

DENVER SEMINARY

M A G A Z I N E

LIVE

Faithfully


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The summer issue of *Denver Seminary Magazine* concludes our journalistic journey through Denver Seminary's mission: to glorify God by equipping leaders to think biblically, live faithfully and lead wisely. Summer '09 will examine what it means to lead wisely.

If you would like to interact with DSM, or if you would like to send comments or thoughts to the editor, please visit www.denverseminary.edu/magazine.

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Denver Seminary is designed to equip leaders who will *think biblically, live faithfully, and lead wisely for a lifetime*. This edition of *Denver Seminary Magazine* highlights the second of those three themes.

spiritual community, usually a church, where one is challenged to grow and serve.

Additionally, living faithfully implies a way of living in the larger world where one is responsive to those who find themselves in weaker positions: the poor, the child, the elderly, the disadvantaged and the economically oppressed. We

Dedicating these pages to the notion of faithful living is timely because soon after this magazine arrives in your mailbox, the Seminary will honor two people who have modeled the idea for a lifetime.

In June and July, Chancellor Vernon Grounds and his wife Ann will celebrate 70 years of marriage and 95 years of life. If that isn't a picture of faithful living, I don't know what is.

Their example of living faithfully is measured in more than just years, however.

... living faithfully means that one seizes every possible opportunity to introduce people to Jesus the Savior who, before we ever knew what living faithfully was all about, was faithful to us.

Almost every morning of the week, you'll still find Denver Seminary's chancellor in his small, book-lined office adjacent to the Vernon C. Grounds Reading Room where he receives visitors who come to draw from his wisdom. While keeping to a much quieter regimen in the Grounds home not far from the campus, the same can be said of Ann Grounds.

Vernon and Ann Grounds' witness to faithful living is part of the Grounds' legacy which marks this school. We have not failed to appreciate the message of their lives which begins with their having stayed in one place and serving God for almost the entirety of their adult years.

Living faithfully is no sentimental idea. It requires a lifetime of hard, spiritual work. Sadly, there is a part of every one of us which defies faithful living. Many of us have our own personal regrets for times in the past when we failed to maintain this high ideal. We know how easy it is to disappoint others when they had every right to expect better of us.

Nevertheless, despite our spotty records, we still strive to live faithfully to God and to one another. We try to renew our belief in this high standard every day. And we make

every attempt to impress this concept of faithful living on the hearts and minds of Denver Seminary students.

At Denver Seminary we say that living faithfully begins with loyalty to Jesus: *following* Him in obedience to His teaching and the example of His character, *trusting* that He points the way to God His Father, and *anticipating* that, one day, we shall see Him face to face.

We also affirm that living faithfully means keeping one's commitments to spouse (if married), to family, to friends. Beyond those essential commitments, we assert that living faithfully assumes one's fidelity to a

reject the notion that one can cocoon himself or herself from the injustices and pain in this world. So living faithfully means conveying redemptive-type love wherever someone needs an act of generosity or service.

Finally, we contend that living faithfully means that one seizes every possible opportunity to introduce people to Jesus the Savior who, before we ever knew what living faithfully was all about, was faithful to us.

In this edition of *Denver Seminary Magazine*, we present the writings of people who have thought a lot about this notion of living faithfully. We hope they can convey to you a bit of the essence of this faithful-living theme. When you've finished reading what they have to say, perhaps you'll be better acquainted with what Denver Seminary is all about.

Sincerely,

Gordon MacDonald





Seminary Appoints New President

On March 5, 2009 the Denver Seminary Board of Trustees unanimously elected Mark S. Young, Ph.D., the Seminary's seventh president. He will assume the role on July 1, 2009.

Until the official start of his term in July, Dr. Young will complete his service as Professor of World Missions and Intercultural Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, where he has served since 1995, and as Senior Executive Pastor of Missions at Stonebriar Community Church in Frisco, Texas, where he has served in a variety of roles since 2001.

Dr. Young earned his Ph.D. from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He received his Th.M. from Dallas Theological Seminary and a B.A. from Marshall University. He specializes in the areas of mission theology and the theology of church and culture. He and his wife Priscilla have been married 28 years; they have three young adult children — Ben, Bonnie and Christian.

For more information about Dr. Young and his appointment, visit www.denverseminary.edu/presidential-transition/.

Record Enrollment for Spring Semester

For the third semester in a row Denver Seminary has experienced growth in student enrollment – the 2009 spring term witnessed a 51% increase of new students over the 2008 spring term. Many factors impact these numbers including the hard work of the Seminary's admissions team, a high level of theological education and most importantly, God's continuing grace and provision. Robert Jones, Vice President of Student Life and Enrollment Management states, "It is both exciting and humbling that God would allow Denver Seminary to continue to grow, even in difficult economic times. We're excited to see what He does next!"

What will happen next is most definitely on Denver Seminary's radar. Although increased enrollment is to be celebrated, the tough, ever-changing, unpredictable economy has left Denver Seminary tightening its budget and saving dollars where it can. Economic pressures are being felt everywhere and Denver Seminary is no exception. For information about Denver Seminary's response to the current global economic environment, please visit our website: www.denverseminary.edu/economy.



Dr. Gordon R. Lewis Celebrates 50 Years

This past fall, Denver Seminary celebrated the life and career of Dr. Gordon Lewis at a luncheon for senior faculty members. Dr. Lewis joined the faculty 50 years ago and has been an invaluable asset ever since. As senior professor of Christian philosophy and theology, he has educated thousands of students on vital issues of faith. Dr. Lewis has authored several books, and co-authored, with Dr. Bruce Demarest, the three-volume book *Integrative Theology* which is studied by all Seminary students.

Dr. Lewis earned a Ph.D. from Syracuse University and also studied at Baptist Bible Seminary, Gordon College, Faith Theological Seminary and Cornell University. He

served as president of the Evangelical Theological Society (1992) and the Evangelical Philosophical Society. He founded Evangelical Ministries to New Religions and has served as a visiting professor at Union Biblical Seminary, Yeotmal, Maharashtra, India. He published one of the earliest evangelical critiques of transcendental

meditation in *What Everyone Should Know about Transcendental Meditation*, which has been republished in Bombay.

We extend sincere thanks to Dr. Gordon R. Lewis for 50 years of faithful service to the Denver Seminary community and most importantly to furthering God's Kingdom.



Gordon Lewis and Vernon Grounds

Celebrating Vernon Grounds' Legacy



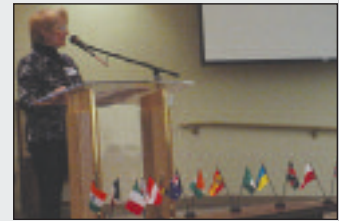
Bust of Vernon C. Grounds, Delissalde – MMVIII

On March 6, 2009 Denver Seminary unveiled a bust in bronze of beloved Chancellor Vernon Grounds. The bust stands proudly in the Vernon Grounds Reading Room reminding admirers and passers-by of the unmatched impact of Dr. Grounds. The sculptor was Francisco Delissalde. To view photos of the bust, photos from the event, video from the unveiling or to download the commemorative program from the dedication, please visit our website: www.denverseminary.edu/grounds-bust/.

In addition to the dedication, Denver Seminary is pleased to host a celebration for both Dr. Grounds and his wife Ann on June 5, 2009. The Groundses will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary in June, followed by each of their 95th birthdays in July. Information can be found at www.denverseminary.edu/grounds-celebration.

Biblical Studies Conference focuses on Messianic Judaism: History, Theology and Education

On Feb. 12-13, 2009, the Biblical Studies Department hosted their annual Biblical Studies conference. The theme of this year's conference was Messianic Judaism. Over the course of two days, history, theology and education permeated the chapel as students, staff, faculty and visitors discovered Messianic Judaism through the presentations of experts from around the nation.



Top: Dr. Hélène Dallaire presents at the 2009 Biblical Studies Conference.

Bottom: Conference speakers, l to r: Alan Shore, Rabbi Chaim Urbach, Dr. Hélène Dallaire, Dr. Michael Rydelnik, Dr. Craig Blomberg.

Organized by Dr. Hélène Dallaire, associate professor of Old Testament, the conference brought together not only the Denver Seminary community but also friends from local Messianic congregations, allowing for the opportunity for diverse question and answer sessions, impromptu conversations, and relationship building.

Speakers included Dr. Craig Blomberg, Dr. Hélène Dallaire, Dr. Jeffrey Feinberg, Dr. Michael Rydelnik, Rabbi Chaim Urbach and Alan Shore.

Denver Seminary Hosts Dinner for President of SETECA

Jim Adams, President of Seminario Teológico Centroamericano (SETECA) in Guatemala, joined with several members of Denver Seminary's staff, faculty and board for a time of collaboration over a shared meal. The SETECA dinner allowed further strengthening of the partnership between the two institutions.

Discussions took place around the themes of continuing the dynamic partnership between the two schools and building and maintaining mutual benefits for both institutions, relationally and programmatically. Denver Seminary was pleased to welcome President Jim Adams on his first visit to the campus and hopes it is the first of many more to come.



Starting from the left and moving clockwise: Wilmer Ramirez, Vivian Lemus, Don Wolf, Patty Wolf, Joan Wells, Keith Wells, Hélène Dallaire, Jacqueline Graber, Larry Graber, Jim Adams, Erin Swanson, Kirk Douglas, Gloria Douglas, Tony Lemus, Vioneth Ramirez, Sung Wook Chung, Joan Carroll, Randy MacFarland.

THE INGREDIENTS OF

Living Faithfully occupies an honored place in our vision statement, curriculum, and campus life at Denver Seminary. We take it quite seriously. Like most important themes, however, living faithfully is easier to print than to practice! That's why in this issue of Denver Seminary Magazine we probe the texture and process of faithful living.

Beginning with a confession, I sometimes have mixed feelings about the notion of living faithfully. Don't get me wrong; I am committed to it! Part of my ambivalence comes when *living faithfully* evokes images of heroism and stimulates the adrenaline rush of a warrior "wannabe." Then at other times *living faithfully* resuscitates memories of spiritual weariness from trying so hard to "get it all just right" before God, hoping somehow to make Him happy with me. That stultifying legalism can drain the life from anyone over time.

Massive amounts of ink have flowed between Christians trying to resolve that dissonance we feel between God's free grace and our responsibility to live faithfully. Where can we find help to live in complete dependence on God's liberating grace while still facing life with intentionality and vigor? Is there a recipe for living faithfully while living fully and freely by God's grace?

Early in our marriage, my wife Sharon called her mother and asked how to make chili. To Sharon's surprise and frustration, her mom did not have a recipe and could hardly tell her how to do it (though my mother-in-law makes great chili). She merely said, "Well, you just take a little bit of _____ and some _____ and then you _____." Sharon pressed her. "But how much, Mom?" "Oh, I don't know," she would say, "just a bit." Know what? Mom knew the ingredients and process for chili, even without a recipe. And Sharon (to my immense delight) has taken that guidance and learned to make her own fantastic chili.

After trying to follow Jesus seriously and, I hope, faithfully (though Jesus will have to be the judge of that) for about 37 years, I'm convinced that living faithfully is a matter of the right ingredients and process rather than a recipe. However, as important as those are, we misstep if we examine those prematurely. First, let's look to

our God – the One before whom we want to live faithfully; the One who alone can define, empower and direct our faithfulness.

When the challenge to live faithfully either appeals to our hero ego or discourages us, we should return to the biblical framework of Philippians 2:12-13; "...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose*" [emphasis added]. Paul saw no conflict at all between absolute dependence on God and wholehearted engagement of all our faculties and energies. In fact, the promise of God's undergirding work (even if it's sometimes behind the scenes) alleviates the pressure of "getting it all just right" by our own initiative and efforts. Peter made a similar point in 2 Peter 1:3-10. Who God is and what God does become even more vivid and life-giving for us in Ephesians 1:17-23. Paul points to God the Father who gives the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to enlighten us, granting us hope and

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by Don J. Payne, Ph.D.

power. In 3:16-19 he goes on to speak of the Spirit working in us to push us so deeply into Christ's love that we are "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." That's as breathtaking and invigorating as it gets! On many days "breathtaking" or "invigorating" is not exactly how life in Christ feels. Yet, Paul lets us peek behind the curtain to see what God is actually doing to sustain faithful living, especially when our faith is weak, our perspective is fading, and our stamina is almost gone. *Living faithfully...an inspiring notion...at times. Keeping a clear profile of God and His work on our behalf provides fuel for faithful living whether we are sprinting or struggling.*

All our efforts at faithful, godly living amount to nothing more than ill-fated moralism without conscious reliance upon God's grace to initiate, sustain, direct and complete us. God's act is always of the first-order. Our rigorous efforts (necessary and repeatedly summoned) are always responses to God's defining, gracious act on our behalf.

That brings us back to the question of ingredients and process. What does God use to impart His grace for faithful living? You can probably guess some of the basic ingredients.

Scripture (a healthy intake that can be absorbed and internalized)

Prayer (regular, honest communication with God)

Worship (involving ourselves in corporate response to God on good days and bad)

Community (friends whose spiritual hunger rubs off on us and pulls us forward)

The list could be expanded. Yet, ingredients alone don't make for a faithful life any more than they automatically turn into chili. How easily we mistake ingesting ingredients for living faithfully; they are not the same thing at all!

With God's grace at center stage, what process activates those ingredients for faithful living? They don't mix themselves, yet too often and too easily we resort to mere willpower or good intentions, only to find ourselves in a vortex of fatigue and discouragement. I offer two simple suggestions.

First, we must know how God tends to encourage each of us personally. Years ago, our interim president, Pastor Gordon MacDonald wrote about the various "languages" God uses to speak to us (see *Christ-Followers in the Real World*). Some respond to God more through study; others visually or aesthetically; some through relationships. All of us need all of those, to be sure, but each of us also has a sort of primary language in which God can most easily get His Truth through to us. What's yours? We

must position ourselves so that we can hear God's "language" with us; governed, of course, by His Word.

Second (and this may sound strange), receive the freedom to experiment or play around! Think about it. In any genuine relationship the patterns and proportions of emphasis will change over time as the people change. Now, God does not change, but we sure do. The ingredients will stay the same but how we engage them may change. Is it possible that God is honored and pleased when we take our relationship with Him seriously enough to try different ways of praying, expose ourselves to fresh styles of worship, or vary our patterns of engaging Scripture? This does not eliminate the need for discipline to push through painful or sluggish seasons. It simply acknowledges that our relationship with God must flex and breathe if living faithfully is to be grace-full and sustainable rather than deadening and moralistic. At the risk of overcooking my culinary analogy, how does a person improve in making really good chili except by playing around a bit with the basic ingredients? Can you taste the difference between canned chili and a batch from a master cook (who may not even have a recipe)?

Third, living faithfully demands focus. Hebrews 12:1-2 puts it as plainly as possible: "[L]et us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." This type of focus is only possible with a tenacious and a passionate conviction that the Way of Jesus is the way to life...even if that way costs us dearly.

The aim of living faithfully is finishing well. Once again Paul sums it up poignantly, this time in Philippians 3:13-14: "[O]ne thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." In 2 Timothy 4:7 he reflects from near the end of his journey, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

Paul's personal example can be rather intimidating to us when we are reminded of our own failures, detours, doubts and weaknesses. So, we are wise to add to Paul's profile an example like John Mark, who evidently gave into some pressures or weakness along the way but ended up writing one of our four Gospels and having a fruitful ministry (see 2 Timothy 4:11). Finishing well does not mean that we never fail and never struggle. It means that we keep coming back to the only source of our lives: God's forgiving, restoring, healing, strengthening and transforming grace! It means we don't give up. **DSM**



Dr. Don Payne provides overall leadership for the training and mentoring program at Denver Seminary and teaches in the areas of systematic theology and pastoral ministry. He serves as executive director of the International Christian Mentoring Network (ICMN). Dr. Payne and his wife Sharon are involved at Centennial Covenant Church in Littleton, Colo.

All Scripture citations in this article were taken from the TNIV. To discuss this article, or to share your favorite chili recipe, visit our website at www.denverseminary.edu/magazine/.

God's Strength in our weakness

by Natalie Corbin, (M.A., Biblical Studies)



Now faith is
being sure
of what we
hope for
and
certain of
what we do
not see.

Hebrews 11:1

In a world of things hoped for and not seen, living faithfully occurs in the land of sureness and certainty. Life in these places is not a vacation or a leisurely respite until the realization of heaven. Rather, living faithfully is a journey of unknowns and unpredictable challenges that often leave a person with deep, aching pains from utter exhaustion, unsure if the ability to go on is possible.

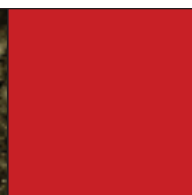
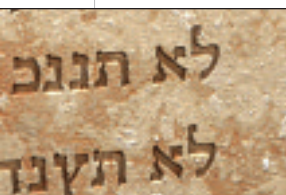
To live faithfully means to walk into the unknown, into the dark, into the foreign land. It requires giving up all that you have for all that is unseen. Many may view you as foolish instead of faithful. You very well might find yourself questioning these same things.

Why then does one choose to live faithfully? It is a fair a question and one that a life of faith should demand in the minds of onlookers. Why would one continue to take the rocky path of faith filled with challenges, frustration, bruises and bumps? The answer lies in that which is hoped for and not seen. What we hope for is that God is who He says He is, especially when we cannot see Him or when He reveals Himself in manners beyond our assumptions and presumptions. In these unexpected "God moments," the stories of those who have gone before surround and fill us with encouragement. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Rahab and many others lived faithfully in the midst of the unknown. They took the obedient risk to be sure of what they hoped for and certain of what they could not see – that God was real and true, and would make good on His promises.

As I strive to live faithfully, I find myself more often rising-after-a-tumble than sprinting-towards-victory. Brushing the dirt off my bloodied, sore knees, I am thankful because I am reminded that faith is not often realized until it is challenged. I am reminded not only of those faithful individuals of Scripture, but also of the brave men and women around me who might have found a place in the pages of old had they been living in a different time and place than now.

To all of us the question remains, "Will you live faithfully, even when everything tells you that you should not?" My dear friend answers "Yes" through tears and suffering upon hearing the news that she and her husband will not be able to have children. Another precious friend also answers "Yes" in the face of diseases and illnesses that would have led others to abandon their faith altogether and wonder why God has not healed. Many of my fellow students confidently say "Yes," unsure of life after graduation. I strained to answer "Yes" while crying out in the dark, early hours of the morning, "I can't find You; I can't hear You. Do not be silent with me, Lord. My faith is waning – dimming to a small flicker that even I have trouble seeing. Show me mercy and grace. Hold me up in all of this, even if I let go of You." The reality is that living faithfully often means living in the opposite of what we thought life would be.

And yet, there is peace that passes understanding, because the Lord is faithful to us. It is through living faithfully that we begin to know His strength in our weaknesses. We begin to pray, "Lord, help me with my lack of faith." We begin to know Him more fully, and therefore we begin to be more fully known. Living faithfully is adventure of the greatest kind, the sort that, just when you think you have nothing left in you, His mysterious and glorious ways intercede, and you are brought to a place that is beyond your wildest imagination, because it is His reality. **DSM**



Natalie Corbin is pursuing an M.A. in Biblical Studies, New Testament, and plans to graduate in 2010.

If you find yourself in a place of learning about God's strength in your weakness and you would like to share a prayer request with the Denver Seminary community, please visit our website at www.denverseminary.edu/friends/prayer/.

Live Faithfully

by Bob Beltz (M.A. '79; D.Min., '86)

I like Oreo® cookies. After pulling one apart, I eat the side without the icing to get it out of the way; then, I savor the side loaded with filling. For me, eating an Oreo is all about the filling.

If you look at the Seminary's mission, you'll notice that *live faithfully* occupies the same position as the icing in an Oreo. It's "sandwiched" between think biblically and lead wisely. To live faithfully is central to being a Denver Seminary graduate. Thinking biblically requires intellectual mastery of Scripture, leading wisely is accomplished by doing, but living faithfully is a matter of who you are.

On a beautiful night in May, 1979, Galilee Baptist Church hosted dinner for Denver Seminary's graduating class. Dr. Vernon Grounds spoke; I was one of the graduates. I've never forgotten what Vernon told us that night. He quoted William James in warning that even the church in America at times bows at the altar of "the bitch goddess of success." Then he said, "God has called you to be faithful, not necessarily successful."

Have I lived faithfully? Let's assume I've practiced the spiritual disciplines that are foundational to maintaining a vital, daily relationship with Jesus. What else has helped me attempt to reach this lofty goal? Here are three attitudes I endeavor to maintain:

I relinquish my agenda and submit to God's.

Unlike most of my classmates, I didn't come to Seminary to be a pastor. As a fan of Francis Schaeffer, I wanted to be a part of a ministry like L'Abri. But God had another plan. By the time I graduated, I was working full time at Faith Presbyterian Church. In 1981, thinking I'd escaped the church scene, I left Faith to help my friend Bo Mitchell launch a young businessmen's outreach ministry. Within a year, we were asked to start a church! I spent the next 18 years as the teaching pastor at Cherry Hills Community Church. My agenda seems to always be a little different than God's, which is why part of my routine is consistently letting God know that I reaffirm the relinquishment of my agenda to submit to His.

I ask to be a pencil in God's hand.

Toward the end of her life, Mother Teresa was asked by a reporter what would happen to her work when she was gone. She told him she had no idea, and it wasn't her concern. Then she said, "I'm just a pencil in the hand of God. He does the thinking; He does the writing." That is a great image of living faithfully; I often pray, "Father, make me a pencil in your hand."

Ten years ago, I sensed God's leading and left church ministry to teach and write. Through a crazy set of circumstances, which I don't have room to tell you, I ended up working in the film industry! It was like God "plucked" me out of vocational ministry and "dropped" me

into Hollywood. I never could've come up with such a plan. He did the thinking; He did the writing; I was just a pencil in His hand.

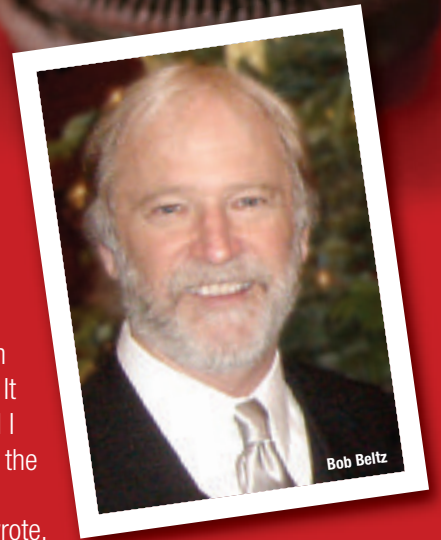
I try to stay "in the flow."

I believe that where God works, there is a "flow" created by the movement of the Holy Spirit. I want to be "in the flow." When there, you don't have to force things. You might need to push a little, but forcing is usually a sign that something is more your idea than God's. Unexpected things happen when you are in the flow. Recently I was asked to write an e-column for Examiner.com on issues of faith and culture. It would not have happened had I not been in the exact place at the exact time the opportunity developed. A recent article I wrote, asking Santa to bring Jennifer Aniston some clothes, was surrounded by ads for a DVD "proving" that Jesus never existed, and others for the TV special "From Jesus to the Christ." I knew I was right where I was supposed to be.

I recently read an article by Margaret Feinberg. In it, she talked about "doing life with God." That pretty much sums up what it means to live faithfully. When I'm on God's agenda, being used as a pencil in His hand, directly in the flow of the Spirit, I'm doing life with God, and I'm living faithfully. **DSM**

Bob Beltz is the President of The Telos Project, a non-profit corporation that engages contemporary culture with vital Christocentric alternatives. For 18 years he served as the Teaching Pastor of Cherry Hills Community Church in Denver, Colo. For the last 10 years Bob has been a special advisor to Philip Anschutz, Chairman of the Board of the Anschutz Corporation, the parent company of Walden Media. In this role Bob helped in the development, production and marketing of such films as "Joshua," "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," "Amazing Grace: the William Wilberforce Story," and "Prince Caspian." He is the author of 12 books including the best-selling Daily Disciplines for the Christian Man, an update of William Wilberforce's Real Christianity, and the novel Somewhere Fast.

For more information about Bob and his ministries, be sure to check out his Examiner blog: www.examiner.com/x-513-Faith-and-Culture-Examiner and his new "The Bible as Screenplay" series: www.god-themovie.com – or you can visit Denver Seminary's website at www.denverseminary.edu/magazine/ for these links and more information.



TEACHING TO LIVE FAITHFULLY

by Interim President Gordon MacDonald (M.Div. '66)

At about the midpoint of my student years at Denver Seminary, I was asked to prepare and present a paper to a school-wide forum that might offer a Christian view on a then-significant matter of public policy. In keeping with my youthful work habits, I put off my work on the paper until the presentation time was only two days away.

Suddenly feeling the heat of the deadline, I did the only thing that had ever worked for me before. I cut two days of class, consumed several quarts of coffee, and—to use a writer's term—crashed the project. I finished with 45 minutes to spare and headed to the Seminary trying to project an air of confidence that suggested that I'd completed the work weeks before.

If you want my opinion, the delivery of my paper went smoothly, and I received moderate applause from the audience. There followed a time for some questions and comments, and then everyone left the hall. Everyone except me and one other: Dr Raymond Buker, Denver Seminary's first professor of missions.

In his years as a faculty member at Denver Seminary, Buker was not known as a memorable lecturer in the classroom. But, for other reasons, he was universally loved and greatly respected by his students. He was the kind of person who walked about saying wise things that spilled out of a heart and mind enriched by many years of difficult, very difficult, missionary service in Burma (now known as Myanmar). The man simply oozed Christian character, and you were a fool if you didn't occasionally sit at his feet.

As the old missionary approached me at the front of the lecture hall, it was clear he had a word for me. It turned out to be a word I have never forgotten.

"Gordon, that was a good paper," he said in his odd way of speaking, "but it was not a great one. Do you want to know why?"

How do you answer a question like that? Would one dare say no? I was smarter than to say no, and so I responded, "Yes, sir. Why wasn't it a *great* paper?"

"The paper was not great because you sacrificed your routine commitments to write it."

He wasn't finished. "Great work," Buker continued, "begins in doing the little, necessary things first that ordinarily make up your day and contribute to the day of others. Being in class today was your prior commitment. You've missed three of my classes in the last two days. By being absent, you cheated the class and me of your presence, and you cheated yourself by neglecting your learning priorities. Tonight's event may have been important. But it should not have served as a substitute for what you signed up to accomplish at the beginning of this school year.



Gordon MacDonald and Vernon Grounds

“For the rest of your life, Gordon, you’re going to be tempted many times to skip your routines and your disciplines in order to do things that seem more interesting or noticeable: like this evening. Probably no one else knew what happened tonight, but I did.”

Forty-five years later, I realize that Raymond Buker was speaking to the second part of Denver Seminary’s inspirational mission statement: *equipping leaders to live faithfully*.

I am now about the same age that Ray Buker was when he confronted me on my failure to be faithful. And as I muse upon the story of that night in the lecture hall—which I have done many times—I realize how often I have had to implement his post-forum insight in the course of my life as a leader. How many times I have been tempted—and sometimes succumbed—to wiggle out of the ordinary responsibilities of life in order to do something which offered quick recognition or applause. On such occasions, I hear again the voice of Dr Buker: *(authentic) greatness stands on the foundation of doing the routine things first*.

I entered Denver Seminary years ago bent on obtaining a degree in biblical and theological studies. I anticipated learning how to be a good preacher and leader.

But as the years have passed, I’ve come to see that there was another level of education which was easily the equal of what I’d expected. It had everything to do with being equipped—as our Seminary mission states in part—to *live faithfully*.

Living faithfully is only marginally a classroom topic. There is no course in the Seminary catalog which bears that name. Yet the subject is (and must be!) taught every day. The teaching is done through modeling and mentoring and often in the context of stress and service. The finished product? People in the continuous process of becoming what the Bible calls *godly*.

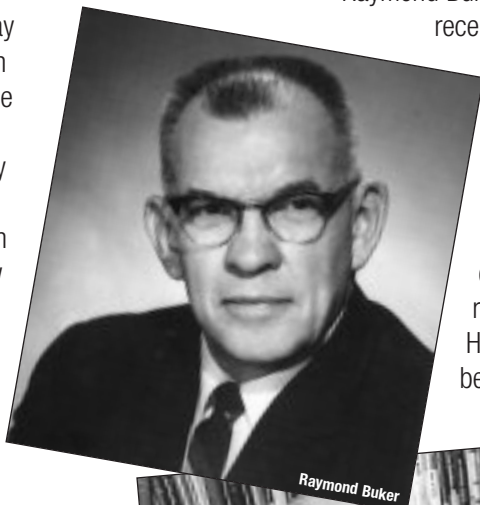
These things come to mind as practical components of faithful living: keeping one’s promises; caring for the weaker brother or sister; meeting deadlines; doing things with appropriate excellence; developing a Christian disposition; being a loyal spouse or friend; nurturing a repentant spirit; maintaining dignity in adversity; making thoughtful, wise choices; developing a rich communion with Jesus.

Trust me: there’s much, much more.

Not learning how to live faithfully opens the door to serious failure in one’s years of Christian leadership. A gifted leader’s abilities and personal charm can take him or her into dangerous territory where

a lack of capacity to live faithfully leads to casualties: in personal relationships, in the use of money, in moral stature, in the abuse of power, in shabby work.

When I arrived at Denver Seminary in the fall of 1962, I began work on a master’s degree in theology. But I soon learned that the course work was only the beginning. This need to learn how to live faithfully dogged me at every turn in the academic arena. Raymond Buker’s rebuke was just one of many such corrections I received at the hands of a young and noble faculty.



Raymond Buker



Vernon Grounds

There were others.

New Testament professor, Donald Burdick, for example, reflected on the subject of living faithfully the very first day of class. “The most important question you will have to address every day in this room,” Burdick said, “is, ‘what does the Bible say?’” He warned us that serious biblical scholarship would be difficult and sometimes painful, because we would come to realize how many of our perceptions about the Scriptures were actually misperceptions. Living faithfully, according to Don Burdick, began with respecting the Bible, handling it with great care, and submitting to what it actually said, not what we assumed it said.

Bruce Shelley, professor of Church history (the man who first gave me a love of writing) expressed a justifiable impatience with sloppy thinking and personal expression. Sometimes when I talk with him now, I sense a bit of embarrassment on his part when he recalls his toughness in the classroom. He seems unaware of how grateful so many of his students are

today because he raised the bar of our standards of excellence. Many of us would never come close to our potential if we had not submitted to professorial pokes and prods to be more thorough and thoughtful in our work.

Theology professor, Gordon Lewis, made it abundantly clear that there was little use in developing theological acuity if it was not formative in growth in Godliness. In other words, Lewis was saying, sound theology helps us measure the day in which we live and what purposes God would have us fulfill.

Dr. Lewis was (and remains) a true Christian intellectual. He was always as faithful in his prayer life as he was with the development of his ideas. While some of us struggled to keep up with his sheer brain-power, we were always able to appreciate his concept of the faithful Christian life.

While at Seminary, we watched Old Testament professor, Joe Edwards, lose an adult daughter in sudden death while serving African people in the name of Jesus. After a brief withdrawal from

his professorial duties in order to grieve with his wife, Edwards returned to the classroom because he somehow sensed that by sharing his sorrow, he could teach us something about faithful living that we might learn nowhere else.

The man never hid his pain as he walked us through the book of Job—which just happened to be the book under study at the time. He opened his heart to us as he struggled mightily (without complaining or whining) to hold on to the eternal truths he taught daily from the Old Testament literature. When he spoke of Job's anguished cries of protest to God, we knew that he understood Job's heart. With Edwards, we saw the concept of living faithfully in the cauldron of great loss.

Raymond McLaughlin—our homiletics (preaching) professor—used to be very blunt with us. “Don't dare come to the pulpit and pretend that you have mastered all that you're preaching about—that you have no problems, no doubts. Make sure your congregation knows that you are a fellow struggler in this business of Christian being and service.” We promised him we would, and, I suspect, most of us have.

Ed Hayes, professor of Christian education, was always traveling on the weekends to distant places where he would preach and consult. We learned to expect stories from his travels which illustrated the nature of Christian leadership.

I remember the morning Hayes returned home on a plane that had flown through terrible air turbulence over the Rocky Mountains. The flight attendant had panicked, and her fear had begun to unnerve the passengers. Hayes related how he stopped her as she came rushing up the aisle in terror. When she looked down at him, he said, “Young lady, look at me. This is your time to be strong; we all need you.” His words helped her to regain her composure and resume her responsibilities.

More than once as a pastor, I have done much the same thing to someone who was on the edge of losing their stability. I have been the one to say the equivalent of, “This is your time to be strong.” In so doing, I have replicated Hayes' teaching on faithful living many times.

I went to Denver Seminary because of Vernon Grounds. Having known him most of my life, I

decided early on that I would do all I could to be just like him. I loved his mind, his care and defense of struggling people, his humor, his love of books, his unique way of loving God. I simply liked everything about him.

If ever anyone lived faithfully, Vernon was the man. I saw how the waitpersons at the restaurant where he took his morning breakfasts (always with students) admired and respected him. I walked city streets with him and watched him engage with strangers who were struck with his congeniality. I observed him when some of his most bitter critics (who resented his love of things intellectual) attacked his reputation. There was never a word of recrimination or disrespect from his lips. He was the essence of pure grace. For him, living faithfully meant calmness and graciousness in the face of adversity.

So you see Raymond Buker was not the only one who taught faithful living. It was every professor with his own unique approach to the subject. The Denver Seminary faculty, with whom I studied, lived on a shoelace, so to speak. They were sometimes a month or two behind in salary checks when giving to the Seminary flagged. They shared one phone, had offices the size of walk-in closets, often carpooled to “work” to save commuting costs, ate bag lunches, and denied themselves in a dozen other ways in order to build a Seminary that would last.

Most importantly they were not content to simply pass scholarly information on to their students. They did not choose to stay aloof from their protégés so that they could bury themselves in their books. Not at all! Rather, they were there to be with us daily: not only in the lecture hall, but in the chapel, in the lunch room, in the hallways, even—when invited—in our homes.

These were the servant-professors through whom many of us first learned that living faithfully was the starting point for effective ministry.

As the years of my life have increased in number, the number of decisions about what to do with my time and energy has grown abundantly. Every day one has to consult his priorities and purposes. Every day one has to sort out the decisions in terms of what are the best things to be doing—the things that gain God's pleasure. In the midst of such a process, I frequently hear Raymond Buker's voice all over again. “Gordon, don't neglect your routines. They are where faithful living begins.” **DSM**

Gordon MacDonald is the Interim President of Denver Seminary and an alumnus (M.Div., '66). He is an author, speaker and teacher who served as a pastor for over 40 years. He has authored more than a dozen books, including, Ordering Your Private World, The Resilient Life, and Who Stole My Church? He is editor at large and a regular contributor to Leadership Journal. He and his wife Gail have been married 47 years. Their great satisfaction is their two married children and five grandchildren.

To discuss this article, or to offer your own story of thanks for the impact of a Denver Seminary professor in your life, please visit our website at www.denverseminary.edu/magazine/. Or, to give to the scholarship funds and endowed chairs which honor the legacy of many of these leaders, visit www.denverseminary.edu/giving/endorment.



Ed Hayes



Bruce Shelley

Perseverance

by DJ Turner, Director of Communications

As Westlink Christian Church in Wichita, Kan., prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary, one of its most humble members will celebrate too, having led the church for 42 of those 50 years. Gene Carlson (D.Min., '92) is an inspiration, having been the church's pastor from 1964 until he retired in 2006.

To serve faithfully in one place for 42 years is an anomaly in today's ministry landscape. While not everyone is called to serve in one place for so long a period of time, all too often pastors work themselves to the point of burnout, experience some sort of moral failing or are drawn to other opportunities – whether for their own reasons or at the prompting of their church. As I spoke with Carlson about his ministry and his service to Westlink, where he still attends and worships, I was struck by his humble and peace-filled spirit. He has none of the angst or ambition that one often sees in leaders today. He is a man that simply seeks to make Christ the center of his life, stay centered on the Word of God and persevere.

When Carlson was called to Westlink, the church's first pastor had resigned, and there were 150 people in regular attendance. Westlink's membership now numbers between 2,000-2,500 across three services each weekend.

After serving the church for 19 years, Carlson experienced a significant case of burnout. Whether attributed to a midlife crisis or other personal issues that Carlson was facing at the time, he felt ready to walk away from the church and ministry. It was at this time that the elders of Westlink made a wise decision: they gave Carlson a one-year leave of absence to do whatever he wanted. They told him, "Don't get involved in ministry – just figure out where you are."

Gene and his wife Janet moved to Vail, Colo., to stay with friends, and he decided to begin a Doctor of Ministry at Denver Seminary; the year was 1983, and Dr. Haddon Robinson was president. "I loved Denver Seminary," Carlson remembers. "The primary thing that pulled me to Denver was the fact that I'd be able to take two of Haddon Robinson's classes on expository teaching, which I love. It was a pivotal year for me."

"We came back from that sabbatical and resumed our ministry at Westlink," Carlson continues, "and things continued to grow. The D.Min. was the right move to prepare me for the next step of my life. I wouldn't have been [at Westlink] for 42 years without that experience."



Gene and Janet Carlson

Dr. Gene Carlson lives with his wife Janet in Wichita, Kan. They have three grown children, one who is currently working in the educational system of Qatar. Though he is retired, Gene continues to travel and teach, having recently taught in seminaries, churches and schools in places such as Eastern Europe, Saudi Arabia, India, Saigon, Vietnam, Israel and Egypt.

If you would like to discuss this or other articles in Denver Seminary Magazine, please visit our website: www.denverseminary.edu/magazine/.

As a result of his doctoral work, Carlson says that the emphasis of the church began to change. "We had always been quite heavily weighted toward building believers, but then in the late 80s and 90s we started to be more conscious of trying to reach unbelievers, and that probably had a lot to do with our growth." The church also has a strong emphasis on discipleship and small groups as a piece of the process for people to become part of the Body.

When asked how he was able to serve in one place so long, Carlson states that as a pastor he had to be willing to change. "A lot of times," he observes, "pastors think entire congregations should change, but the first person who needs to change is the pastor. Over the years, I discovered that my willingness to face my issues and not stand in the way of progress was very important. You have to be willing to try new things. Don't deny it when the church has problems, but find positive, healthy and honest ways to work through them."

In that same vein, Carlson encourages leaders to "keep your family healthy. I think it's very important that we face our own family situations to make sure we're not 'robbing Peter to pay Paul.'"

But the most important thing to remember, Carlson reveals in his quiet demeanor, is to live faithfully, making Christ the center of our lives. "The occupational hazard of ministry," warns Carlson, "is that you may forget about the Savior. At times it's easy to lose that vital connection, but we must stay centered on the Word – not just knowing it, but doing it... And we must persevere." **DSM**

Lessons on Living Faithfully

..from an unexpected source

by Monte Hasz, Psy.D.

In his recent book, *Tell It Slant*, Eugene Peterson deals with the idea that God's communication may not always be direct. Rather, he suggests, sometimes God may communicate gradually or in

unexpected ways. He suggests that this is God's way of "getting past preconceptions, prejudices, defenses and fact-driven literalism, all of which prevent relational receptivity to the language of the other:

the Other" (page 4). For me, it was God's indirect and unlikely communication that taught me very vividly about what it means to live faithfully.

I have spent the better part of my professional career either working as a psychologist or teaching counseling. In both of these situations, I have been the one teaching and guiding other people. However, at times the situation has been reversed. And one of God's indirect means has been to teach me through those I am trying to help. Margaret was one of those people. She was God's means to help me understand better what it means to live faithfully.

Margaret was a 50-year-old woman who spent most of her adult life dealing with some significant disabilities. Her situation was such that even at church Margaret was often overlooked. Because of her disability, people treated her as if she were incompetent and frequently kept her at a distance. The situation was difficult for Margaret, because she was fully aware of how people viewed her. Clearly this was a situation that could have caused a good deal of resentment on Margaret's part. But she chose to respond to her church situation in some unexpected ways. First, she did not leave her church to find one in which she might be treated differently. This church was where she felt God wanted her, and she wasn't ready to leave. Instead of becoming resentful, she chose to frequently volunteer where she could. The second thing Margaret did was to actively seek out others in the church who were likely to feel left out. She did this, not so much for companionship, but so that these people would feel like someone cared

about them. Once when we were speaking, Margaret made a statement that impacted me and revealed what she thought faithful living was. In speaking of another woman in her church, a woman that Margaret chose to befriend, she said, "She gets overlooked so often, but people don't know what they're missing. Nobody knows how much she prays." Margaret was able to see what everyone else missed: God's presence and His active work through this other woman.

From Margaret I learned two key points about faithfulness. First, living faithfully means living consistently. This is not a particularly profound idea. However, to see someone live consistently, especially in Margaret's situation, is to witness the profound.

The second thing I learned is that living faithfully means looking beyond the obvious to see what can so easily be missed. I need eyes to see God's presence and the unexpected ways that He is working through others. Margaret's way of being with other people began a new chapter in my own journey of trying to live faithfully.

Scripture encourages us to practice faithful living. This is the pattern that Paul gave to his younger friend Timothy "The things you have heard me say . . . entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:2). Granted, Paul is specifically talking to Timothy about the dissemination of the Gospel and the spreading of biblical truth in the early Church. However, the principle is clear: *entrust the truth to others who will faithfully pass it on*. While she didn't try to teach or lecture, Margaret was certainly one of the faithful who passed on what had been entrusted to her. **DSM**



Monte Hasz is Assistant Professor of Counseling at Denver Seminary. In addition to his teaching role, he maintains a half-time, private practice at Southwest Counseling Associates in Littleton, Colo. He has co-authored a book *Promoting Change through Brief Therapy in Christian Counseling*, as well as several articles on brief therapy and marital treatment.

For more information about Denver Seminary's counseling program, visit www.denverseminary.edu/counseling.

I have spent the better part of my professional career either working as a psychologist or teaching counseling. In both of these situations, I have been the one teaching and guiding other people. However, at times the situation has been reversed. And one of God's indirect means has been to teach me through those I am trying to help.



Calling and the Journey

by Tony Lemus, Dean of Students

Each semester, I enjoy being with new students at Orientation. They have decided that a seminary degree is an essential step in God's call for their lives. I have no doubt that each one envisions graduation. However, the distance between these two events – this beginning and that conclusion – is made up of days and months with joys and challenges that can make the objective feel less clear or even nonexistent.

It could be likened to a family vacation. Sometimes we choose places that cater to everyone; other times, parents opt for destinations suited to children. We consider our budget, organize our schedules, and make arrangements for the care of our home and pets. Then the day comes when it's time to depart on what will surely be an unforgettable trip. It is here our plans often meet the unexpected: we miss a connection and are stranded; we realize we forgot our mobile phone charger; we discover our hotel doesn't look like the picture on the website. Suddenly, the parentheses filled with relaxation that we'd hoped to insert into our busy lives is now more stressful than our daily routine.

The students at Orientation are beginning one of the most crucial journeys of their lives. They start with a set objective and certain assurance they are following the path God has set for them. And that is where their calling and goals begin to be tested and students' lives are shaped. Will they stay faithful to the call they received from God? Will they remember that, regardless of circumstances, the most important decision is to live

faithfully and fulfill the purpose that made them begin this journey in the first place?

When the "perfect plan" for our vacation goes south, we find ourselves at a crossroads. We may decide there is no solution and feel so defeated that we return home. Or we may choose to find alternatives that allow us to continue the journey. It is the same for our students in their Seminary careers.

The key to maintaining the course in any journey is to stand up and face situations that would defeat us. The perfect model for this battle is Jesus.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Hebrews 12:1-3)

From the moment Jesus became flesh, He had a clear objective: our redemption through His sacrifice. He persevered and was able to see beyond

circumstances and problems; He even saw beyond the cross. Instead of focusing on the pain He would feel by bearing our sins or the solitude He would endure by being separated from the Father, He focused on the result.

In this journey, we must understand that we may grow weary or feel discouraged. The human condition is our biggest hurdle. However, we are not the first to take this road. Many have passed through similar circumstances; many have faced worse troubles. But the key is where we find the strength to endure.

We have to be assured that the One who gave us this task did so knowing that we could make it with *His* strength. God doesn't ask us to do something we can't accomplish; He trusts that in the moments we feel like turning back, we will cry out for His help – and trust that He will send it.

Each day I witness speed bumps that serve to ruin the travel plans of students: sickness, family conflict, financial crisis, internal storms – these may divert their eyes from the goal. But each day I witness their strength and courage, as they determine to live faithfully and follow their calling.

Answering God's call is not easy, but in the midst of personal storms, God's hand still moves. It's when we set our eyes on Jesus that we are able to move beyond that which makes us weary. Let's live faithful to the call, knowing that strength and direction come from the One who decided we were capable of doing it. **DSM**



Tony Lemus is from Guatemala. There he acquired a vast experience in the fields of law, politics and education. He moved to Colorado in 2002 to work in an international parachurch organization, as the person in charge of the Spanish/Portuguese areas. He began his work at Denver Seminary as Dean of Students in March 2008.

If you are interested in learning more about pursuing your calling at Denver Seminary, visit our website: www.denverseminary.edu/become-a-student/.



Living Faithfully Through a Will

by Brian Fort, Director of Development

Having a last will and testament is an ancient practice that ensures the wise stewardship of your resources and the care of those who remain on this world after your death. The author of Hebrews writes to a group of believers in the Greco-Roman world who understood the concept of a "last will and testament." In fact, the author uses the example of a will (Hebrews 9:16) to emphasize the point he is making. That point is that Jesus Christ's atoning death has made available an inheritance of eternal life to His beneficiaries.

In the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) I find encouragement of a similar principle. The parable tells us that the master entrusts his property to his servants and then goes on a journey. Upon his return he asks each servant individually what he had done with the things he had given them. This is where I see the application. We don't know when Jesus will return, but we do know that He has entrusted each of us individually with unique gifts and goods. What better way to be able to tell the Lord what we have done than by having a "will" in place. When He asks us what we have done with what we have been given, we can answer with confidence:

1. I took care of the needs of my family by providing for them after my death (1 Timothy 5:8).
2. I gave to the needs of my church (2 Chronicles 24, Galatians 6:6)
3. I distributed the rest to other charitable organizations (Acts 4:32-36)

Having a will in place is always a good idea, and during these economic times it is a wonderful way to provide for organizations such as Denver Seminary. Would you prayerfully consider including Denver Seminary in your estate plans? If you already have or if you are in the process of doing so, we would enjoy hearing from you. If you would like help in putting together a God-honoring estate plan, please contact Brian Fort at 303-762-6924, or brian.fort@denverseminary.edu. More information on estate planning can be found on our website at www.denverseminary.edu/estateplan/.

Creative Ways to Give in Challenging Times

God provided Bill and Eleanor a beautiful lake home in upstate New York. As part of being good stewards, they realized that they could deed the property to the Seminary and still retain full use of it until a time when they no longer had need of it. They were able to continue to enjoy the use of the property and receive favorable tax exemptions. All this was done through a vehicle called a Retained Life Estate.

When Bill and Eleanor no longer had need of the property, the Seminary was able to sell it and invest the proceeds into the lives of students, who are then able to impact the world for Christ.



Robert walked into his garage one day and asked God, "What should I do with this [extra car] today?"



God told him to give it away. As a result of Robert's obedient faithfulness, the Seminary received a vehicle that we were able to sell and then

invest the proceeds directly into the lives of students who are equipped to think biblically, live faithfully and lead wisely for a lifetime.

Is the Lord leading you to work in students' lives in a creative way? Then please contact Brian Fort at brian.fort@denverseminary.edu or 303-762-6924 or visit our website at www.denverseminary.edu/creative-gifts/.

Alumni: Share Your Story

If you have news about you or your ministry that you would like to share with other alumni, or if you have a story about how Denver Seminary impacted your life and ministry, we'd love to hear from you. Please send news announcements and stories to dj.turner@denverseminary.edu. Alumni story examples can be seen on the bottom of the alumni page: www.denverseminary.edu/alumni/. Alumni news can be seen on our website: www.denverseminary.edu/alumni-news/.

How to Use the Internet to Disciple, Create Community and Outreach

A Free Webinar for Pastors and Church Leaders

We have all heard about websites, social networking, search engines and blogs. But how effective is your Internet strategy in outreach, creating community and discipleship? Come learn practical ways to enhance your web ministry and impact hundreds, if not thousands of people. Learn from case studies and best practices from churches that have been successful doing ministry online. This one-hour session will equip you with practical strategies, whether you are an online expert or a beginner.

This free webinar is sponsored by Monk Development and Denver Seminary as a service to pastors and church leaders in the Denver Seminary community. It is offered on two dates for your convenience:

- Thursday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. (Mountain Time)
- Wednesday, May 13 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Mountain Time)



Drew Goodmanson

The webinar will be led by Drew Goodmanson. Drew serves as CEO of Monk Development and co-founder/elder at Kaleo Church. Monk is an Internet strategy and development company. Drew often speaks at conferences about how churches can use the Internet; his blog is recognized as one of the Top Church Blogs; he wrote a chapter in *Voices of the Virtual World: Participative Technology and the Ecclesial Revolution*; and his company's services are used by thousands of churches and ministries. Drew spends much of his time thinking about church planting, web missiology and being a husband and father.

For details or to register, please visit our website: www.denverseminary.edu/webinar.

FLY FISHING TRIPS

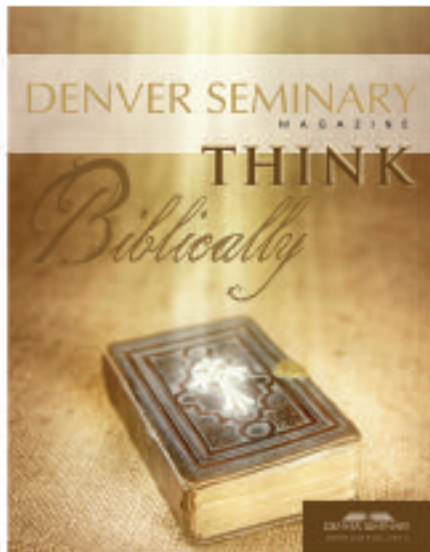
If you are interested in fly fishing with Denver Seminary, please contact Gary Hoag at gary.hoag@denverseminary.edu. Denver Seminary is planning some spiritual retreats to various rivers this summer, and you are welcome to wet a line with us.



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Studies in the Personal Names of Genesis 1-11

Richard S. Hess
(Eisenbrauns, 2009)

Genesis 1-11 is a text that may well have received more attention than any other in the history of literature. Nevertheless, what do we know about the personal names that occur in these chapters and whose influence has permeated all of Western literature? Hess provides a thorough investigation of the Ancient Near Eastern background of these names and discusses how each played a key role in adding significance to the stories and genealogies in which they are found. By studying both the linguistic contexts in the surrounding cultures and the wordplay in the biblical texts, the author provides the first comprehensive study of the importance of these names and traces the implications of his results for the antiquity and power of the familiar stories in which they appear.



The Denver Journal Book Reviews by Our Faculty

Want to know what Denver Seminary faculty members think about the latest theological books and commentaries? Be sure to check out the Denver Journal on our website. Not only does the Denver Journal contain some of the most comprehensive bibliographies for the Old and New Testaments, but you'll find thoughtful book reviews on the latest books of theology, philosophy and other resources for pastors, scholars, students and those who want to learn. The

Denver Journal is updated regularly, so check back often!
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Denver Seminary blogs are a great way to stay in touch with and interact with the Seminary community. Blogs are maintained by faculty, staff and even some students. All of the blogs feature RSS feeds, and you can even subscribe to some of them to receive automatic email updates when new posts have been added. Current blogs include: Alumni News, Craig Blomberg's New Testament Musings, thoughts on mentoring and theological education by Don Payne, Stewardship Matters by Gary Hoag, and much more. To access the blogs, go to www.denverseminary.edu, and click on "Blogs" in the middle of the page. See you online!



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If you've ever wanted to comment on an article on Denver Seminary's website — whether a news item, a Denver Journal review or some other article, many of which are linked to from our home page (www.denverseminary.edu) — now you can! Denver Seminary has added a new comment feature to all articles on our website to encourage online dialogue between faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends. (The comments feature will appear at the bottom of each web page for which it is an option.) We look forward to hearing from you.



the Secret of STEADFASTNESS

Among the many lines of poetry that throng my aged memory are these free-floating fragments:

*So he died for his faith?
Did he live for it too?*

To me, that is a heart-searching question. I often confess that I would probably be a rather pathetic martyr unless under some intolerable pressure God gave me an infusion of courage and grace. But what about the divine help needed to live for Jesus consistently day after day? Life is a wearisome treadmill for many of God's people with a tiring sameness that makes it difficult to experience love and joy and peace.



Yet, thanks to our enabling Lord, we don't have to limp and stumble along as defeated disciples. According to Paul in Romans 8:37, we can be "more than conquerors." Yes! And Isaiah, that hope-giving prophet, assures us in chapter 40, verse 31 that we can walk and not faint. That assurance occurs in one of the Old Testament's most soul-strengthening passages: "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:29-31).

God gives to some of His children a more-than-merely-human ability to rise triumphant over down-dragging difficulties as if they were endowed with angelic wings. God may also give to others the ability to run without exhaustion the marathon of our difficulties. But what about our daily living, the humdrum of life, the dull plodding along with monotonous sameness? That's when we are thankful for Isaiah's back-bracing reassurance that as we wait upon God, we can plod along, heavy-footed, step-by-step, mile-by-mile, day-after-day, and in spite of panting weariness, keep on moving ahead.

The secret to a steadfast pilgrimage is really no secret. In steadfast fellowship with our unchanging, ever-faithful God, we can find—no, we *do* find!—the secret to living out our faith steadfastly.



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He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals His thoughts...
the Lord God Almighty is His name. (Amos 4:13)



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