture Series: New Testament, Vol. 8)
Timothy George, General Editor
(IVP Academic, 2016)



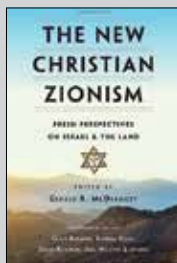
▶ *Famous Stutterers: Twelve Inspiring People Who Achieved Great Things while Struggling with an Impediment*
Gerald R. McDermott
(Cascade Books, 2016)



▶ *The God Who Prays: A Forty Day Meditation on Jesus' Farewell Prayers*
Douglas D. Webster
(Cascade Books, 2017)



▶ *1 Corinthians*
(Reformation Commentary on Scripture Series: New Testament, Vol. 9)
Timothy George, General Editor
(IVP Academic, 2017)



▶ *The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land*
Gerald R. McDermott
(IVP Academic, 2016)