

The Testimony

Vol. 53, No. 2
Fall 2009

Exegesis: The Focal Point of Theological Education

Roy E. Beacham

“Till I come, give attention to reading (what the Scriptures *say*), to exhortation (what the Scriptures *mean*), and to doctrine (what the Scriptures *teach*).”

– 1 Timothy 4:13

Those of us who believe in the inspiration and the authority of the Bible naturally make the text of Scripture the foundation of all of the academic courses of study in theological education. The *focal point* of all of these academic courses, however, is biblical exegesis. *Biblical exegesis is the process of determining the meaning of (interpreting) the biblical authors as they penned the words of Scripture.* The centrality of exegesis in theological education is evident in the way that all of the courses relate to each other. Some of the courses in seminary education come before biblical exegesis. These studies provide information that leads into or enables exegesis; they make accurate exegesis or interpretation possible. Other courses in seminary education come after or derive from biblical exegesis. These studies discuss and evaluate information that has been obtained as a result of the exegetical process.

Because biblical exegesis is the center of biblical education, at Central Seminary we seek to focus and to sharpen our students' skills in this area. Let's look first at those theological studies that come before biblical exegesis.

Biblical Introduction. Theological training logically begins with biblical introduction. Biblical introduction is first concerned with the *character* of the text: what written documents are part of the authentic revelation of God, the Bible? The underlying quest is to recognize and give attention to the actual books of the biblical text. For example, should the book of Enoch be considered as Scripture? Such a study lends *authority* to the work of the

exegete. It serves to authenticate the object of exegesis as “biblical.” Next, biblical introduction analyzes the *content* of the text: what is each biblical document or book all about? Is the book of Genesis, for instance, a book of history or of myth? This broad study of the content and makeup of each biblical book lends *accuracy* to the work of exegesis. It informs the exegete as to the culture and context of the Scriptures. If the book of Genesis is, in fact, part of God's self-disclosure to man and if it is, in fact, historical and not mythical, these foundational truths will greatly affect interpretation, like that of Genesis chapter one.

Textual Criticism. Having examined a document to assure that it is the *word* of God, the student must then establish that a given copy of that document accurately records the *words* of God. Because we have many *copies* of the biblical books but not the *original* documents themselves, textual criticism examines the available evidence from these copies in order to eliminate textual errors within the copies. It seeks to determine the original wording of the text. For example, did Isaiah (9:3) write that God “did not increase joy” (KJV) or that God “did increase their joy” (NKJV, NASB, NIV, ESV, et al.)? The study of textual criticism lends *specificity* to biblical exegesis. The Scriptures clearly assert that God originally “breathed-out” his inscribed revelation to mankind in such a way that the very words, word combinations, denotations, and connotations originally recorded were inerrant and infallible. The doctrine of inspiration demands the task of textual criticism in light of the realities of textual transmission.

Hermeneutics. A textually based theological education logically proceeds to the discipline of

(cont'd on page 4)

Winter Courses M.A.T./M.Div.

January 4-8

Methods of Biblical Change
Thomas Zempel

Acts
Eric White

January 11-15

Problems & Procedures
Thomas Zempel

Enlightenment
Ryan Martin

January 4-15
Systematic Theology II
Kevin Bauder

D.Min.

January 18-21
Pastor's Personal Growth
Kevin Bauder

Ph.D./Th.D./Th.M.

January 6-8
Seminar in NT Studies
Jon Pratt

January 13-15
Doctrine of Justification
Gerald Priest

Take a Seminary Class as a "Visitor"

Visitors pay a flat fee of \$75 per seminary course and fill out a simple form to register. They are not required to do any class work or go through the regular application process.

Golf

On August 31, Central Seminary hosted its fundraising golf outing at Wild Marsh Golf Club with the record attendance of 114 golfers. Each one received a gift bag, valuable door prizes, and the opportunity to win gifts through drawings and contest holes. As for the tournament, there can be only one winning team. This year the team of Dan Carlson, Cary Flinck, Matt Fure, and Jim Teeslink won first place. John Goetz and his team got second place, and Bruce Zschokke's team earned third. Thank you to

all who attended and especially to all of our sponsors whose contributions helped improve our



library. Didn't get to participate this time? Plan to join us next year!

Picnic

Families of Central Seminary faculty, staff, and students enjoyed a great time of food and fun while getting to know one another better at the 2009 Central Seminary picnic. Despite a forecasted chance of rain, we were blessed with a beautiful day! Chef Straub prepared the delicious fruit-of-the-barbeque as our main course, which was complemented by an assortment of potluck delicacies. After lunch, Junior Class Officer Jonathan Wass led us in family-friendly games, including a relay that involved

balloons, lots of spinning, and a few airborne raw eggs. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this great event! 🍷





Fall Conference Reformatted

For the 2009 Fall Conference Central Seminary invited Dr. Robert Delnay to speak on the topic: *The Ties That Bind Us: The Basics of Fundamentalism*. A former professor at Central Seminary (1962-1967) and current head of the Bible Department at Clearwater Christian College, Dr. Delnay provided four challenging and insightful lectures on fundamentalism. In addition, seminary president Dr. Kevin Bauder provided a stimulating lecture, *Fundamentalists and*

Conservative Evangelicals, and NT Professor Jonathan Pratt presented a paper entitled, *The Story of Pillsbury Baptist Bible College (1957-2008)*.

This year we altered the format of the conference, combining it with Pastors' Day. We were encouraged to see many pastors and friends of the seminary in attendance. In February we combine our spring Pastors' Day with the MacDonald Lectures Series. More information at www.centralseminary.edu. ☞

Spring Courses M.A.T./M.Div.

The following courses meet once a week:

Tuesday

*Expository Preaching
Fundamentalism/
Evangelicalism
NT Biblical Theology II*

Wednesday

Expository Preaching III

Thursday

*NT Introduction
OT Biblical Theology III
Foundation of Missions
Personal Evangelism
John
Apologetics*

MacDonald Lectures Series & Pastors' Day

Schedule

Monday, Feb 8 - 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

Workshops with Rodney Decker and Kevin Bauder followed by complimentary lunch for pastors who RSVP by Friday, February 5

Tuesday, Feb 9 - 8:00 AM-12:30 PM

Workshops with Rodney Decker, Kevin Bauder, and the faculty

Keynote Speaker

Rodney Decker, Central Baptist Theological Seminary alumnus and current professor of New Testament at Baptist Bible Seminary, Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania



Theme

Crucial Issues in the Book of Hebrews

Weekend Graduate Courses

Feb 19-20, Mar 5-6 and 19-20
Hermeneutics
Jeff Straub

Mar 26-27, Apr 9-10 and 23-24
Problems and Procedures
Thomas Zempel



ANNUAL LEADERSHIP GIVING

<i>The Founder's Circle</i>	\$10,000 +
<i>The President's Circle</i>	\$1,000 +
<i>The Dean's Circle</i>	\$500 - \$999
<i>The Friends of Education</i>	\$1 - \$499

OTHER LEADERSHIP GIVING

The Legacy Society
Those who have included Central Seminary in an estate plan

The Pillars
Local churches who support the seminary

Planned Giving

Did you know that through a Charitable Gift Annuity written with WaterStone, Central Seminary's service provider, you can generate retirement income, fund your grandchild's education, receive a tax deduction, and further God's ministry at Central Seminary and WCTS?

For more information, contact
Ron Gotzman
VP of Advancement
763.417.8250
rgotzman@centralseminary.edu.

Give Online at
www.centralseminary.edu

Exegesis: The Focal Point (cont'd)

hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. It establishes rules that govern the interpretation of a text. The proper understanding of any document depends upon the rules that are used to interpret it. For example, are we to look for some "spiritual" or "mystical" meaning in the words of Scripture, or do we follow more objective rules for a literal or normal reading of the text? The *principles* of interpretation (hermeneutics) regulate the *process* of interpretation (exegesis). Exegesis applies the rules of interpretation in order to expose the meaning and teaching of the author.

Once the data from biblical introduction, textual criticism, and hermeneutics is mastered, and the biblical languages of Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic are learned, the student of the Bible is able to do detailed, thorough, and precise exegesis of the text of Scripture. Then, just as some theological coursework precedes biblical exegesis, so other theological studies follow or result from biblical exegesis.

Biblical Theology. Biblical theology is theology at its most fundamental level. Biblical theology seeks to determine directly from the Bible what it means and teaches theologically. For example, what does the book of Genesis teach about creation, man, sin, and faith? Since any search for biblical meaning and teaching demands biblical exegesis, then exegesis must serve as the basis of all biblical theology.

Systematic Theology. Systematic theology refers to that discipline which organizes broader biblical teaching under thematic headings. The object of this endeavor is primarily to establish the interrelatedness of broader scriptural teachings. Systematic theology begins with biblical theology (the more explicit teaching of the text) and works toward systematization (the broader implications of the text). How should we coordinate, for example, what the book of Genesis teaches about faith with what Paul and James teach about faith? Since systematic theology logically begins with biblical theology, systematic theologians

(cont'd on page 6)

Volunteers

Phil Holmquist is a glass-half-full kind of guy. Greeting students in the hallways, he often follows his “Good morning!” with “Another wonderful day.” That is his outlook.



Each Tuesday and Friday, Phil volunteers his time to pick up and deliver breads, muffins, and produce donated by a local grocery store and for our students. Making multiple trips from the loading dock to his SUV or from his SUV to our bread

racks, Phil experiences both the best and worst of Minnesota weather, yet to him even days of subzero temperatures are wonderful: after all, Phil says, “No mosquitoes.”

Collecting goods and produce that a grocery store intends to discard may seem an insignificant service, yet each load quite literally saves the student body and seminary hundreds of dollars, and we are grateful to Phil for volunteering his time.

Around the seminary and radio station a volunteer is someone who holds a special role. The seminary relies upon volunteers for many of its endeavors. For example, how many volunteers do you suppose WCTS Radio needs during Sharathon week—ten, perhaps as many as twenty? Try 70. What about the Friends and Family Banquet? The seminary needs about

75 volunteers to host a successful evening.

Whether participating in something as large as Sharathon, or a banquet for 300 people, or simply stuffing envelopes, volunteers help the seminary function smoothly. ☺

Central Baptist Theological Seminary and WCTS Radio have received gifts in memory of the following individuals:

In memory of *Betty Condon*
by Bernard Plank

In memory of *Bertha Thorhaug*
by Harriett Pearson

In memory of *Tena Moore*
by Ron & Shirley Darling

In memory of *David Pearson*
by Ron & Shirley Darling
Lee & Beverly Ensminger

In memory of *Robert Carlson*
by Lee & Beverly Ensminger

Friends & Family Banquet

Monday, April 19

Fourth Baptist Church

Contact the seminary office if you would like to be added to the banquet mailing list.

Resources at www.centraseminary.edu

Online Bookstore

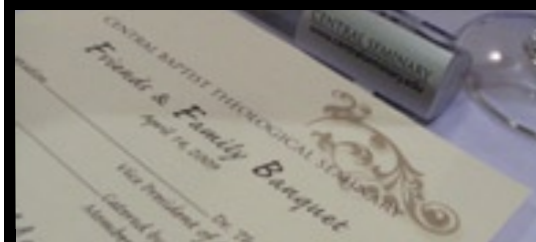
Powered by amazon.com

MP3 Audio



Alumni & Friends of
CENTRAL SEMINARY

facebook



Upcoming Events

Feb 8 Pastors' Day
 Feb 9 MacDonald Lectures
 Apr 19 Friends & Family Banquet

Exegesis: The Focal Point

(cont'd from page 4)

should first be biblical theologians and, thus, skilled biblical exegetes.

Historical Theology. Historical theology examines the establishment and progress of theological beliefs through history. It observes the outgrowth of biblical and systematic theology synchronically (within periods of time) and diachronically (throughout periods of time). What did the Council of Nicaea, for example, decide about the Bible's teaching concerning the deity of Christ, and what impact did that decision have on later councils and movements? The task of historical theology is not,

in itself, the exegesis of Scripture. Rather, it explores the fruit of exegesis.

Practical Theology. Practical theology seeks to subordinate and coordinate all aspects of life and ministry to the teachings of Scripture. The biblical text, then, becomes the authority not only for faith (biblical, systematic, historical theology) but also for practice (practical theology: church polity, methods of evangelism, principles of spiritual living and growth, etc.). Practical biblical studies are grounded not only on the explicit teachings of Scripture but also on principles that are derived from Scripture. Nonetheless, any teaching that is truly derived from revelation must find its source in biblical exegesis.

Conclusion. Exegesis is not only the *center* in the disciplines of theology, it is the *source* of all theology. Everything that the theologian, minister, or Bible expositor believes and teaches in the realm of theology depends upon someone's exegetical skill. For this reason, the faculty at Central Seminary focuses the curriculum on biblical exegesis and diligently teaches this skill to its students. Like the apostles of old, we desire that our students acquire both a deep dependence on God and a skilled ability in exegesis. (Acts 6:4, "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.") Would you join us in this exciting quest? ☞

Central Seminary Alumni Focus

Bernard Dodeler, Missionary

Is France a missionary's graveyard? Bernard Dodeler (M.Div. '72) should know. He and his wife, Bernice, have been planting churches there for four decades. Certainly, the missionary work in France requires resolve, but the Lord has used Bernard and Bernice to oversee or assist church plants in Thionville, Mets, Laon, Mantes, and Vernon. As self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, these churches challenge the assumption that autonomous churches cannot thrive in France. These are more than subsistence works; they support French missionaries as well as a Bible institute that, under

Bernard's leadership, now offers seminary-level coursework. Bernard not only provides leadership for the institution but also teaches regularly and revamps, translates, and writes curriculum for courses. As he reflects on all he and Bernice do in France, Bernard is quick to reference his education: "Over the years, I have publicly expressed my deep thankfulness for my alma mater. . . . Sound hermeneutics, a love for exegesis, expository preaching, and a genuine fervor for the welfare of people stem from my training at Central Seminary."

Bernard and Bernice have four children, two of whom are in vocational ministry, and nine grandchildren. ☞

Snapshots and Snippets

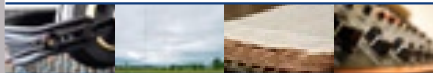
a photo review of WCTS Radio



We look forward to Sharathon each year because it allows us the opportunity to switch places with our listeners. We get to hear from you! We also enjoy hosting local pastors and other special guests during the week. We thank those of you who sent in gifts or who pledged support by calling the station during Sharathon as well as our many volunteers who helped answer phones. Thank you to everyone who supports this ministry! 🌸

Sharathon donors received
a 2010 WCTS calendar.

WCTS RADIO



2010 Calendar



Our website has a new look and
some new features.

Visit us at wctsradio.com!

The Testimony

Is a publication of
Central Baptist
Theological Seminary

Phone:
763.417.8250

Website:
www.centralseminary.edu

Editor in Chief
Kevin T. Bauder

Executive Editor
Thomas Zempel

Managing Editor
Deborah Forteza

Assistant Editors
Joshua Boyd
Elizabeth Charpie



CENTRAL SEMINARY
900 Forestview Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55441-5934

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 546
Mpls., Minn.

Traveling Schedules

Kevin Bauder

Dec 15	Northland University	Dunbar, WI
Feb 4	Heart Conference.....	Dunbar, WI
Feb 10-11	AACCS	Clearwater, FL
Feb 21	Sunrise Bible Church	North Branch, MN
Feb 27	MACHEA, First Baptist Church	Marshall, MN
Feb 28	First Baptist Church	Marshall, MN
Mar 12-13	Deer River Bible Church.....	Deer River, MN
Mar 29-Apr 2	Northland University	Dunbar, WI

Dan Brown

Dec 7	Fourth Baptist Church	Plymouth, MN
Jan 3-8	Missionary Jeff Brown.....	Baiersdorf, Germany
Jan 9-23	Faith Baptist Bible College	Cochin, India
Mar 8-11	Shepherd's Haven	Poconos, PA

Jon Pratt

Mar 19-20	ETS Midwest Regional Meeting	St. Paul, MN
-----------	------------------------------------	--------------

Jeff Straub

Dec 8-22	Central Seminary	Arad, Romania
----------	------------------------	---------------

Thomas Zempel

Dec-Feb	Brookdale Baptist Church	Moorhead, MN
Feb 7-12	Biblical Counseling Conference.....	Lafayette, IN