



Postgraduate Studies Seminar

1.7.2021

Ms Karen Nivala, Brisbane School of Theology

'A Crossroad of Story: Narrative Criticism, Narrative Therapy and the Way Stories Change Us'

In the 1980s two distinct fields, biblical studies and counselling, were experiencing a narrative turn. In fields previously dominated by structuralist approaches, biblical scholars and counsellors were beginning to draw on literary theory for two different purposes. The resultant approaches which developed, narrative criticism and narrative therapy, have been appropriated and replicated, evolving in their respective fields in the decades which followed. Whilst differing in application and approach, both fields agree that a person or community's interaction with the narrative form is a catalyst of change. This paper will survey the nature of the relationship between these two fields. Further, it will offer an integrated methodology for interpreting the transformative nature of the narrative of the gospel of Matthew.

Dr Graham Cole, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

'The Great Antagonist'

This is a strange time in the west. Supernaturalism is under attack from secularism (e.g. Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris). Yet the entertainment industry is filled with offerings of supernatural contests between good and evil. The devil is often the chief antagonist in films and TV shows. In biblical perspective, the devil is no figure of fun or entertainment. He is the opponent of God's good character, word and ways. So the biblical account is amenable to being read in dramatic terms and so to use drama as the lens through which to view the canonical story is most useful. Drama means conflict. In a drama there are protagonists and antagonists. Without these elements there is no drama. The canon of Scripture has all these elements: a chief protagonist (Jesus Christ, Son of God), a chief antagonist (the devil) and conflict from Genesis 3 to Revelation 20. However, as Cornelius Plantinga argues, "Nonetheless, Satan is no match for Jesus Christ the exorcist, the destroyer of the destroyer. In the end, Satan and his minions are ejected from the theatre."