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MINISTRY

Adam Schoenmaker

Number crunching and neatly categorising assets and liabilities is second nature to an accountant. But in the world of pastoral ministry, things get a little messy where there are very few things that are clear and neat, and often there is no simple or quick solution.

More than six years ago I took a career change from being an accountant and pursued pastoral ministry. One of the challenges with which I've had to wrestle is walking with people through their various struggles and complexities of life in a broken world. This is the messy part of Christianity and for me, being able to do that is to embrace what it means to be willing and eager to serve and shepherd God's people (1 Peter 5:2). I also realise the need to continually embrace and apply the gospel to my own heart—God has pursued and

continues to pursue me and love me in all of my brokenness, and has called me to do the same for the people he loves.

I have been privileged to serve at Bray Park Community Church (BPCC) where I originally started out leading young adult and youth ministries part time, and also worked as a high school chaplain at Genesis Christian College, all while going to Bible college.

Now in my full-time pastoral role at BPCC,

I look back and reflect on how much I have grown and what I have learned in pastoral ministry.

Going to Bible college was crucial to my development as a pastor. It equipped me to

face the many different situations, questions, and responsibilities of pastoral ministry in a way that I did not fully anticipate when I first began my studies. A solid theological education definitely

helped prepare me for working with young adults.



One of the things I love about working with young adults is the questions they ask. They, like most people, want to know that the Christian worldview is not just existentially satisfying, but intellectually rigorous as well. In other words, they not only want to know how to walk with Jesus, but also to consider if the foundation of

their faith is solid ground on which to rely.

Helping to grow them in their understanding of the Bible and to encourage them in their Christian walk has been a joy and a privilege for me. It's rewarding to see people encounter the love of Christ in a real way and see the gospel impacting them, being reminded that the gospel really is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16).

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

GREECE & TURKEY STUDY TOUR



Join our New Testament lecturer Dr Alan Stanley as he leads the study tour to Greece and Turkey from **11th-28th September 2016**. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity as we **explore the Book of Acts** in more detail and see the sights where the Apostle Paul lived for a time, and visit the island of

Patmos where John penned Revelation. You can study the unit for credit or simply come along as an audit student.

Enrolment for the tour close on 29th April 2016.

For more info please visit our website or contact **+61 7 3870 8355**.



SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD

Rev Dr Richard Gibson, BST Principal

I recently enjoyed the privilege of teaching from the letter to the Hebrews. Towards the end of the section I came to this remarkable description:

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:11-12)

I was reminded of the great Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon's response to the demand for a defence of the Bible's reliability and inspiration: "Defend the Bible, I would as soon defend a lion. Unchain it and it will defend itself!" Spurgeon was not opposed to giving reasons for believing the truth claims of the Christian faith. But he was convinced that God's word was powerful and effective whenever it was read, or preached or spoken.

These verses in Hebrews explain why. As God's self-expression, the Bible is never just words on a page. God doesn't wield this sword like a clumsy soldier, but with the skill of the surgeon who knows us inside out. As we are exposed to his word it penetrates into the inner recesses of our hearts, exposing our motives, thoughts, desires and priorities. In the process, if we do not harden our hearts, we are convicted of our disobedience and unbelief.

We leave the word of God in its scabbard when we refuse to read the Scriptures. We leave the sword sheathed when our teachers neglect to do the thorough preparation that brings the Scriptures to God's people with power and penetration. Just as Spurgeon knew that he just had to let the lion out of the cage, we too need the confidence to let the sword do its work of cutting through our pretense and self-deceit so that we will take refuge in Jesus our Great High

Priest and find mercy and grace in him (Hebrews 4:14).

These verses remind us of why we might be reluctant to let the sword out of its scabbard. It is an uncomfortable experience to find ourselves exposed and naked before God's searching word. But it is a reminder of the reality that there is nowhere to hide from God. Like the surgeon,

God speaks to us to heal us and secure our relationship with him.

Please pray for BST as 2016 begins, that we will be confident in God's word and in his goodness so that we let his two-edged sword do its work of judging and saving.

If you would like to invite Richard or other faculty to guest speak at your church or special event please email info@bst.qld.edu.au or contact us on: **(07) 3870 8355**.

JESUS ACCORDING TO THE GOSPELS

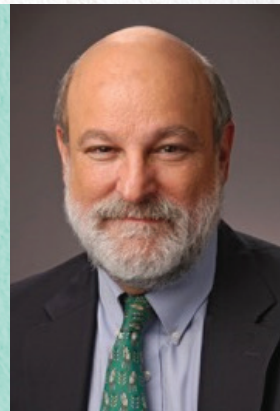
DR DARRELL BOCK 25 - 29 JULY 2016

Study the life of Christ as described in the Synoptic Gospels and John, and gain a deeper appreciation of Jesus' ministry.

You'll be taught by Dr Darrell Bock, the Executive Director of Cultural Engagement and Senior Research Professor of New

Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He is a Humboldt Scholar (Tübingen University in Germany) and has authored more than thirty books, including well-regarded commentaries on Luke and Acts, studies of the historical Jesus, and works in cultural engagement as host of Dallas Theological Seminary's 'The Table Podcasts'.

For more information visit bst.qld.edu.au/events.



PASTORAL MINISTRY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



That is why I absolutely love preaching and take the responsibility of this task seriously. In an age of continuous technological advancement, there is unprecedented global access to gifted preachers and teachers, especially through podcasts. While this is a blessing, there may be the temptation to default to regurgitating the key points of a preacher's sermon, without doing the hard work of wrestling with the text. This is a

unique challenge to modern-day pastors. For me, to avoid becoming a 'Tim Keller puppet' - or whomever - requires a constant diligence to foster an intimate familiarity with the Scriptures. I recognise the need to give the word of God the time and space to do its incisive and microscopic work in my own heart and life. The knowledge and skills developed through my theological education have been a huge blessing and

assistance in mining the depth of Scripture and in preparing me for the weighty task of preaching God's word.

Adam Schoenmaker completed his Master of Divinity at BST in 2015. Adam is married to Molly whom he met at church. In his spare time he loves to watch as much sports as possible - preferably the Broncos, any form of cricket, and the odd AFL or union game.



FORTY YEARS OF MINISTRY

The end of 2015 marked ten years since Rev Dr Michael Tan began teaching at BST in the English and Chinese classes. We honoured our dear brother at the BST Celebration Dinner on his retirement from full-time teaching.

Originally from Malaysia, Michael was introduced to Christianity at the age of nine when a neighbour took him to Sunday School. He grew up amongst the youth group and went to youth camps. At the age of 21 he attended one particular

youth camp and after hearing some of the convicting messages being preached, Michael strongly felt the call of God for him to go into full-time ministry, and so he responded.

In 1969 Michael travelled to Singapore where he lived and studied at Trinity Theological College. He was awarded a scholarship that covered the cost of his Bachelor of Theology. He didn't know anyone in Singapore, but he loved the spiritual formation that he received from his four years at Trinity. They held Chapel every weekday morning, Vespers service in the evening and a prayer meeting in the dormitory at 10pm. That spiritual discipline established a strong foundation for his life and ministry. After completing his BTh,

Michael returned to Malaysia to work as a supply pastor at a local church in Port Dickson for a year. That's where he met his lovely wife Ping.

Michael went on to complete a Master of Theology on full scholarship at the Graduate School of South East Asia, and served as a teaching assistant. At the age of 27, Michael still felt that he was too young to teach and needed more ministry experience. So after completing his MTh, he served for four years in the Methodist Church in Singapore where he was ordained as a Minister.

In 1980 the Global United Methodist Church in New York awarded Michael a Crusade

Scholarship to enable him to undertake doctoral studies, so Michael and his family moved to Claremont School of Theology in California where they spent two and half years. While completing his doctoral

studies he served part-time in the local Chinese church in Pomona and also spent time at Andover Newton Theological Seminary in Boston where he was a visiting scholar.

Michael wrote his commentary on First and Second Corinthians in Chinese while he was in Boston.

He returned to Singapore in 1983 and served as a Senior Minister in the Methodist church for eight years, as well as filling in as a part-time lecturer at Trinity. The Lord enabled Michael to serve in other parts of the world including Perth, Western Australia. Michael was the Senior Minister of the Perth Chinese Christian Church for almost eight

years. During his time there Michael helped the church to plant a south branch. His relationship with that church has continued, where he is often invited to teach and guest speak at their services.

In 1997 Michael was appointed the Senior Minister at the Chinese Methodist Church in Eight Mile Plains. He also served one term as the president of the Chinese Methodist Church in Australia. Then in 2005, Michael felt that it was time to teach full-time and help equip Christians for ministry. With the encouragement of Dr Johan Ferreira, former BST Principal, Michael joined BST to help expand the Chinese program.

Michael's thirty years of pastoral experience enabled him to have insight into the struggles and complexities of human life. As a Senior Minister at various churches he visited members of his congregation when they were sick, he officiated at weddings and funerals (sometimes two events in the one day), counselled couples in their relationship struggles – you name it, he's done it.

His wealth of pastoral experience has been valuable for our students who have benefited from his insight and understanding for the past ten years, particularly for those preparing for pastoral ministry. As the Director of our Chinese Program, Michael has been a committed servant-leader who has provided wisdom, intellect, encouragement and direction for the Chinese faculty and our students, as well as his fellow staff. Though Michael is now retired, we look forward to our continued contact with him as he visits from time to time and to teach intensives for our Chinese program.

We thank God for Michael's ministry at the college and pray that the Lord will bless this next chapter of his life.

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ALUMNA CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

In December 1955, Valda Langton (née Fawcett) completed her two year diploma at Brisbane School of Theology (or QBI as she knew us back then) in preparation to become a missionary. She was a trained nurse and signed up to serve overseas with Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ (WEC). Valda and her late husband David served in India and Kashmir for more than 20 years. We had the opportunity to honour Valda, and commemorate her 60th anniversary since graduating from the college, at our Celebration Dinner on Wednesday, 18th November 2015. Current students, alumni, staff, faculty and volunteers were among the 100 guests who attended the event hosted at the United Service Club in Spring Hill.

WATCH Valda's testimony: bst.qld.edu.au/valdalangton



THE CLASS OF 1955

BACK ROW: N. SCOTT, D. O'CONNOR, J. ELEY, L. WILES, M. BOPP, L. LARSEN, M. HORTON

FRONT ROW: J. GORELL, J. BURKIN, MRS & REV. E. E. POTTER (PRINCIPAL), V. FAWCETT, J. MACNISH

BST ALUMNI MINISTRY NEWS

We congratulate BST alumnus **Rev Sam Chidamber** (pictured right with his family) on his recent appointment to **Gateway Presbyterian Church** (Ascot and Nundah). Sam will be commissioned as their incoming Senior Minister on the retirement of Gateway's long-serving minister Rev Guido Kettniss. Sam completed his **Master of Arts**

in Theology at BST in 2000. Since graduating from the college through to the end of 2013, Sam taught WEC missionaries at Worldview in Launceston. He then served as the CMS state director for Tasmania, while also working two days a week for his local church. Former BST Principal and Sam's mentor, **Dr Ken Newton** is the guest speaker at Sam's

Commissioning Service on Sunday, 6th March at Gateway's 9.30am service, 14 Rode Road, Wavell Heights. Please pray for Sam and his family as they move back to Brisbane and transition into this next phase of their life and ministry.



EVENTS

Leadership and Management in Christian Ministry (MA Intensive)

**Monday – Friday
29 February – 4 March 2016
8.30am – 3pm**

Build your knowledge and understanding of leadership development, key components of managing organisations, and understand personality types and their impact on working relationships. This intensive will help you to program a detailed personal leadership development plan, and be able to analyse and program changes to the structure and management of a Christian organisation or activity.

Open Night

**Wednesday
11th May 2016
6.30pm**

Guests have the opportunity to get a taste of the lectures, check out the campus, and meet some of our staff and students.

Following Jesus in a Hostile World

**Monday
30th May 2016,
9am – 3.30pm**

What does it mean to be in the world but not of the world? Come along to our day conference and hear from New Testament scholar, Dr Thomas Schreiner as he shares insights from 1 Peter chapters 1 through to 5. Dr Schreiner has been a professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky since 1997 and is the James Harrison Buchanan Professor of New Testament Interpretation.

Jesus According to the Gospels (MA Intensive)

**Monday - Friday
25 – 29 July 2016,
8.30am – 3pm**

Study the life of Christ as described in the Synoptic Gospels and John, and gain a deeper appreciation of Jesus' ministry.

Visit bst.qld.edu.au/events for more information on upcoming events or contact us on **(07) 3870 8355**.

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