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FROM LONDON TO BRISBANE

David Malcolm Bennett, BST alumnus

When I was a young boy growing up in old Hampstead, London—failing miserably at my school work—I never imagined that I would ever be a writer (let alone a published one!). But the Lord had other plans.

Now seventy-three, I spend most of my week buried in research, scrupulously writing my next book. While many might shudder at the thought of wading through hundreds of documents, books and journals for the sake of research, I absolutely love it! The Internet has also made researching easier and more interesting.

Writing didn't always come naturally. As I mentioned, I failed miserably at school. It didn't interest me and I struggled in class. But as I grew older and the more I was exposed

to books (working in bookstores helped considerably), I took interest in various topics and became self-taught. I loved reading the Bible, theology, and church history, and still do.

In 1985 I left my job at QBD Bookstore to start writing a book about William Booth, a fascination influenced by my upbringing in a Methodist family and having worked at the Methodist publishing house in England (Booth was originally a Methodist). When money eventually ran out, I worked part-time for the Bible Society while studying at BST from 1988 to 1990.

For many years I led Bible study groups, which I am still doing today, and found that people often came to me with questions about the Bible. As I grappled with some of their questions, I felt prompted to do further study, which is why I enrolled in the Bachelor of Theology at BST.



When I announced to my wife this desire to go to Bible college, she replied, "Oh no!" and covered her face, completely dismayed.

It was then that I knew that going to Bible college was going to be a challenge for our family (we had two teenagers living at home at the time), especially as our financial situation would be tough during those years.

But, my wife has always been supportive and never stopped me from pursuing studies. She knew that I didn't want to study for study's sake, but that it was for a purpose.

To be honest, I found college to be difficult. It had been a long time since I had studied (at that stage I was in my forties). The first week was especially hard. I wasn't really good in a classroom setting, though if I was given a book to read, I would happily devour it at my own pace. By God's grace, I got through it.

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TURKEY & GREECE STUDY TOUR 2016



Picture yourself exploring the island of Patmos where John experienced that magnificent vision recorded in Revelation, or visit the locations of the Seven Churches, and tour the streets of Ephesus and Corinth where the Apostle Paul lived for a time. Students can go on the study tour for credit (FEE-Help available to eligible

students), or if you're not enrolled in a course, you can simply audit. **Find out more at the information session at BST on Wednesday, 7th October at 2pm.** RSVP is essential, so please email info@bst.qld.edu.au or contact us on **(07) 38708355**.

MISSION MATTERS

Rev Dr Richard Gibson,

BST Principal

Mission matters at BST. It is part of our DNA going back more than seventy years. We want BST graduates to think and act missionally. We encourage them to communicate and love cross-culturally. The emphasis is reflected in our curriculum, the composition of our board and faculty, Gen12 conference, Mission Exposure Week, Mission Awareness Program, Graduate Attributes and so on. The presence of students studying in Mandarin contributes to BST as a cross-cultural experience.

Naturally, we highlight this emphasis to people thinking of enrolling. Recently, someone asked me, "With this emphasis on mission, will I be prepared for congregational ministry in a local church?" The distinction between overseas mission and local ministry is a familiar distinction to most Christians. When I entered theological training nearly 30 years ago, it made sense. But the intervening period with its rapid social change means we can't sustain these tidy categories.



It is increasingly impossible to avoid the fact that all ministry is missional and must be. As the face of Europe changes with the massive migration of people, and as Australia increases its intake of refugees to cater for the Syrian crisis, this fact gets clearer and clearer. These changes threaten familiar patterns of ministry. But, they present exciting opportunities for people able and willing to share Christ with people from different backgrounds, cultures, and religions. More importantly, mission matters at BST because mission matters to Jesus. He underwrites our efforts. By his death and resurrection he made it possible for those who were far away to come near, even into the presence of God (Ephesians 2:17-18).

And he promises to be with us always as we make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). It means we can face an uncertain future with courage and hope.

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.

BST MISSION CONFERENCE

More than 100 people attended Gen12, BST's mission conference, on Saturday, 22nd August. Gen12 is for anyone who is interested in local or global mission or keen to support it. This year's theme focused on **Building a Culture of Discipleship**, with keynote addresses from David Riddell, International Director of World Team. Electives covered topics such as discipleship in church, discipling teenagers, ministry to international students, discipleship across cultures and child protection in mission.



PHIL COATES

"I found the whole day an opportunity to learn more about serving, discipling, and what the challenges can and will be when out on the mission field. I believe it's essential to be well-equipped and informed, and I am valuing the generosity and wisdom I received from the input of everyone who participated."

BEN FIEN

"The keynote speaker, David Riddell, really impacted me. God used him to renew my passion for discipleship and I was surprised at how clearly he presented his topics. The elective run by Peter Bradbury (discipleship in church) built perfectly on everything that David had said and helped me to see the cost and the reward of discipleship. There are no shortcuts to discipling someone, but it is hugely rewarding."



SIGHTS SET ON OXFORD



BST graduate Kirsten Mackerras is not your average 25-year-old. With an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a passion to pursue research, Kirsten now has her sights set on Oxford...

Doctoral study was the obvious next step after Kirsten completed her master's degree in Ancient History at Macquarie University in June this year. She worked as a part-time music coordinator at her church, and spent the last few years doing the bulk of her masters by coursework, and finally, completing a thesis on the second-century church father Irenaeus, an interest in church history that was inspired by studying at BST.

Originally from Canberra, Kirsten moved to BST to study her Bachelor of Ministry, which she completed in 2011, being awarded the Barton Babbage Prize (an accolade given to the student with the highest GPA of all Australian College of Theology students in the Bachelor of Ministry program). Kirsten's high marks enabled her to do a further honours year at BST.

Her continued commitment to Christian studies led Kirsten to apply to study at Oxford, where she was accepted into the prestigious university's doctoral program.

"It's been my goal since I left BST to pursue further research opportunities, and I was excited to be accepted into Oxford," Kirsten said. "I move to the UK this month and start studying under Professor Mark Edwards, combining my interests in early church history and politics, by writing about how two Christian

theologians, Lactantius and Eusebius, talked about the church's relation to the state around the time of Constantine."

Kirsten's interest in politics was further sparked after her placement in the Lachlan Macquarie Internship (LMI) in 2013, a program that explores how Christians can positively influence public life, whether through politics, law, media or other areas.

"I've long-been interested in politics and how we can commend the Christian worldview in public, and LMI helped me investigate these ideas further."

Kirsten has also received a doctoral fellowship at the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, giving her access to quality mentors relevant to her area of study.

"I look forward to conversations with some top Christian thinkers who will be able to guide and mentor me on how to apply my studies to benefit the church."

John Coulson, Deputy Principal and Academic Dean, who previously mentored Kirsten at BST, is especially encouraged by her pursuits.

"It is a joy to me to see how Kirsten has continued to pursue God's will for her and further training since graduating from BST," John said.



"God has led her step by step and I will be praying that she knows the Lord's presence in her PhD studies."

As with many BST alumni, we eagerly follow Kirsten's progress and we thank God for her continued interest in pursuing Christian studies to serve his church.

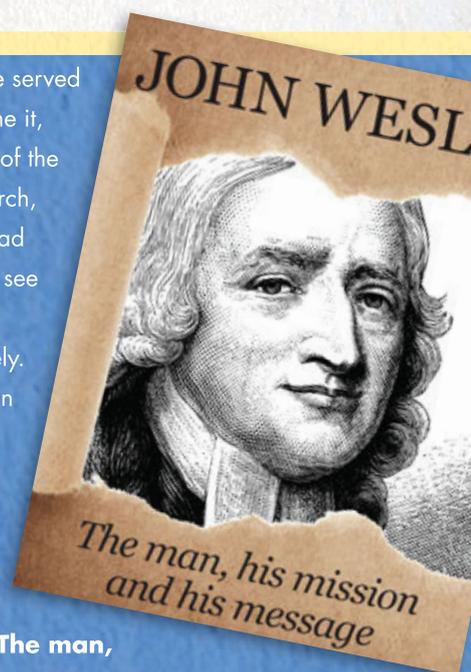
FROM LONDON TO BRISBANE (continued from page 1)

I didn't stop there. As I hungered to dig deeper into certain topics, the more I desired to write. By the time I was in my fifties I had researched so much on the topic of the "altar call" that I thought it would be a good idea to do a masters on that. ***The Altar Call: Its Origins and Present Usage*** was published in 2000. The next area of study I pursued was doctoral research on ***The Origins of Left Behind Eschatology***, which was later published in USA.

For anyone who is seeking the Lord on a direction for ministry or ways you can serve, **I encourage you to consider the gifting the Lord has given you.** For me, it wasn't obvious at first, but when I worked around books all the time—some well written, others not so much—it inspired me to write and spurred me to do further studies.

Growing up in church, I have served in a variety of roles. You name it, I've done it. Now a member of the Coorparoo Presbyterian Church, I am thankful to be able to lead Bible studies and help others see what is in the Scriptures that they might not see immediately. As for writing, it is my passion and I will keep writing for as long as the Lord will have me do it.

David is also the author of the recently released, John Wesley: The man, his mission and his message.



UNDERSTANDING GOD LEADS TO PRAISE AND REPENTANCE



The Bible is replete with accounts of believers coming together to pray to God. An interesting account occurs toward the end of the book of Nehemiah, which records the people of God coming together for a half day of fasting and prayer. Why would they ever do such a thing?

According to Nehemiah chapter 7, the community of God's people assembled to read and study

the Bible together. By chapter 9, this resulted in an overwhelming consensus that their new-found knowledge of God required from them a humble, comprehensive, and direct response to God in prayer.

So, what did the people in Nehemiah's day pray for? Did they pray for an end to their poverty and enslavement to Persian overlords? Did they pray for a restoration of

their broken-down nation? Well, yes, their material needs and political circumstances are implicit throughout their long prayer. Yet as they gathered together in Jerusalem, in the midst of the rubble and ruined glory of their capital city, the overwhelming focus of their prayer to God was praise and repentance.

Visit bst.qld.edu.au/blog to read more of **Jason Atkinson's** blog.

EVENTS

Turkey and Greece Study Tour Information Session

Wednesday,
7 October 2015, 2pm
RSVP essential
info@bst.qld.edu.au

If you've ever wanted to visit the locations of the Seven Churches, or visit Patmos, and walk the streets of Ephesus and Corinth, come along to our information session.

- **Dr Alan Stanley**

Celebration Dinner

Wednesday,
18 November 2015,
6.30pm at United Service
Club, Spring Hill

Join our students, staff, faculty, and board members to celebrate the end of the academic year.

- **Rev Dr Richard Gibson**

Jeremiah (MA Intensive)

Monday-Friday,
1 - 5 February 2016,
8.30am-3pm

Gain a deeper understanding of the book of Jeremiah, the prophet on fire with the word of God. Perfect preparation for a sermon series.

- **Rev Dr Andrew Shead**

Leadership and Management in Christian Ministry (MA Intensive)

Monday-Friday,
29 February - 4 March
2016, 8.30am-3pm

If you're a leader in a Christian ministry context, come along to this intensive and build on your skills in conflict resolution, change and people management.

- **Mrs Kara Martin**

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.

- **Dr Darrell Bock**

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

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1 Cross Street
Toowong
QLD 4066
Australia

(07) 3870 8355
info@bst.qld.edu.au
bst.qld.edu.au
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