

# The Sentinel

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Scott Stripling  
ABR Shih Excavation  
Director of Excavations

"Captivus: A Brief History of Martin Luther"

"Free to Question, Free From Doubt"

"Rooted Locally - Connected Globally"

"Finding Abundant Life in Lockup"

"passionate love"

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## The Sentinel

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The Bible Seminary (TBS) is an independent, non-denominational, 501(c)(3) charitable institution of higher education incorporated in Texas in 2010 to offer training for laity and vocational ministry professionals. Programs include Bible Certificate, Licensed Professional, Dual Degree Completion, Master of Arts, and Master of Divinity. *The seminary exists to glorify God by training Christian believers in a context of biblical community in all 66 books of the Bible so that they can serve the local church and fulfill the Great Commission by the power of God's Spirit.*

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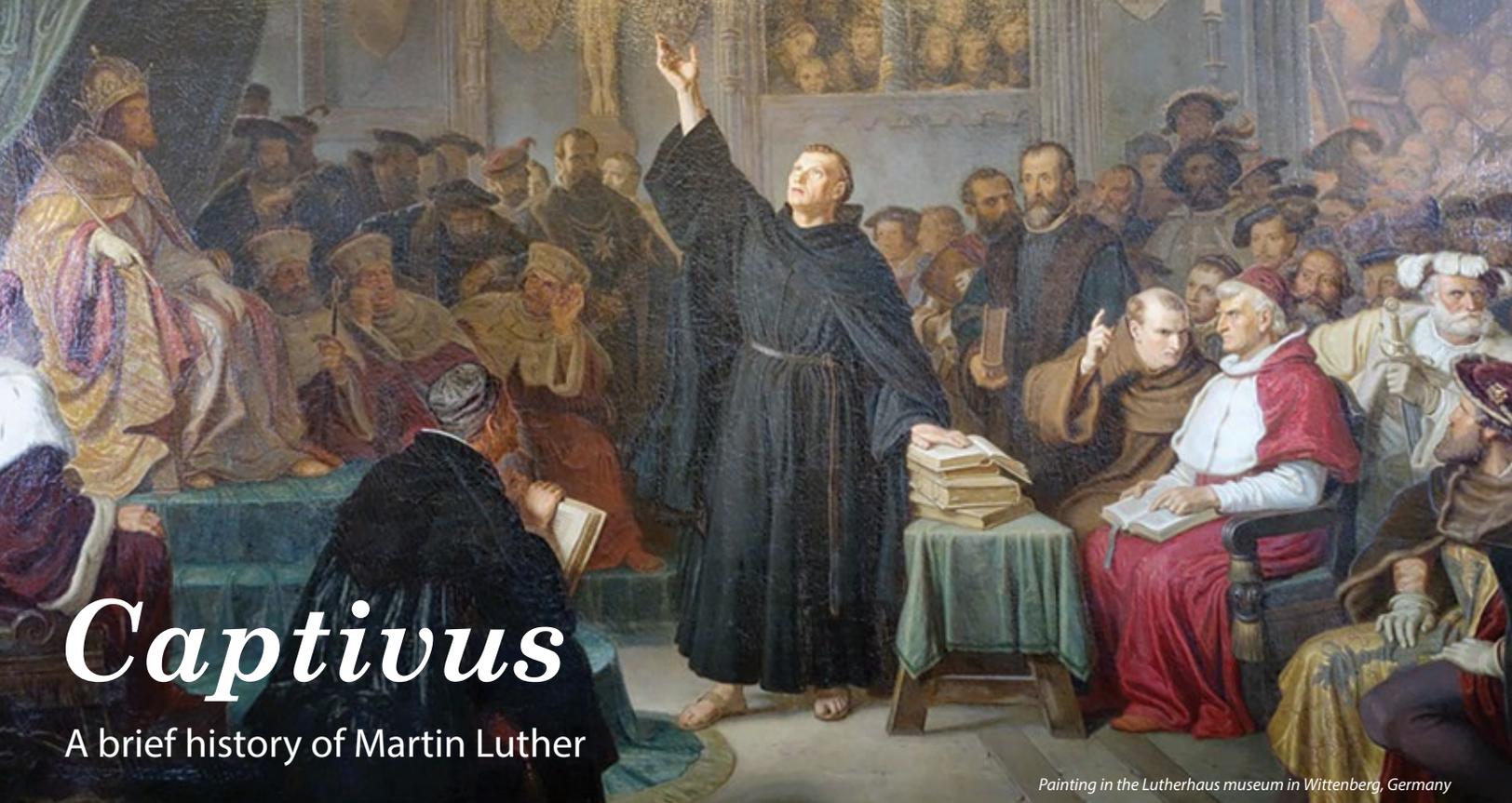
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Photo taken on location at the newly opened archaeological dig in Shiloh, Israel under the direction of TBS Provost and Shiloh Director of Excavations, Dr. Scott Stripling (R), along with Dr. Doug Petrovich (L), TBS Professor of Biblical History and Exegesis.





# Captivus

A brief history of Martin Luther

Painting in the Lutherhaus museum in Wittenberg, Germany

**Four years after Martin Luther posted 95 theses on a church door in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517, he defended his actions by appealing to “the word of God” at the Diet of Worms in 1521 – and was branded a heretic.**

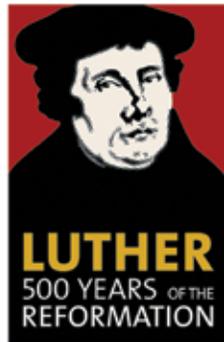
*The* small village of Eisleben, Germany bookended the life of Martin Luther. He lived there barely a year following his birth and died there on a preaching visit 62 years later, but his actions between November 1483 and July 1546 continue to impact the world.

The bright son of a copper miner and foundry owner, Luther grew up attending boarding schools and then earned Bachelors and Masters degrees in Theology from the University of Erfurt.

One summer afternoon on his way back to college after his first year of law school, a bolt of lightning struck so near him that a terrified Luther cried out to St. Anne and vowed to become a monk if he survived. Within two weeks, Luther infuriated his father by making good on his vow and joining the Augustinian Order.

Luther's first years as a monk were filled with torment. At the time, he believed all people were hopeless sinners in the sight of God and unworthy of salvation, and that good works and acts of penance were the keys to heaven. However, through his religious studies he eventually concluded that people could be saved by true repentance and belief in the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ.

He took his vows of poverty, chastity, and religious duties as a monk very seriously. He wore out his confessor with such detailed, long, and repeated confessions that Father Staupitz finally said, “Look here, if you expect Christ to forgive you, come in with something to forgive – parricide, blasphemy, adultery – instead of all these peccadilloes.”



Luther became theology professor at the University of Erfurt and then the University of Wittenberg where he earned a Doctorate in Theology and became the parish priest.

Trending at the time were indulgences – an act or practice in the Catholic Church that some interpreted and/or promoted as guaranteeing release from Purgatory (in Catholic doctrine, an intermediate state after physical death during which souls must undergo purification in order to achieve the holiness necessary to enter heaven).

In and near Luther's parish, tickets were sold for forgiveness and salvation by Prince Frederick III of Saxony to build a bridge over the Elbe river, by two other men to purchase a church office from the Pope, and by various representatives on behalf of the Pope himself to construct St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Some used a sales pitch that rallied around the jingle, “As soon as the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from Purgatory springs.”

Luther visited Rome in 1510 on an errand for his parish. While there, he discovered shocking clergy immorality and lack of piety, as well as rumors of Pope Leo X living in luxury and enjoying carnivals, hunting, and gambling.

Luther's observation that poor Germans were funding sinful lifestyles of rich and famous Roman clergy, and his own studies of the Bible and writings of early Christians, led him to conclude that there was no biblical evidence for believing the Pope had power to release souls from Purgatory and that pious Christians were being scammed.

*(continued)*

So, Luther wrote down 95 points of discussion and offered them up for debate by posting them on the community bulletin board now known as the wooden door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. Originally posted in Latin on October 31, 1517, Luther also sent a copy sent to his local cardinal, Prinz Albert of Mainz, who then forwarded a copy to the Pope. The 95 theses were also translated into German and distributed widely across Germany.

Pope Leo initially believed that Luther was “a drunken German. He will feel differently when he is sober.” However, he directed the head of his Augustinian order to “quench a monk of your order, Martin Luther by name.”



Luther statue in Eisleben, Germany

*“Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason – I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other – my conscience is captive to the word of God.”*

The Pope offered forgiveness if Luther backed down, but Luther doubled down and added new complaints.

Later, at a debate in Leipzig, Luther openly challenged the authority of the Pope and suggested that many church practices conflicted with Scripture.

Pope Leo responded with a papal bull, or letter, promising to excommunicate Luther unless he renounced his heresy. Luther publicly burned the letter and other Church writings in Wittenberg.

Finally, in 1521, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V summoned Martin Luther to a meeting in the city of Worms in western Germany. During the meeting, they offered Luther the opportunity to publicly recant his writing and views, but he replied, “Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason – I do not accept the authority of popes

and councils, for they have contradicted each other – my conscience is captive to the word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen.”

Although Luther was allowed to leave the meeting, the Emperor issued what is known as the “Edict of Worms” that declared Luther a heretic and ordered his execution. Luther was then “kidnapped” for his own safety by Frederick the Wise of Saxony and taken to Wartburg Castle near Eisenach. There, Luther grew a beard, called himself “Junker Jörg,” and hid in the Wartburg fortress writing, translating the New Testament from Greek into German, and fighting depression and other ailments.

During his absence from Wittenberg, even more radical leaders appeared. Priests abandoned traditions, monks and nuns fled monasteries and convents and began to marry, and groups began smashing church images and statues and dragging priests out of church. At the town council of Wittenberg’s request, Luther returned to restore order through negotiation with ultra-radicals. He also wrote instructions on proper worship and Christian behavior.

One problem Luther faced was what to do with all of the nuns who ran away from their cloisters. Since women were not allowed to remain single, Luther worked to find husbands and solve the problem.

Finally, all were taken care of except one, 26-year-old Katharina von Bora. Although Luther picked out an elderly man for her, Katharina refused the proposal by responding that she would marry either Luther or someone else, but not that man. Luther, 42 and a confirmed bachelor, surprised everyone by announcing he would accept her refusal and her offer, and take her as his own wife.

Their marriage was quite happy and fruitful. In one letter, he addressed her as “my beloved wife, Katharina, Mrs. Dr. Luther, mistress of the pig market, lady of Zulsdorf, and whatsoever other titles may befit thy Grace.”

He also called her “My rib” and noted that married life was quite a change.

“There is a lot to get used to in the first year of marriage. One wakes up in the morning and finds a pair of pigtails on the pillow that was not there before.”

By 1525, Luther’s challenge to the authority of the church inspired others to rebel against the authority of the state as well. Thousands were slaughtered amidst the fighting, looting, and burning. Nobles blamed Luther for stirring up the people, and peasants blamed him for encouraging nobles to suppress their actions with violence.

Luther himself spent the next nearly two decades in Wittenberg, preaching, teaching, writing, and meeting with key leaders. He wrote books on theology, Christian worship and living. He wrote hymns such as “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” and helped shepherd the spread of non-violent protestantism throughout northern Germany and Switzerland.

After Luther’s death in 1546, he was buried in front of the pulpit in the Castle Church in Wittenberg, and his life and works continued to nurture the Reformation. His influence in protestantism and other forms of religious, political, and even social reformation in many of their various iterations continues even today.

- KLL



View of the Vatican and St. Peter's Basilica across the Tiber River in Rome, Italy

## Luther's own summary of his 95 Theses

### 1. Selling indulgences to finance the building of St. Peter's is wrong.

“The revenues of all Christendom are being sucked into this insatiable basilica. The Germans laugh at calling this the common treasure of Christendom. Before long, all the churches, palaces, walls and bridges of Rome will be built out of our money. First of all, we should rear living temples, not local churches, and only last of all St. Peter's, which is not necessary for us. We Germans cannot attend St. Peter's. Better that it should never be built than that our parochial churches should be despoiled . . . Why doesn't the pope build the basilica of St. Peter's out of his own money? He is richer than Croesus. He would do better to sell St. Peter's and give the money to the poor folk who are being fleeced by the hawkers of indulgences.”

### 2. The pope has no power over Purgatory.

“Papal indulgences do not remove guilt. Beware of those who say that indulgences effect reconciliation with God. He who is contrite has plenary remission of guilt and penalty without indulgences. The pope can only remove those penalties which he himself has imposed on earth, for Christ did not say, ‘Whatsoever I have bound in heaven you may loose on earth.’ Therefore I claim that the pope has no jurisdiction over Purgatory . . . If the pope does have power to release anyone from Purgatory, why in the name of love does he not abolish Purgatory by letting everyone out? If for the sake of miserable money he released uncounted souls, why should he not for the sake of most holy love empty the place? To say that souls are liberated from Purgatory is audacious. To say they are released as soon as the coffer rings is to incite avarice. The pope would do better to give everything away without charge.”

### 3. Buying indulgences gives people a false sense of security and endangers their salvation.

“Indulgences are positively harmful to the recipient because they impede salvation by diverting charity and inducing a false sense of security. Christians should be taught that he who gives to the poor is better than he who receives a pardon. He who spends money on indulgences instead of relieving want receives not the indulgence of the pope but the indignation of God . . . Indulgences are most pernicious because they induce complacency and thereby imperil salvation. Those persons are damned who think that letters of indulgence make them certain of salvation. God works by contraries so that a man feels himself to be lost in the very moment when he is on the point of being saved . . . Man must first cry out that there is no health in him. He must be consumed with horror . . . In this disturbance salvation begins. When man believes himself to be utterly lost, light breaks. Peace comes in the word of Christ through faith. He who does not have this is lost even though he be absolved a million times by the pope, and he who does have it may not wish to be released from Purgatory, for true contrition seeks penalty. Christians should be encouraged to bear the cross.”

#### Notes:

- The Council of Trent condemned “all base gain for securing indulgences” in 1563, and Pope Pius V abolished the sale of indulgences in 1567 (just over 20 years after Luther's death) by canceling “all grants of indulgences involving any fees or other financial transactions.”
- *Catholic Church definition*: “An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain defined conditions through the Church's help when, as a minister of redemption, she dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions won by Christ and the saints” (*Indulgentiarum Doctrina 1*).
- To read Luther's actual 95 theses, search the Internet for the “*DISPUTATION OF DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER ON THE POWER AND EFFICACY OF INDULGENCES. OCTOBER 31, 1517,*” or simply “Luther 95 theses.”

# Free to Question, Free from Doubt



By Dr. K. Lynn Lewis,  
President

## Where Should I Pose?

I have a question, Lord, I'd like to ask,  
And many more, a daunting task.

This may be weary, but here it goes,  
"When I query, where should I pose?"

Should I, in faith, on solid rock I stand?  
Or question Thee from waves and sand?

For in the one I'm tossed about,  
Seeking certainty in seas of doubt;  
Fearful, faithless, to and fro,  
What is true I never know!

But the other, uncertain tho' I may be,  
I am free to question Thee;  
Fearless, faithful, safe, secure,  
Above the fray, I rest assured.

"Well, wonders never cease!  
You know, I will keep in perfect peace,  
Those whose minds are steadfast  
Because they trust in Me.

Why qualm and drift, never sure,  
Across sands and seas, no saving cure?  
Rather, believe, and I will help your unbelief,  
And give your body, mind and soul relief.

Even with only the tiniest kernel  
'Tis best to stand on the Rock eternal,  
And ply your queries from faith,  
Not doubt."

**D**uring the 10-minute drive home from my seminary president's office after a long day of holy work and decades of attempting to faithfully live out a calling to ministry, I questioned God.

I pondered deep, existential thoughts about Maker and made, life and death, meaning and purpose, and "Why?" and "What difference does it make?"

But, amidst the swirling whirlwind of queries and theories, I experienced not the slightest worry, no wonder if I had lost my mind, and no panic for safety of my soul.

I contemplated the concept of sin, the manner and matter of spirit, the veracity of salvation, and the probabilities of an actual, once alive, once dead, now living Savior.

I reflected on the concepts of love and hate, thoughts and feelings, justice and righteousness, good and evil, heaven and hell, gravity and wind, power and authority, creation and evolution, free will and predestination.



It was a busy 10 minutes.

By the time I arrived home, I realized that I did not *really* have doubts; I had *real* questions.

I do believe in the Lord God Almighty. I believe He is the one and only true God, and there is no other.

I believe He is the Creator, Savior, and Messiah; God of gods, King of kings and Lord of lords; the bread of life, the water of life, the true vine, the light of the world, the gate, the good shepherd; the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. I believe He is the Living One who says, "I was dead and behold I am alive for ever and ever."

And, because of my belief and life-changing personal experiences, and those of others, I am willing to trust the Lord even when I don't know or understand everything.

The difference for me is that – standing on faith – I am free to ask bountiful questions.

I can casually or fervently probe the heights and depths of “Does God exist?” “Do I exist?” “What is truth?” “Am I loved?” “What does this or that mean?” “Why (anything)?”

Like Abraham, I can debate with God about His plans. Like Moses, I can share my feedback, feelings and frustrations. Like David, I can psalm with proclamation, plea and query. Like the disciples, I can examine and explore the words and person of Jesus as man and Messiah.

Yet, while doing all of this, I stand on God’s promises, engaging His presence like a child with a parent or a student with a teacher, asking, testing, thinking and rethinking, seeking understanding, wisdom, and insight.

Conversely, if I were to ask these questions from a posture of doubt and an unwillingness to believe only things proven with absolute certainty, I might rarely believe anything.

## What constitutes proof?

Proof can be somewhat elusive, for even when presented with undeniable evidence, doubters can always find reasons to continue to doubt.

There are people who doubt that the Holocaust ever happened, despite ample evidence.

Until recently, even the most brilliant scientists believed in a steady state universe.

In 1917 Albert Einstein determined that his general theory of relativity evidenced a probable expanding or contracting universe, but he changed his own equation to compensate for what he could not believe at the time.

In 1924 Edwin Hubble announced that he had discovered other galaxies in distant space. In 1927 Belgian priest and astronomer Georges Lemaitre theorized an expanding universe and proposed what became known as “Hubble’s Law.” When Hubble publicly confirmed the theory in 1929 via observations of redshifts (indicating movement away; blueshifts would have indicated movement toward), Einstein admitted his error and called his adding a “cosmological constant” into his own equation his “biggest mistake” and thanked Hubble personally for his observations.

Einstein’s initial mental framework of doubt resulted in years of resistance for even someone as brilliant as him to accept facts as facts, until mounting evidence overwhelmed conventional thought and his personal doubt.

**Barely 385 years ago Galileo faced inquisition for theorizing that the earth revolved around the sun, not vice versa. Though he recanted publicly, he still believed the earth moved, and his observations from a position of faith strengthened his belief in God and nurtured his wonder of the majesty of creation.**

He believed “the Bible shows the way to go to heaven, not the way the heavens go,” and he gave “infinite thanks to God, who has been pleased to make me the first observer of marvelous things.”

Galileo explained his earnest questioning and experimenting this way, “I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use.”

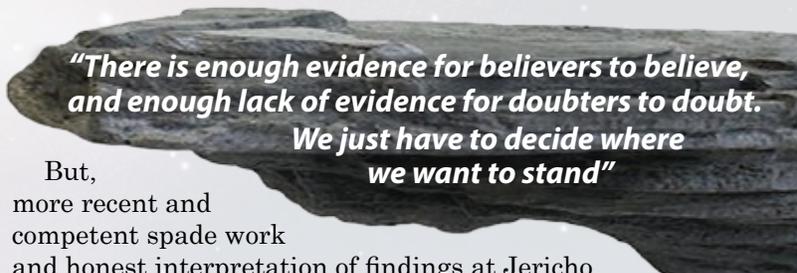
In fact, at this point in history, there is enough evidence for believers to believe, and enough lack of evidence for doubters to doubt. We just have to decide where we want to stand until all is known that can be known.

## Textbook doubt

One of our seminary students recently found an old theology textbook exemplifying what has been taught in many seminaries for decades.

“The most recent and competent spade work at the site of ancient Jericho returns the verdict that no trace of Israelite violence in the thirteenth century is to be found. Excavations at Ai indicate that the city was already in Joshua’s day a long-dead ruin.”\*

Such claims based on Edward Robinson (1800s) and William Albright’s (1900s) suggested identification of et-Tell as the location of Ai, and Kathleen Kenyon’s research conclusions from her work at Jericho (1950s), have been used to make the case that Scripture is not historically accurate and is therefore neither trustworthy, holy, or some supposed god’s actual words. The result has been decades of Christian leaders trained to doubt the Bible and its claims about God, and generations of congregants similarly trained to doubt by their leaders.



**“There is enough evidence for believers to believe,  
and enough lack of evidence for doubters to doubt.**

**We just have to decide where  
we want to stand”**

But, more recent and competent spade work and honest interpretation of findings at Jericho and Ai directed by archaeologists Bryant Wood and Scott Stripling have debunked these earlier assumptions and assertions. Evidence at both ruins fit perfectly with a more historically accurate 15th century dating of the conquest, and Ai’s actual ruins that fit Scripture like a glove sit a mere six tenths of a mile from the previously purported location at et-Tell. Six tenths of mile! Such a tiny distance between evidence and disproof, facts and conjecture, that has helped ferment generations of doubt.

Looking in the *wrong* place thinking of the *wrong* time, and looking in the *right* place but thinking of the *wrong* time – from a framework of doubt – has egregiously been used to encourage doubters to doubt and believers to question.

**Even actual and factual data in the right place  
from the right time – viewed from a position of doubt –  
can dramatically skew interpretations and conclusions.**

Consider Israeli archaeologist Israel Finkelstein’s interpretation of an extremely large ash pit discovered at Shiloh. The contents seem consistent with offerings required by the Jewish sacrificial system, the size makes sense if Shiloh was the center of Jewish worship for 350+ years, and dating evidence fits a plausible biblical and historical time frame. However, since Finkelstein believes many biblical stories were written by “a creative copywriter” advancing an ideological agenda, he interprets the same data as evidence of Canaanite worship, thus contradicting biblical references from Joshua to Jeremiah.

The new work at Shiloh under the direction of Dr. Stripling will include efforts that could scientifically verify that evidence from the bone deposit does not contradict the plain reading of the biblical text, but actually supports it.

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## Stripling Featured in Episode of "Expedition Unknown"

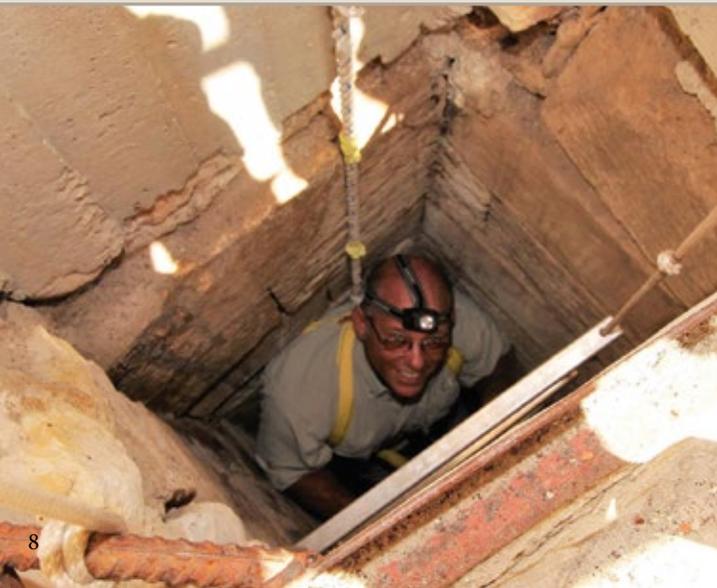
Dr. Scott Stripling was featured this year in the Travel Channel program, *"Expedition Unknown: The Ark of the Covenant"* (Season 3, Episode 12).

The show originally aired in March with host Josh Gates following in the footsteps of Indiana



Jones searching in Israel and Ethiopia for the lost Ark of the Covenant, the sacred relic that once contained a copy of the Ten Commandments and is said to possess extraordinary powers.

In the episode, still airing in reruns, Gates drops into a deep shaft with Dr. Stripling to reach an intimidatingly tight tunnel that seems to lead toward the site of the temple in Jerusalem. Together, they find a fascinating discovery at one end of the tunnel that confirms the reports of previous archaeological adventures in this historically significant area of the world.



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In fact, these recent teams exploring from a framework of faith have done their own excavation work and examined the findings of previous archaeologists thoroughly, biblically, historically, and scientifically above and beyond reproach. So much so that some of the most ardent doubters are now questioning the veracity of their doubts, and believers are finding solace in factual evidence proving that their faith has been well-placed all along.

## Faith vs. Doubt

Standing on faith, it is possible to trust what we do not yet know for sure, and experience the joy of not being surprised at all when evidence proves what we have believed all along.

This is the kind of trust – simple, childlike faith – that young children often have in their parents. Trusting children leap and expect to be caught. Over and over and over. And they ask many questions: "What is this? What is that? How does X work? Who? What? When? Why? How? Whee! Let's do it again! Again!"

Doubters will rarely experience freedom and joy like this if they truly never trust anything not 100% sure and certain.

Also, it is not intellectually dishonest to stand on faith without infinite facts. Even amidst confusion and misunderstanding, clinging to resolute doubt seems more intellectually dishonest.

True doubters must dismiss all that exists, visible and invisible, past and present, in order to then test each one through their own "filter of truth" while inhaling invisible air, thinking invisible thoughts, rotating on an orb invisibly suspended and speedily spinning in apparently rapidly expanding space, all the while trusting their own synapses to chemically/electrically formulate unbiased judgments that are independently, historically, scientifically, intellectually, and even spiritually, conclusive.

Thus, a true doubter floundering in a storm must refuse to grab a life preserver tossed from a ship until all of his or her questions have been answered. *"Where did you come from? What makes your boat so special? Are there other life preservers I can try? How do you communicate wirelessly and who are you talking to? Who is your captain and why should I trust them? Who made the ocean, the wind, the waves? Why am I here? Do you care about others who perished, and if you had the power to save them, why did you let them die? How are we floating? What happens to me after my demise?"*



In the end, eternal doubters may find themselves drowned in the depths of the sea, sunk by the weight of all their confusion, ignorance, misinterpretations, opinions, queries, and skepticisms.

Meanwhile, believers may be living on foundations of faith in fine houses built from materials resourced through many of those same places, but processed through the mill of faith.

Holding a rock load of questions in a sea of doubt can sink a soul. Better to stand in faith with all our baggage on the Rock – free to question and free from doubt – and build our hope on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. All other ground is sinking sand.



Dr. K. Lynn Lewis serves as President of The Bible Seminary and may be reached at [Lynn.Lewis@TheBibleSeminary.org](mailto:Lynn.Lewis@TheBibleSeminary.org).

\* *Song of the Vineyard: A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, B. Davie Napier; Harper & Row, 1962; p. 127.

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- Author, "The Trowel and the Truth: A Guide to Field Archaeology in the Holy Land" and others



**Dr. Doug Petrovich**, Professor of Biblical History and Exegesis

- Archaeologist, Educator, Historian, Linguist
- Epigrapher and Egyptologist
- Author, "The World's Oldest Alphabet: Hebrew as the Language of the Proto-Consonantal Script"



Dr. Doug Petrovich, TBS Professor Biblical History and Exegesis

## Petrovich Joins TBS Faculty

The Bible Seminary is pleased to announce that Dr. Douglas N. Petrovich has been selected to join the full-time faculty as Professor of Biblical History and Exegesis beginning July 1, 2017.

Dr. Petrovich was selected from among 60 candidates from around the world.

A native Ohioan, Dr. Petrovich has been involved in Christian service and various educational institutions since the 1980s, and he has taught over 30 different courses. He was ordained in a non-denominational church in 1998, and he has served as a pastor in California and Siberia, Russia.

Prior to attending college, he recalls, "I worked full-time from 18-23 years of age because I was not sure whether God wanted me to go into vocational Christian service or computer programming."

He worked his way up to the position of supervisor in a factory in California, learned valuable business and leadership skills, taught Sunday School and served as evangelism coordinator in his local church until he knew for sure that the Lord was calling him into Christian service.

Dr. Petrovich has since earned a Bachelor of Arts in Evangelism from Moody Bible Institute in 1992, a Master of Divinity from The Master's Seminary in 1996, a Master of Theology in New Testament from The Master's Seminary in 1998, a Master of Arts in Syro-Palestinian Archaeology from The University of Toronto in 2009, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Syro-Palestinian Archaeology from The University of Toronto in 2016.

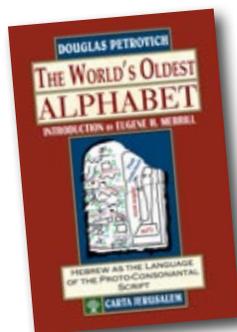
He was invited by Slavic Gospel Association to lead the founding of a seminary in Akademgorodok (Russia) – Novosibirsk Biblical-Theological Seminary – where he served as Academic Dean and Assistant to the President for 10 years.

"I asked him to relocate his family to Siberia to organize a Bible Institute, operate it for a year, and then transition the program to a seminary level," says Dr. Robert Provost, President of the Slavic Gospel Association. "Doug did so, then constructed the curricula for the Bachelor of Divinity program, the Master of Divinity program, the Master of Theology program, as well as a distance learning program. Ever since, the seminary has continued to thrive. The entire family proved to be strong, persevering modern day pioneers."

Dr. Petrovich later served as Vice-President of Academic Affairs at Shepherds Theological Seminary in Cary, North Carolina, and he has since taught at the University of Toronto and Wilfrid Laurier University.

While he has taught courses in ancient history, Egyptology, biblical studies, theology, and pastoral studies, his two areas of greatest specialization are biblical history and the exegesis of the biblical languages.

He has studied and taught Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Middle Egyptian, and Late Egyptian. He is a historian, archaeologist, epigrapher, and Egyptologist, and has participated in archaeological digs at Hazor (Israel) and Tell Tayinat (ancient Syria). This summer he worked as a Supervisor at Shiloh with TBS Provost, Dr. Scott Stripling.



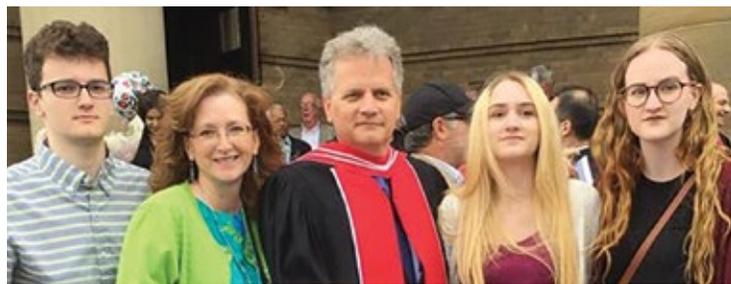
Dr. Petrovich's groundbreaking research on the reading of inscriptions of the earliest alphabetic script led to the publication of his book, *The World's Oldest Alphabet: Hebrew as the Language of the Proto-Consonantal Script*.

He enjoys integrating his experience and interest in ancient languages into his devotional life.

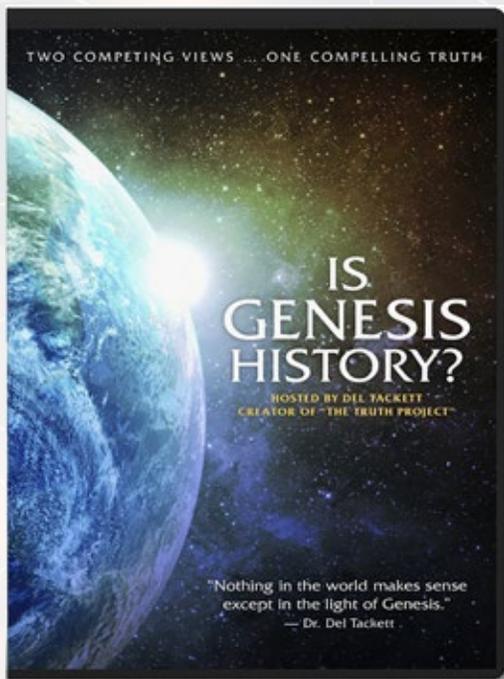
"I translate a text from Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic – solving any textual variants, if present – and I meditate on the text I have translated. The meditation process leads my prayer time, where I praise God for who He is and what I have learned about Him from the text, pray for issues related to events in the world, and pray for events in my world."

He recently appeared in the movie "Is Genesis History?" discussing the historical reliability of the Genesis 11 narrative on the tower of Babel. He is scheduled to appear in the upcoming newest "Patterns of Evidence" film, most notably addressing the question of whether there was an existing Hebrew script for Moses to write the Pentateuch.

When notified of his selection to serve on the TBS faculty, Dr. Petrovich excitedly replied, "I can't wait to be a part of helping God to build the seminary and to effect its impact on the church and the kingdom!"



**The Petrovich family:** Doug (center); his wife, Sherri (left center), works as Regional Manager at Samaritan's Purse Canada; and their three children: Alex (left) attends the University of Waterloo, Elise (right) attends Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and Danielle (right center) is a rising senior in high school. The family has lived in Toronto, Canada for the last decade.



A 101 minute feature documentary released in March 2017 and directed by Thomas Purifoy, “*Is Genesis History?*” reviews biblical, historical, and scientific evidence for Creation and the Flood.

The film tracks Dr. Del Tackett, creator of “*The Truth Project*,” as he visits 18 locations around the globe to meet with more than a dozen scientists and scholars to ask questions surrounding the most controversial book of the Bible that everyone is curious about:

---

*Was everything created in six days? Did we evolve from apes? Were Adam and Eve real? Was there a global flood? What happened to the dinosaurs? Was there a tower of Babel?*

---

One of the biggest challenges in understanding the issues surrounding Genesis is that there is so much to consider. It’s easy to get lost in the trees and lose sight of the forest.

The movie’s goal is to make it easier to understand fairly complex topics such as paradigms, created kinds, fossil record, DNA, transitional forms, evolution, ecosystems, global flood, starlight, the Tower of Babel, Big Bang, rock layers, radiocarbon and radioisotope dating, Hebrew text, dinosaurs, epochs of history, Neanderthals, Nautiloids, soft tissue, coal formation, ice-age, post-flood, and more.

Interviewees in the film and bonus features include an archaeologist, astronomer, atmospheric physicist, biologist, geologist, hebraist, marine biologist, mechanical engineer, microbiologist, paleontologist, pastor, philosopher of science, taphonomist, and theologian.

The film presents the concept that the Genesis creation account is literal history, and questions the common idea espoused by some scientists committed to naturalism and materialism that the Earth is 4+ billion years old.

The common model does not explain the discovery of soft tissue, intact proteins, DNA and red blood cells in dinosaur bones, horns and skin. Nor is it confirmed by radiometric dating of rocks of known origin that has yielded vastly

incorrect dates, such as rocks formed from the lava flows at Mount St. Helen’s, which were only 5 to 10 years old, but given dates of 350,000 to 2.3 million years old.

According to TBS Professor of Biblical History and Exegesis, Dr. Doug Petrovich, “Not only was I thrilled to have a part in it (I am the film’s archaeologist, who discusses the location of the Tower of Babel and the expansion of the people from Babel after the confusion of language), but I was amazed at how powerful the evidence is collectively, when hearing the testimony of all of the specialists involved. The film’s message is a rope of many strands, all thick.”



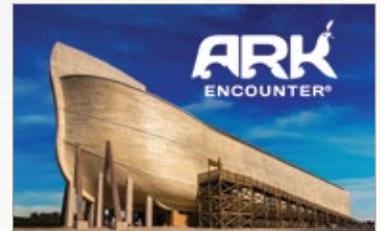
From rock layers to fossils, lions to stars, this fascinating film will change the way you see the world.

**For more information, including additional Bible-based creation/evolution research and theory, visit:**

**IsGenesisHistory.org** – Official web site.

**AnswersInGenesis.org** – An apologetics ministry, dedicated to helping Christians defend their faith and proclaim the gospel effectively by focusing on providing answers to questions about the Bible – particularly the book of Genesis – regarding key issues such as creation, evolution, science, and the age of the earth.

Attractions include *The Creation Museum* in Petersburg, Kentucky ([creationmuseum.org](http://creationmuseum.org)) and the *Ark Encounter* ([arkencounter.com](http://arkencounter.com)) in Williamstown, Kentucky.



**BibleScienceForum.com** – The web site of Dr. John G. Hartnett, an award-winning Australian physicist and cosmologist and Christian with a biblical creationist worldview.

**BioLogos.org** – Promotes various forms of theistic evolution with the slogan “science and faith in harmony.” Aims to show that science and faith do not have to be mutually exclusive by presenting an evolutionary understanding of God’s creation.

**Creation.com** – Creation Ministries International seeks to support the effective proclamation of the Gospel by providing credible answers that affirm the reliability of the Bible, in particular its Genesis history.

**CreationResearch.org** – The Creation Research Society is a scientific society recognized internationally for its firm commitment to scientific special creation.

**ICR.org** – Institute for Creation Research seeks to equip believers with evidence of the Bible’s accuracy and authority through scientific research, educational programs, and media presentations, all conducted within a thoroughly biblical framework.



Congratulations to **David and Micah Gamboa** on their marriage on March 31, 2017 at Kendleton Farms. David is a *TBS Master of Arts student* and served for eight years as Student Pastor and assisting with media communications at Sugar Land Family Church.

He recently resigned to begin working full-time with his wife, Micah, who serves as the Executive Director of Elijah Rising and Kendleton Farms, is curator of the Museum of Modern-Day Slavery, and helps lead a team working to end sex trafficking and sexual exploitation by equipping a new generation of justice warriors to confront culture through prayer, awareness, intervention and aftercare in the spirit of Isaiah 1:17.

For more information, visit [ElijahRising.org](http://ElijahRising.org).

Congratulations to **David and Chandler Hiley** on their marriage on December 23, 2016 at Big Sky Barn in Montgomery, Texas.

A *TBS Dual Degree student*, Chandler works at The Legacy Center for Christian Counseling. David is a commercial roofer, Ironman athlete, a *Bible Certificate student* and helped launch TBS@Faithbridge in the Fall of 2016.



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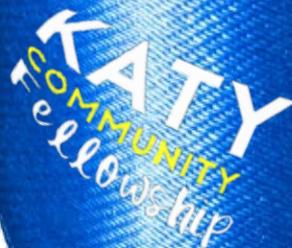
Congratulations to **Zach and Kelsey Anderson** on their marriage December 10, 2016 at Aristide in Mansfield, Texas. The oldest of 10 kids, Zach is a *TBS Bible Certificate student* and helped launch TBS@Faithbridge. He and Kelsey both work at Faithbridge.



Congratulations to former student **Israel and Jordan Rivera** on their marriage on February 3, 2017 at Mia Bella Vita in Tomball, Texas.



**Justin Johnson**, *TBS MDiv 2016*, an HSE Technician at Alta Mesa Holdings, LP and a Carol Vance Unit volunteer, is engaged to Kari Tjon, an Art Teacher at Mission Bend Christian Academy. Their wedding is scheduled for this October at Scheider Hall in Columbus, Texas.



**TBS families are engaged every day in numerous ministries locally, regionally, nationally and worldwide.**



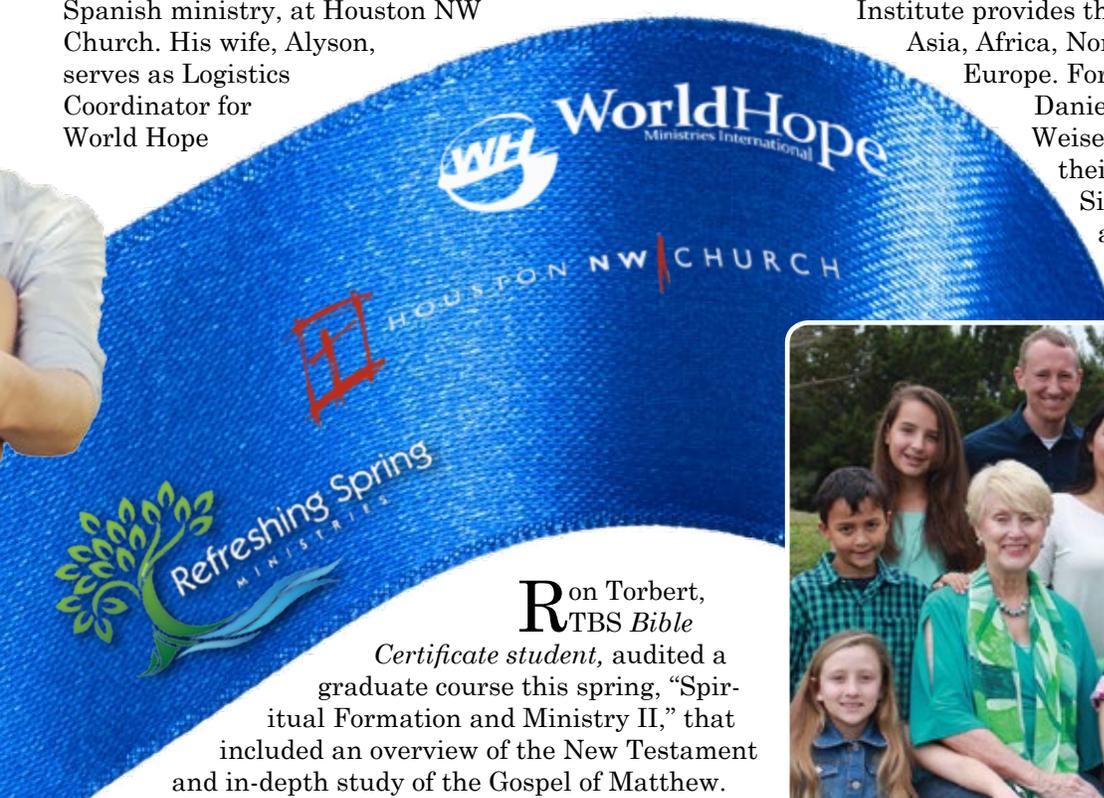
**The Weise family (L to R):** Zaria, Kate (daughter-in-law), and Jeremy; Alyson and Dobie; Kate (daughter) and Matt Newman; Daniel, River, and Kelly Weise; Trey and Megan Weise.

**C**ongratulations to **Dobie Weise**, *TBS Business Manager* and graduate student, on the marriage of his daughter, Kate, to Matt Newman.

Dobie serves as Lay Elder, and Associate Pastor of the Spanish ministry, at Houston NW Church. His wife, Alyson, serves as Logistics Coordinator for World Hope

Ministries International (WHMI) based in Spring, Texas. WHMI ministers in 30+ nations through its Bible Institute, through which TBS students can serve as teachers as part of their graduate degree education. The WHMI Bible Institute provides theological education to students in Asia, Africa, North, South and Central America, and Europe. For more information visit [whmi.org](http://whmi.org).

Daniel and Kelly Weise also welcomed their second child, Sierra, in February. They live in Ankara, Turkey.



**R**on Torbert, *TBS Bible Certificate student*, audited a graduate course this spring, "Spiritual Formation and Ministry II," that included an overview of the New Testament and in-depth study of the Gospel of Matthew. A retired engineer, Ron and his wife, Sherry founded Refreshing Spring Ministries five years ago to help people find wholeness, hope and peace through Biblically-based prayer ministry and coaching. Ron serves as VP of Marriage and Men's Ministries and Sherry (an ordained Pastor and certified Life Coach) serves as Executive Director.

Together, Ron and Sherry offer marriage coaching, marriage seminars and their own unique and in-depth pre-marital counseling. Resources include "Elijah House School of Biblical Prayer Ministry" and "Heart Matters" classes and workshops. For more information, visit [RefreshingSpringMinistries.com](http://RefreshingSpringMinistries.com).



**The Torberts:** Wearing green above, Ron (R) and Sherry Torbert (L) have been married 40 plus years. Their son, Darin (back L in blue) and his wife, Carolina (wearing white) and their four children serve as missionaries in Montevideo, Uruguay with Catapult Missions ([catapultmissions.com](http://catapultmissions.com)). Daughter Traci Torbert Allen (back center) and her husband, Daron (back R), live in Austin with their 3 children, where Traci works as an ER doctor.





President Lewis (L) and Provost Stripling (R) recently visited Ryan Cirkles (C) at Texas Bible Institute (TBI) in Columbus, Texas to explore potential networking and partnership opportunities.

Under the leadership of Pastors Tommy and Rachel Burchfield, Founding Pastors of Believers World Outreach Church in Katy, Texas, TBI is located on a 1,088 acre campus.

TBI ministries include:

- *Discovery Camp* – a 10-week summer program involving 700+ church groups and up to 20,000 children and youth each summer.
- *The Discipleship Program* – a four-month course offered each Fall Semester for young adults ages 17 – 25.
- *The Leadership School* – a four-month program offered each Spring Semester for young adults ages 17-30.

For more information, visit the TBI web site, [TexasBibleInstitute.org](http://TexasBibleInstitute.org).



Dr. Lewis and Dr. Stripling both spoke at Sugar Land Family Church in May to share the TBS story and promote TBS educational opportunities. TBS student Leslie McAlee manned a booth in the lobby throughout the morning services and signed up numerous new students.

*Please invite TBS representatives to your church anytime!*



Provost Stripling, spoke at chapel for The College of Biblical Studies (CBS) in Houston, Texas on April 26, 2017. TBS administration and adjunct faculty shown along with the CBS President above include (L-R):

- *Dr. K. Lynn Lewis*, TBS President.
- *Dr. Israel Loken*, TBS Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies, Dallas Theological Seminary Adjunct Professor, and CBS Professor and Department Chair of both Bible and Theology.
- *Dr. William "Bill" Blocker*, CBS President.
- *Dr. Scott Stripling*, TBS Provost.
- *Dr. Rich Cozart*, TBS Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Leadership, Counseling Pastor at The Brook church, and CBS Professor teaching Bible, Theology and Counseling.
- *Dr. Steve Sullivan*, TBS Adjunct Professor of Theology, CBS Professor, and Ministry Skills Department Chair.



Spring semester *Church History SII* students enjoyed several field trips as part of the class experience, including excursions to the Dunham Bible Museum, Houston Museum of Fine Arts (*above*), Lanier Theological Library, and the historic origins of the Azusa Street Revival near Sam Houston Park in downtown Houston, Texas (*right*).



**C**ongratulations to **Rev. Kevin Alvarez**, *TBS MDiv 2016*, on his recent selection as the new Pastor of Long Point Baptist Church in Houston.



**The Alvarez family (L-R):** Gabriela, Cassandra, Madison, Yvette, and Kevin.

**C**ongratulations to **Kevin Penner**, *TBS MDiv 2015*, and his wife, Allie, on the birth of their new little bundle of joy, Amber Paige Penner, on April 26, 2017. Kevin is planning a new church plant, and Allie is a nurse at Texas Children's Hospital.



**C**ongratulations to **Brenda Martin**, *TBS MDiv 2015*, on her acceptance into the Doctoral Program at The King's University. She is the Founding Pastor of The Great Southwest Prayer Center and serves as the Prayer Pastor at Grace Fellowship in Katy, Texas.



*M*<sup>Div</sup> student and Katy Cares Board member, **Angela McClinton**, helped secure a ministry home to provide specialized therapeutic-housing services to mothers and children affected by homelessness in Katy (KatyCares.org). She also serves at The Waters Church with husband, Jordan, Worship Pastor.

Summer 2017

ARTISAN SPOTLIGHT - ELLEN MOTE

March 27, 2017



EM  
JEWELRY  
+DESIGN

"When I'm designing pieces, I'm thinking about the customer. I wonder who will buy the piece, if a husband will get to surprise his wife, or perhaps someone will find the perfect gift for their sister. There's a more personal touch that goes into every single piece."  
- Ellen Mote, owner



JOANNA

Wife, Mom, Renovator, Designer, Shop owner. Homebody. Watch us on HGTV's Fixer Upper Tuesdays 9/10pm CST!

CONNECT WITH ME

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

Email Address

**C**ongratulations to **Ellen Mote**, daughter of TBS Board Chair, Heidi Arneson, and owner and designer of EM Jewelry+Design, a Waco-based jewelry design company committed to creating unique and timeless pieces of handmade jewelry. Ellen was invited to sell her jewelry at Magnolia Market, owned by HGTV show "Fixer Upper" hosts, Chip and Joanna Gaines. Joanna also highlighted Ellen with an Artisan Spotlight on her blog. For more information, visit [EMJewelryDesign.com](http://EMJewelryDesign.com).



**C**ongratulations to *TBS Bible Certificate student*, **Kip Thomson**, for being one of 1,000 persons nationwide to complete the 9-month Colson Fellows Program. Kip serves on a leadership team working to establish a Houston chapter that will meet monthly starting in August on 2nd Saturdays from 8:30 am - 1:30 pm at TBS. Visit [ColsonFellowsHouston.org](http://ColsonFellowsHouston.org) for more information.





# Rooted Locally - Connected Globally

Local roots and global connections characterize our TBS leadership, students and alumni

By Dr. Scott Stripling, *Provost*

Graduate student Samantha Jackson Rude's heritage includes both cowboys and Indians who were among the first pioneers who settled the Katy, Texas area. After graduating from Faith West Academy in Katy, she attended college and worked in ministry in California, Tennessee, and China before returning to Katy to serve as Worship Pastor at Katy Community Fellowship for five years. Both her and her mom, TBS Administrative Coordinator Coby Jackson, speak fluent Mandarin Chinese.

Business Manager and graduate student Dobie Weise grew up near my hometown in the Rio Grande Valley area of Texas. His CPA career has included work in global companies in the HVAC, farm produce, and oil industries in McAllen, San Antonio, and Houston, Texas. He also served for six years as a missionary in Guadalajara, Mexico, and served with Youth With A Mission in Hawaii and the Philippines. He has served as a lay elder at Houston Northwest Church in Tomball for the past five years and as an executive pastor helping launch a Spanish ministry. Like me, Dobie speaks Spanish fluently.

Our new full-time faculty member, Dr. Doug Petrovich, grew up in Ohio. His career has included work and ministry in California, Illinois, New York, and North Carolina, as well as Canada, Israel, and more than a decade in Russia. He speaks fluent Russian, is proficient in French, German, and Spanish, and studied and teaches ancient Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew, and middle and late Egyptian.

All of our TBS students are required to serve locally in churches or ministries as staff or volunteers. While doing ministry, living in local neighborhoods and sending their children to local public and private schools, some are also still working in careers in accounting, real estate, and nursing.

Others work as senior pastors, worship pastors, youth pastors, children's directors, and more. Some do both, like Uche Emenike, a native Nigerian, who works as a CPA for a company in Houston while also serving as Senior Pastor of Master's Vessel Ministries, leading a growing church and television ministry while also preparing for a lifetime of ministry service.





While TBS students clearly thrive locally in their assignments, a global vision and global connections drive their destinies like a NASA flight plan guides a mission to Mars.

Graduate students are required to experience cross-cultural ministry as part of their educational journey. Belize, China, Columbia, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Uganda rank among past destinations, and hundreds more countries wait on the horizon. Like the Macedonian man in Paul's vision at Troas (Acts 16:9), the people of these lands cry out for help, especially in the "10/40 window."

As TBS faculty and administration help connect students to ministries and partners worldwide, our connections become their connections and our friends their friends.

Also, our students do more than just study scripture. They have opportunities to travel to the Land of the Bible to experience it firsthand. Many will help dig the Bible conducting original research with me at the critically important site of Shiloh, the site of the Jewish tabernacle for over 300 years in Israel's Central Hill Country.

Graduate student David Gamboa writes of his experience excavating and touring in Israel, "The way I saw the Bible changed radically. Doing original research at biblical sites greatly impacted how I communicate the Bible to others."

This type of local/global dichotomy derives directly from the New Testament. After his resurrection, Jesus instructed his followers to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Just prior to his ascension, Jesus provided his inner-circle with a specific strategy: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The thoughts of the apostles must have often meandered to far away regions where people sat in darkness, awaiting the light of the Gospel message that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). At the same time, they passionately poured themselves into Jerusalem and the surrounding regions of Judea and Samaria.

When the Gospel finally reached Greece, about twenty years after the resurrection, the locals agonized that "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also" (Acts 17:6).

Samantha epitomizes the "here and now" and "there and later" friction, noting, "A day seldom passes that I don't think about China and wonder what future plans God has for me. My goal in this season of life is to excel as a minister of the Gospel while I am completing my education."

At times, a local/global tension exists regarding the allocation of human and financial resources. The cost of benevolence in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1-5) had to be weighed against the expense of traveling abroad to reach the lost.

When critics of John Wesley claimed that he did not focus enough upon his home parish, Wesley presciently responded, "I look on all the world as my parish."

When the Dole family's Missions Board recalled them from Hawaii due to lack of funds, they decided to stay and fund their missionary enterprise by entering the pineapple business. They perfected the skill of canning, resulting in great family wealth, much of which financed world missions.

From President and Provost to our first ten graduate degree alumni and beginning students, we all embrace the founding vision of TBS to equip 5,000 alumni to each reach at least 200 lost people for Christ. This vision of 1,000,000 souls drives the decisions, prayers, resources, and passions of TBS.

TBS students study amidst this tension as they wrestle with life's questions. Working to find the balance between investing in their current ministries and seminary studies and how much to direct to the urgency of the global mission field represents no easy task. This grappling equips them to later guide others who will face the same pressure.

I know this firsthand because challenges I faced, successfully and unsuccessfully, early in my ministry, formed a reservoir from which I can now empower and encourage those who find themselves navigating troubled waters.

Perhaps the Apostle Paul penned it best, "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." The targeted synergy and momentum of this cycle strengthens with each new generation.

We are currently exploring ways to reach students regionally, nationally, and internationally who are not within driving distance of our current course locations in west and northwest Houston. These include expanding our regional teaching sites (including the launch of our first class in southwest Houston this fall), and online classes.

This past year we offered two courses live online – *Spiritual Formation and Ministry I and II*.

We also captured video sessions of *Church History II* to explore creating an asynchronous option so students could take this class online anytime. Since *Church History II* begins with the Reformation and extends to the present, we may celebrate Martin Luther's launch of the Reformation by opening registration for this class on October 31, 2017, 500 years to the day since Luther nailed his "95 Theses" to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany.

Within us all resides a desire to be a part of something greater than ourselves, to live a life of significance. If this resonates in your soul, I invite your partnership to produce "persuaders" for this great harvest.

Providers, prayers, and persuaders comprise Team TBS. We value your partnership believing that together we can accomplish great things.

Dr. Scott Stripling serves as Provost of The Bible Seminary and may be reached at [Scott.Stripling@TheBibleSeminary.org](mailto:Scott.Stripling@TheBibleSeminary.org).



The Bible Certificate program is designed to help nurture a biblically literate populace via comprehensive, strategic Bible-based studies.

For more information about offering these courses in your church or ministry region (TBS@YourChurch), please contact The Bible Seminary.



# Bible Certificate

Newly revised!

The Bible Seminary administration conducted a review of the “Bible Certificate” program (formerly known as “The Bible Institute”) over the last few years. An even more in-depth review was sanctioned in early 2016 that involved more than 20 TBS leaders and course feedback from students over eight years.

In May 2017, The Board of Trustees approved this revised “Bible Certificate” program to begin implementation with the Fall 2017 semester.

**The 10-credit, non-degree educational program for ages 16 and up is offered by The Bible Seminary in association with churches, denominations, individuals, ministries and other organizations.**

The courses are designed to supplement general preaching and teaching through a comprehensive, strategic process aimed at strengthening core proficiencies in Biblical understanding.

The CORE curriculum consists of 7 short courses (8 credits) designed to help students internalize the worldwide impact of Judeo-Christian history and culture by strategically covering all 66 books of the Bible, teaching how to study scripture, and mentoring the practice of studying specific passages.

The ELECTIVE options (2 credits) offer students a wide range of Bible-based experiences and opportunities to reinforce applied learning and skills, as well as allow some flexibility to tailor the program to meet individual needs and interests while maintaining educational standards.

*\* The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) has approved our CORE courses for 2 CEU's. CEU credits vary according to the ACSI standard of 1 CEU credit for every 6 hours of class up to 5 CEU's.*

## Sample Schedule

Academic Year	Fall 1	Fall 2	Spring 1	Spring 2
One	Bible Panorama		Bible Study Methods	Old Testament I
Two	Old Testament II	Old Testament III	New Testament I	New Testament II
Three	Elective 1	Elective 2	Or Elective 1	Or Elective 2

Visit “Academics - Academic Calendar” or “Academics - Bible Certificate - Registration” at [TheBibleSeminary.org](http://TheBibleSeminary.org) to view, register, and/or pay for upcoming courses.

## CORE Courses

### **Bible Panorama**      \$250, 14 weeks, 2 TBS credits; 4 CEU's

A sweep of the entire Bible that provides a Big Picture view of Scripture. Learn the content, themes, and background of all 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. *See page. 9 for more details!*

### **Bible Study Methods**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

Learn how to study the Bible through observation, interpretation, correlation, and application. Introduces various types of literature found in the Bible and the cultural context of the biblical writers, both of which affect our understanding of the text and how to apply it to our modern context.

### **Old Testament History**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

A study of Genesis through Esther that charts the course of salvation history from creation through the exiles' return from Babylon. Gain a clear picture of "the story" of the Old Testament, including major characters, covenants, and memorable timeline.

### **Old Testament Poetry**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

A study of Job through Song of Songs, and Lamentations. Helps students gain a greater understanding of biblical poetry and appreciation of its artistry, beauty, and function.

### **Old Testament Prophecy**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

A study of major prophets, Isaiah through Daniel, and minor prophets, Hosea through Malachi. Gain a clear picture of who they were, when they lived, to whom they prophesied, and how their prophecies relate to what took place before their time, after them up to the present, and what has yet to take place.

### **New Testament Gospels/Acts**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 credit; 2 CEU's

A study of the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Gain a well-rounded understanding of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the particular emphases of each Gospel, and experiences and perspectives of the early Christian disciples.

### **New Testament Epistles/Rev.**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 credit; 2 CEU's

A study of the Pauline and General Epistles, and the book of Revelation. Know the authors, readers, and issues in the epistles and have a clear framework for analyzing them. Get an introduction to the book of Revelation, its structure, content, some of the issues involved in interpretation, and various major eschatological views.

CORE totals = 7 courses, 8 credits, \$1420

## ELECTIVE Courses

### **God and Science**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

Explore fundamental concepts related to reconciling God, the Bible, and science. Learn to confidently respond to critics of the Bible who attempt to use science to undermine it.

### **Holy Land Tour Prep**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit

An introduction to the geography and cultures of Bible lands designed to help prepare students for a trip to Israel. Course content specifically focuses on sites scheduled for visits during TBS study tours, but is also helpful for anyone going on any trip to Israel, since most groups visit many of the same sites.

### **Perspectives**      \$250, 16 weeks, 1 TBS credit, 5 CEU's

*Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: From Creation to the present, learn how God has moved in the past, how the global Church has responded, and the greatest needs in world evangelization today.*

### **Soul Care**      \$195, 8 weeks, 1 TBS credit; 2 CEU's

Learn how to apply the Bible to daily challenges of life, including practical ways of advising others and offering hope to those who long for encouragement and biblical wisdom.

### **(TBS Graduate course Audit)**      \$250, 14 weeks, 1 TBS credit

Audit any graduate course offered by TBS and receive Bible Certificate credit. May participate in assignments, but are not required to turn in work for a grade or to take exams. However, auditors CAN request that their work be graded and may take exams in case they do decide to eventually pursue a degree.

### **Other Elective options**      \$ varies, 1 TBS credit

#### **Trips**

- Holy Land Study Tour – (Any study tour of the Holy Land)
- Other Study Tour – (Any study tour of other Biblical/historical locations)
- Mission Trip – (Any cross-cultural missions trip)

#### **Other courses**

- Bible Study course series, such as Beth Moore, Bible Study Fellowship, Navigators, Precept Ministries
- Disciple Bible Study I, II, III, or IV
- Emotionally Healthy Spirituality
- Financial Peace University
- Stephens Ministry Training
- (Others may also be acceptable)

ELECTIVE totals = At least 2 courses, 2 credits, \$ varies



# Student Spotlight

By  
Samantha  
Rude

The Bible Seminary agrees with the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans, that each of us have abilities with which to “serve the Lord enthusiastically” (Romans 12:11).

TBS is blessed to have a diverse range of students in the ranks. Our goals include awakening hearts to the Word of God, the love of Christ, and changing the world for His glory. Ministers, artists, stay-at-home moms, CPAs, engineers, retired doctors, and more – all being trained for history-making Greatness.

Cassia Glass is one of our artists. Using her wonderful creativity, her skills as a writer, and her own life journey, she has mentored, educated and helped others find their identity in Christ for the past twenty years.

When asked about her time at TBS, Cassia says,

*“TBS is strengthening my ability to study, teach, and write about the Bible, but I’m also constantly engaged with my classmates in discussing what it means to minister within our sphere of influence.”*

Following an assignment for her TBS “Spiritual Formation and Ministry I” graduate class last fall, Cassia began to put some of her experiences together in vlog form.

The assignment required students to create a tool relevant, effective, and contextual to life and ministry.

As she began to share on identity and the power of life-giving, biblical principals taking root in everyday life, the feedback from her circles of influence and sharing was overwhelmingly positive, and developed into a book.

Her purpose for this little pink and green book? To be a tool for your tool kit, meant first to be useful to you, but then to be a practical help as you encourage others.

In her book, Cassia inspires her readers,

*“Let us get down to the business of building relationships instead of tearing them down, of healing wounds, of letting things go forward instead of stagnating and dying... no more hiding and hating the unique person God has created you to be.”*

Cassia believes her time at The Bible Seminary, engaging with other students, has helped her creative process.

*“One thing that sticks out is how unique our backgrounds are. We have a pastor who is also a talented portrait artist, an accountant who is helping launch a Spanish ministry, a retired engineer who works with his wife to counsel couples in crisis . . . Some of us have moved from one path in life to a completely different path in ministry and seen skill sets we developed in one area transfer into ministry in ways we never imagined.”*

As an author, mother, wife and friend, Cassia’s passion is clear – to put the love of God on display for all to see and experience. Her works are authentic representations of her life in Christ. They are thought-provoking and challenging. She is able to bravely reveal the vulnerable parts of her heart for the entire world to see and read, constantly pointing towards the power of the cross.



Available on Amazon.com.  
Sections: *The New Woman, Outfitted in New Clothes*, and *Empowered to Live, Lead, and Love*.

Follow her blog at [Cassianglass.com](http://Cassianglass.com) for articles such as “i am pauline,” “hint: it’s not about the bread,” and “my kids told me not to write about toilets, but i did it anyway.”



The Glass family (L-R): Caroline, Cassia, Barret, and McLeod. Cassia grew up in Georgia and Alabama and moved to Texas in 2000. McLeod has worked for Hewlett Packard Enterprise for 15+ years and currently serves as VP of Product Management. Cassia and McLeod celebrated their 21st anniversary in January. The family attends Faithbridge in Spring, Texas and loves sports, music, Star Wars, and the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

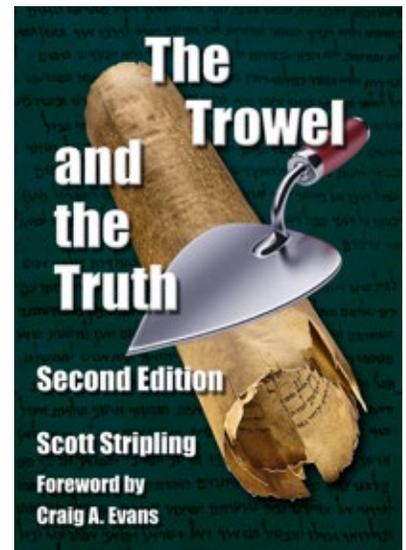
## Books By TBS Authors

### **The Trowel and the Truth: A Guide to Field Archaeology in the Holy Land, Second Edition**

By Scott Stripling

An introductory textbook on biblical archaeology and a guide to Bible readers interested in the relationship between artifact and text. Excavations since the publication of the first edition in 2007 have yielded an enormous amount of new information on the material culture of the land of the Bible. Highlighting significant findings confirming biblical accounts in the highlands of Israel, this book highlights synchronisms between the biblical text and the physical remains of humans and their activities found in the archaeological record. Since illumination of the background of the Bible serves as the primary goal of ancient Near Eastern archaeology, these connections help reinforce the discipline of Christian apologetics by drawing out the cultural clues embedded in the remains of the material culture and helps set the biblical text in its proper context.

*Available now in online bookstores.*

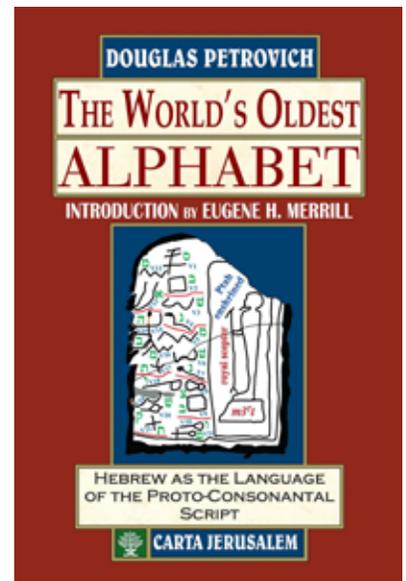


### **The World's Oldest Alphabet: Hebrew As the Language of the Proto-consonantal Script**

By Douglas Petrovich

For close to 150 years, scholars have attempted to identify the language of the world's oldest alphabetic script and to translate the inscriptions that use it, which were found in the Sinai Peninsula and date from 1842 to 1446 BCE. Until now, scholars have accomplished little more than identifying most of the pictographic letters and translating a few of the Semitic words. In *The World's Oldest Alphabet*, however, Douglas Petrovich presents a thorough, detailed defense of his bold new claims concerning these writings. Petrovich claims to have resolved all of the disputed letters and to have identified the language as Hebrew, which allows him to translate all of the inscriptions. Furthermore, he argues that they explicitly name three biblical figures and greatly illuminate the earliest Israelite history in a way that nothing else has, apart from the Bible.

*Available now in online bookstores.*



### **Boss Like God: Supreme Leadership and Management**

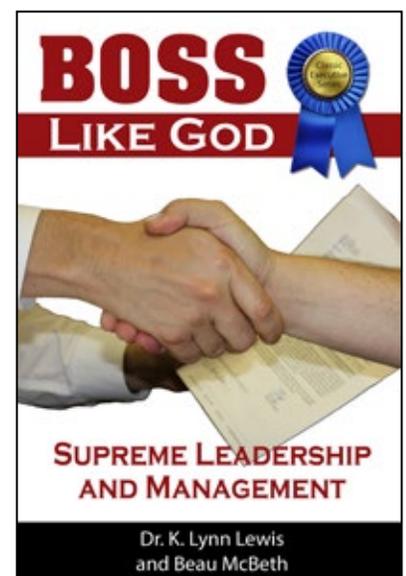
By K. Lynn Lewis and Beau McBeth

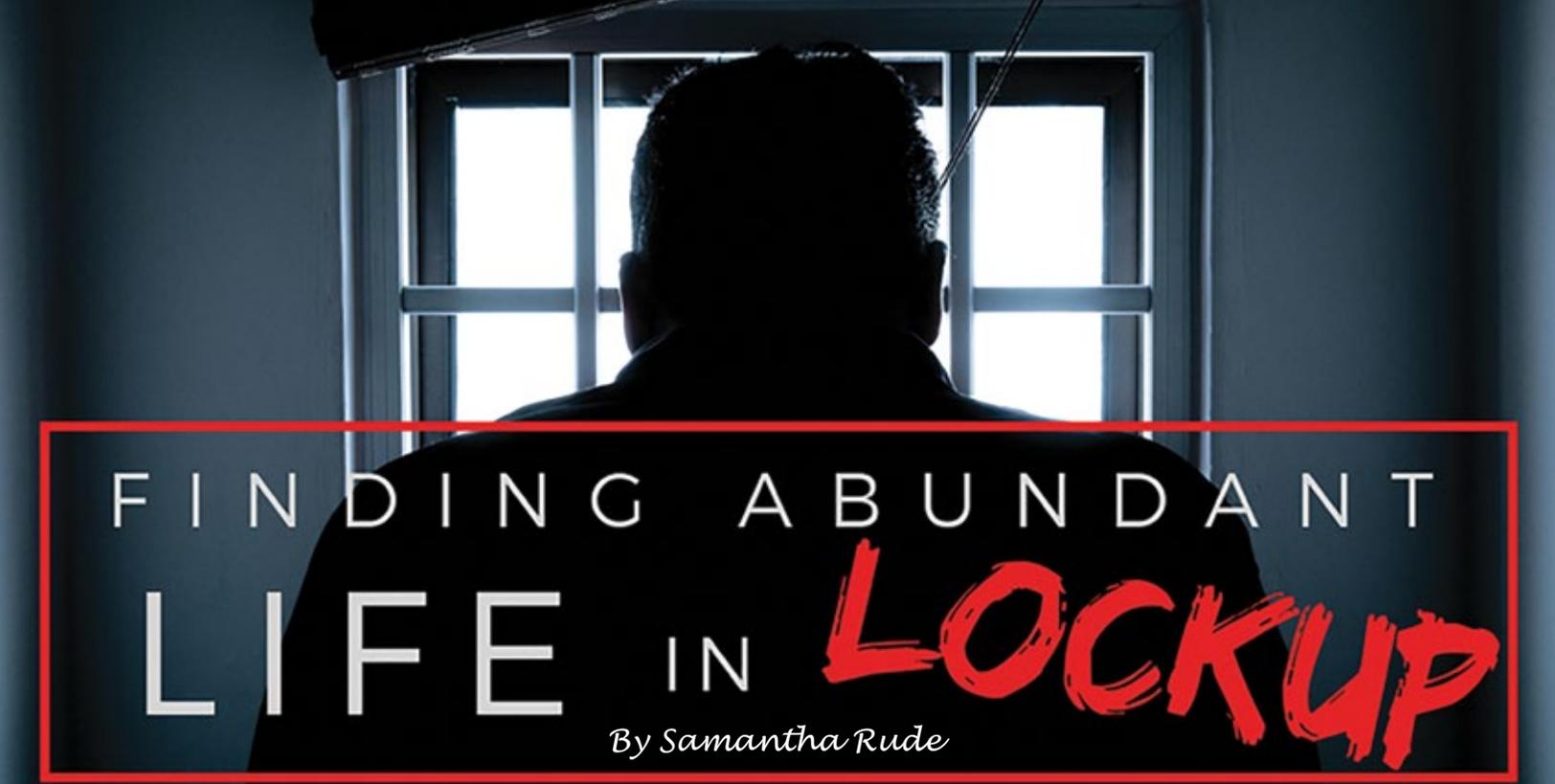
An estimated 30 million businesses operate in the United States where the MBA is the most popular postgraduate degree and a search for “leadership and management books” yields nearly 100,000 results. That is a lot of businesses, bosses, and books. But, which is best? If you could learn from the best boss ever, attend the best school, and read the best leadership and management book ever, which would you pick?

“Boss Like God” uniquely explores bossing from the perspective of God as Boss. In a sweeping review of employer/employee accounts recorded in the Old Testament books of the Bible, the authors explore how God found and selected good employees, how He managed them, even fired some, and helped employees execute transitions in leadership. Book sections include *Hiring Well*, *Managing Well*, *Firing Well*, and *Leaving Well*. Real-life examples from business, education, ministry and more make this one of the most immensely practical books on being a boss that you will ever read.

A transformational adventure for everyone seeking to reach their highest potential in leadership and management. *Companion study guides for training in executive leadership make this a valuable resource for study groups and teams in any organization!*

*Available October 2017 in online bookstores.*





# FINDING ABUNDANT LIFE IN **LOCKUP**

By Samantha Rude

**“TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, AS YOU DID IT TO ONE OF THE  
LEAST OF THESE MY BROTHERS, YOU DID IT TO ME”**  
matthew 25

**J**ust off the Grand Parkway in Fort Bend county sits a lush five thousand acre farm.

The fields are pristine. There is a quiet hush once you arrive on the property. Amidst the vast commercial growth, the green fields and farm equipment look oddly peculiar next to freeways and sprawling, masterplanned neighborhoods.

This land can be traced all the way back to Texas founding father Stephen F. Austin. Originally a gift from the Mexican government, the farm has been in operation for over one hundred and thirty years – as a labor prison.

No matter the images your mind might conjure, the setting of Jester State Prison isn't so different from the atmosphere on the inside. This year, the prison celebrates a historic twenty years of faith-based education and experience for inmates.

The project is overseen by Prison Fellowship Ministries, a non-profit organization committed to Jesus' words in the book of Matthew. According to PFM President, Mark Earley,

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***“I think what you're seeing is a willingness to attack the problem in a different way. We've done a good job in getting criminals behind bars, but we've done a miserable job in preparing them to re-enter society.”***

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As part of this project, The Bible Seminary Provost, Dr. Scott Stripling, took graduate seminary students behind the walls of Jester to experience firsthand what the Spirit of the

Lord is doing there. Each week students were exposed to the radical faith of Jester inmates during a study of the General Epistles and the book of Revelation.

Students led worship for inmates, prepared introductions to the scriptures, and shared personal testimonies with the men of Jester. Despite their bleak circumstances, these inmates worship with a zeal most never encounter in a traditional church service. Row upon row of men in white jumpsuits worship and praise the Lord like a Heavenly choir.

“I've lead worship for tons of different congregations, and this was by far the most engaging and enthusiastic worship I have experienced,” exclaimed one TBS student.

In the 1990's, former Harris County district attorney and chairperson of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, Carol Vance, appealed to board members for the implementation of the first Christian faith-based prison program in the Jester II unit.

The state granted Vance the motion on one staunch condition – the program had to work.

Byron Johnson, formerly director of the Center for Research and Urban Civil Society, took on the task of monitoring the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI) in 1997. Johnson studied over 125 inmates of Jester II for six years, making hundreds of visits to IFI participants. Even within the first year, Johnson found that the unit began to take on the identity of a church community and described the environment at Jester as “extremely open, supportive, upbeat, friendly and nurturing.” Not only was the program working, it was literally transforming the landscape of the prison.

A prisoner's participation in the IFI begins twelve to eighteen months before their scheduled release. The program consists of 15 hour days filled with life-giving, biblical principals and applications for approved inmates. There are three major phases of the IFI program including a thirty day self evaluation, which addresses the inmates personal values and thought processes.

Phase one is formatted to get to the heart of the inmate, and encourages spiritual and personal development. The second phase tests the foundations built in phase one. Inmates are employed off campus in real-life settings to better prepare them for life and success outside the walls of Jester. Phase three occurs after release. Also called the re-entry phase, inmates must secure a job for six months, meet with a mentor regularly, and contribute positively to their community in order to graduate.

According to Prison Fellowship founder, Chuck Colson, "We don't run IFI to reduce recidivism rates . . . We run this program so that through the Gospel, people's lives might be changed . . . so that the world around us will see the transforming power of Jesus Christ and be drawn to accept him as Lord."

Unfortunately, this hasn't always been the case for inmates at the Jester State Prison farm.

The state of Texas purchased the large sugarcane plantation in 1885, then named the Harlem Plantation, and began using controversial convict leasing to grow and harvest the cash crop. In 1908, the state purchased neighboring Riddick plantation, and even a large tract from Imperial Sugar, in addition to other land along the banks of the Brazos.

Convicts were segregated and subjected to extreme working conditions. In one investigation, state legislature found that a convict assigned to a Texas prison farm could expect to live seven years due to the grueling labor, unsanitary conditions, and the likelihood of being shot by guards.

Despite mounting evidence that convict labor was unethical and unnecessary, the governor and the Texas DOC dismissed the findings as impractical. Keeping the inmates as a source of revenue, at no expense to the public tax payer, was a high priority. As the "practicality" of convict labor became increasingly lucrative for the state, conditions for inmates grew worse. Convicts were considered sub-human, basically an endless supply of disposable machines.

In what the commissioner called a case of "bad judgment," and possibly the most documented tragedy on the farm, eight inmates died of suffocation. Guards at the then Harlem prison unit held twelve men in a metal box called the "Hole" in temperatures well over 100 degrees, resulting in the unnecessary casualties.

The harsh conditions continued throughout the beginning of the 20th century, until reforms under Texas governor and World War I veteran Beaufort H. Jester in the 1950's. The prison was officially named after the governor who institut-

ed educational programs for inmates serving time in the Jester facilities. With educational reform eventually came spiritual reform. Under Vance's introduction of IFI in the 90's, finally, these men were given opportunities to enhance learned skills for the purpose of being released back into society, and spiritual skills for furthering the Kingdom of God.

InnerChange Freedom doesn't change the fact that these men have committed crimes.

"I made the mistake of looking up the inmates and their convicted offenses before going to the prison," TBS student Shannon Stubblefield recounts, "so I prayed for peace!"

"From a young age I had been victimized by crimes like theirs. Assault, abduction, brutalization. The thought of being in a room with them sent me into a tailspin of anxiety. God helped me know that I needed to pray to see them as

HE saw them. I prayed that prayer until I was standing in front of them. I saw them clothed in white and their faces shining with the glory of God. It was a very beautiful and humbling experience."

The InnerChange Freedom program might have begun for inmates, but it has transformed into a full-blown Holy Ghost movement in the Jester Prison system, which has been experiencing it's own unique form of revival.

To conclude their Bible study, Dr. Stripling and the TBS students threw a pizza party for the inmates of Jester, some of whom hadn't tasted pizza in decades. There is nothing like breaking bread with one another to experience koinonia – true connection and fellowship with God and one another. The Bible Seminary is considering offering courses to the men of Jester, giving students and convicts alike more opportunities to encounter the transformational power of Christ.

Welcoming the Spirit of the Lord for twenty years has definitely brought a peculiar glory to Jester. All preconceived stereotypical notions of prison are dispelled when you enter Jester's chapel.

**Behind walls that once held convicts abused by violent racism, subjected to unbelievable conditions, with no hope of actual rehabilitation, these men have found abundant life.**

With every handshake and smile, it is evident that these men have been changed by the power of the Living God for good and for His glory.

*Samantha Rude is a graduate student at TBS, and serves as Worship Pastor at Katy Community Fellowship.*



In 1974, Chuck Colson, a former top aide to President Nixon, voluntarily pled guilty to obstruction of justice on a Watergate-related charge. His painful journey led him to Christ, and he served seven months as a new Christian in Alabama's Maxwell Prison. In his best-selling memoir, *Born Again*, Colson wrote, "I found myself increasingly drawn to the idea that God had put me in prison for a purpose and that I should do something for those I had left behind." He emerged from prison with a mission to mobilize Christians to minister to prisoners in life-changing ways. He founded Prison Fellowship in 1976, which has become the world's largest outreach to prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families. Colson died in April 2012.



# passionate love by Paige Helbig

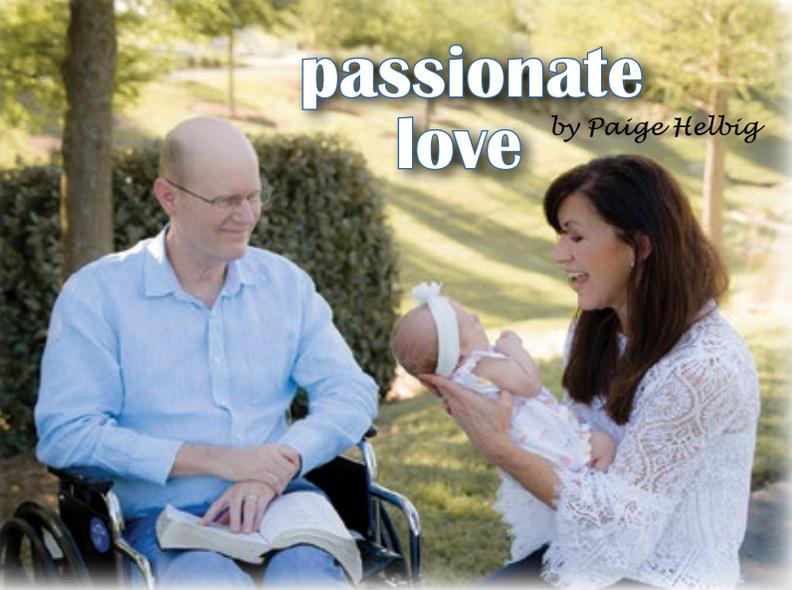


Photo © CasiHoward.com

Paul and Krystal Helbig with the newest addition to their family, Payton Joy Helbig, their first grandchild, born to son, Kanen, and McKenzie Helbig on March 6, 2017. Co-founder of The Bible Seminary, Paul went on full-time disability from TBS at the end of 2016. For family updates, visit [KrystalHelbig.com](http://KrystalHelbig.com). The article below was written by their oldest daughter and published on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2017.

*"I, Krystal,  
take you, Paul,  
to be my husband,  
to have and to hold,  
from this day forward,  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
until we are parted by death,  
this is my solemn vow"*

My mom spoke those very words to my dad over 25 years ago and now those past vows are her current realities. She lives by those words. She loves by those words. Her love for my dad is strong. It is real. It is extraordinary. It is passionate.

My mom has shown me what true and passionate love looks like. A love quite contrary to this world. My generation has twisted and created this false view on love. Love to most is a feeling. It is fleeting. It is okay if it fades. This world has made love become selfish, instead of something to cherish. My generation screams that when a person is not satisfying you anymore, or if you're not happy anymore, then it's okay to quit. To give up. To leave. Because love is all about being happy. "Passionate" love is all about attraction. All about sexual satisfaction, but the fact is they have it all wrong. This worldly love is lustful. We crave people more than we care for people.

Love is not a sensation. Love is a decision. Love is not a feeling. Love is a choice. Feelings fade. Circumstances change. Beauty is fleeting. But real passionate love, that real deal solid foundation built on Christ kinda love. That love can bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endure all things (1 Corinthians 13:7).

Today, my heart is overwhelmed with thankfulness that I have two parents who walk in passionate love.

Passionate love is not ripping each other's clothes off after knowing one another for a night.

No, that is not passion. That is attraction.

Passionate love is my mom helping my dad take off his clothes because his body has become too ill for him to do it himself. That is passion. That is the kind of love my heart desires to find someday.

The proof of your passion is found in your perseverance. My mother is able to love my father with perseverance because she loves her Heavenly Father first and foremost, with all her heart, all her mind, and all her soul. My mom loves my dad but she loves Jesus the most. She is the wife I desire to be someday. She honors her husband with her words and respects him with her actions. She serves his every need. She is his helper. His encourager. His biggest believer. His dreamer. She is by his side. On his side. His best side. The way she sacrificially serves her husband is, oh so beautiful and, oh, so bright. Shine on, mama. You are a light in this dim and dark world. You are inspiring so many with the way you love your husband.

I believe my mom is able to submit so freely to my dad because he leads her out of love, toward a Greater Love, because he is in love. In love with her mind, with her heart, and with her soul. My dad has shown me what a husband who cherishes his wife looks like. He positions her highly in the way he talks about her, when she is in the room and even more so when she is not. I have never heard a man talk about his wife the way my dad does so of his bride. He loves loudly. He brags on her proudly. His words always build her up, never down. She is his crown. His queen. He truly believes that his wife is his glory and that their story is to show the world God's glory.

Their love is glorifying and inspiring. Their current season of life is full of pain and really really rough days. The last couple years have been filled with tears, many many tears. And a lot of rain. I don't mean a simple shower. I'm talking like thunder storm-in, straight down pourin', but through it all I have seen their love grow. Just as a flower cannot beautifully bloom without rain, the same holds true for love. I have been reflecting a lot lately on this season of life, on my parent's marriage, and I realized that I have never loved watching them love like I do now. I love their love. It's something so pure. So private, yet so public. So passionate.

When they walk into a room, they both aren't walking anymore, but that is what I find so captivating. I am captivated by the way *my mom walks my dad* through life now, not solely physically, but spiritually.

She walks in hope.  
She walks in strength.  
She walks in love.

When they walk into a room, they both aren't walking anymore, but that is what I find so captivating. I am captivated by the way *my dad walks with my mom* through life now, not physically, but solely spiritually.

He walks in grace.  
He walks in compassion.  
He walks in love.

On a day all about love, my heart is bursting with love toward my parents. They have given me a rare gift of growing up in a family where love remains evident through it all. On mountaintops high and in valleys low. For better or for worse. In sickness and in health. In the sunshine and in the rain. Thank you for choosing to continue to selflessly love each other daily. Thank you for cherishing the vows you claimed. Seeing this love close up has forever changed my heart, my view on love, my view on marriage, and my view on the gospel.

Hey @mygeneration – let's change our definition of "passionate love" . . . there is so much more than fleeting feelings I can promise you that. I hope you're encouraged to love in a new light.

purposefully.  
purely.  
&  
passionately.

*Paige Helbig is a Communications major and rising senior at Texas A&M. For more, check out her blog at [PaigeHelbig.wordpress.com](http://PaigeHelbig.wordpress.com).*



# The National Day of Prayer Ignites Fire on the Altar

*1 Event. 2 Locations. 3 Days.*

Occasionally we have the opportunity to participate in something bigger than ourselves. “I believe very, very much that there are some things I can do by myself, but there are some things that are only possible when we all come together.” says Pastor Gbolanhan Faluade (Falu) of The River of Life Family Church. He is right. There are some things we can only do in community. Unity is one of them.

Unity is what just happened. It happened at the Merrell Center on May 4th and it continued to happen throughout that night and the next at Fire on the Altar.

Churches in Katy, Texas have participated in the National Day of Prayer since it began in 1952.

But in recent years something special has happened. The churches have come together. Instead of meeting separately, or a few faithful gathered at City Hall, we now see more than 70 churches standing together in prayer for America! Amazing. Denominational differences, racial and socio-economic differences, age variance all fall away and we stand together in agreement. We stand in prayer.



The award-winning band, *Phillips, Craig and Dean*, opened with powerful worship. Katy ISD Superintendent Dr. Lance Hindt (*above L*), and Pastor Jim Leggett (*R*) of Grace Fellowship, then welcomed an estimated crowd of 2800 to the Merrell Center.

Pastor Mike McGown of Parkway Fellowship led us in silent, personal prayers of repentance. Pastor Coleman Philley, of First Baptist Katy, prayed over Katy Police Chief Bill Hastings who represented all of our law enforcement.

Fourth grader Maddie Forks took the stage with her school principal, Angel Bateman, to honor all school faculty and teachers. She asked them to stand before she prayed for them with confidence and authority.

Pastor Roy Meadows of Westland Baptist brought his grandchildren with him to represent all of our teens and



young people in his prayer, and Pastor Jorge Carrdenas from the Church on the Rock prayed over all our U.S. Armed Forces represented by Sergeant Edwin Humerez.

We prayed for revival. We listened for God’s voice and we prayed for the nations with 7 different people, who prayed in 7 different languages for the nations to be ready. They each prayed the same prayer in their native tongues – a beautiful reflection of both diversity and unity.

Mike Hooper, the Director of Prayer at KSBJ closed the event with an invitation for all to attend Fire on the Altar, which then continued nonstop for another 48 hours!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR 2018!

## National Day of Prayer 2018

*70 + churches coming together in unity for our nation.*  
Thursday, May 3, 2018, 7 pm

## Fire on the Altar 2018

*Churches taking turns to continue worship for 50 hours*  
Thursday, May 3, 8 pm – Saturday, May 5, 9 pm

[www.katyprays.org](http://www.katyprays.org)

More than 200 volunteers and worship team members from 45 churches throughout the Katy area collaborated to continue the worship and prayer through Saturday. The variety of worship styles represented kept the worship fresh and enjoyable. Ministry teams from The Great Southwest Prayer Center ministered healing prayer and prophetic listening prayer to 76 people.

One person reported that the ministry time was “Direct, loving and spot on. Thank you!”

Fire on the Altar culminated in a citywide worship and prayer finale at the conclusion of 50 hours. Head Pastors and Worship Leaders from 12 different churches led the crowd in that 2-hour set which was a fitting celebration to the amazing things that happened May 4-6, 2017.



*Stephanie Leggett serves as Director of Community Relations for The Great Southwest Prayer Center (TheGreatSouthwestPrayerCenter.org). Contact her at [sleggett@whatisgrace.org](mailto:sleggett@whatisgrace.org) or call 281.647.7729 (PRAY).*



(L-R, clockwise from the top L) Jimmy Needham; banquet setting; auctioned church painting; Wayne and Kelly Kerr and daughters; donating to TBS; and sign outside the Khirbet-el-Maqatir museum exhibit at the University of Pikeville in Pikeville, Kentucky.

More than 180 TBS family and friends enjoyed a blessed evening Friday, January 27, 2017 at the Omni Houston Hotel Westside for our 2017 banquet, *Mission Possible*.

After enjoying appetizers and socializing in the lobby, attendees were welcomed by TBS President, Dr. K. Lynn Lewis, and led in an invocation by TBS Board member and retired Katy ISD School Superintendent, Dr. Leonard Merrell.

An inspiring video of faculty and students sharing their TBS experiences and perspectives followed.

During dinner, Board member Robert Button shared an opportunity initiated by Board Chair, Heidi Arneson, who had once given out envelopes with a small amount of money enclosed and a challenge to invest it for growth toward Kingdom purposes. At the suggestion of his wife, Mr. Button invested his money in art supplies which he gave to local musician and graphic artist, Wayne Kerr, to paint a church based on the seminary's key verse in Nehemiah 8:8, "They read from the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read." He hoped to multiply the money by auctioning the painting during the banquet to raise at least \$10,000 for TBS.

Dinner closed out with an inspirational time of worship led TBS student Samantha Rude and a praise band comprised of local worship leaders – David Gamboa (*guitar; Student Pastor at Sugar Land Family Church*), Sara Regan (*bass; Young Life leader*), Samantha Rude (*Keyboard and vocals; Worship Pastor at Katy Christian Fellowship*), Josh Stewart (*guitar and vocals; Worship Pastor at Kingsland Baptist Church*), and Jesus Tejada (*percussion; Percussionist for Hope City*).

TBS Provost, Dr. Scott Stripling, opened the program sharing updates about a newly opened museum exhibit in Kentucky at the University of Pikeville exhibiting artifacts from an archaeological dig he directed at Khirbet-el-Maqatir (the biblical city of Ai), as well as news about his upcoming dig at Shiloh. He also shared reasons he was excited to have the opportunity to serve as the new Provost (*see inset box*).

- **Local connections with global outreach.**
- **More than an education** – relationships focused on training, not just teaching; and discipleship, not just learning.
- **Deep connection to the land of the Bible.**
- **Commitment to the Great Commission** – aim to graduate at least 5000 students who each make at least 200 disciples during their ministry and that together impact 1 million souls for Christ.

TBS Board member and pastor of Grace Fellowship, Dr. Jim Leggett, then honored TBS co-founder, Paul Helbig. Following a rousing standing ovation, Dr. Leggett recounted their shared passion for starting the seminary nearly a decade earlier, and read notes from three of Paul's former students expressing their appreciation for his powerful influence in their lives.

Dr. Leggett then introduced internationally acclaimed contemporary Christian music artist, Jimmy Needham, who shared a passionate message about our fuel for ministry. He closed with a moving spoken word piece summarizing the Gospel in five minutes entitled "The Story" (*see JimmyNeedham.com*).

Dr. Stripling then returned to the stage to auction off the original painting by Wayne Kerr, which ultimately went to two high bidders for a combined \$18,000 based on Wayne's promise to paint a second, similar original painting for the second donor.

Chair Arneson then offered attendees information about donating to support the seminary while Jimmy Needham sang a closing song, and Dr. Lewis concluded the evening in prayer.

The banquet helped raise more than \$130,000 for TBS. Thank you to everyone who participated and gave!

## Financial Update

By Rick McCalip  
VP of Finance and Administration



Last year, TBS celebrated a breakthrough at the end of our 2015-16 fiscal year. Through the great generosity of donors, for the first time since our first year in 2010-11, total income exceeded expenses. We are blessed to report that the breakthrough continued this year!

We have completed preliminary accounting for the end of the fiscal year as of May 31, 2017, and once again, total income has exceeded expenses. Total donations were \$553,981, with tuition and other income totaling \$72,286. Expenses of \$564,458 resulted in net income of \$61,809. *Special thanks to our donors for making this possible!*

Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Income	\$659,189	\$626,267	(seeking)
Expenses	\$625,621	\$564,458	\$769,362 (budgeted)
Excess	\$ 33,568	\$ 61,809	(praying)

We hold excess income in our reserve fund in hope of developing an endowment to invest for use to sustain financial solvency and help TBS become the world-class theological educational institution that we seek to become.

This fiscal year's result should be sufficient to demonstrate to our potential accrediting agency that we have the financial support and expense controls necessary to proceed with accreditation. The accreditation standards require that we demonstrate this level of performance for at least two successive years, so ... done! Now the challenge will be to exhibit a similar level of increasing financial performance every year so that academic accreditation, once achieved, can be maintained.

We again contributed a tithe of our net tuition, fee, and other income (excluding donor contributions) to outside purposes consistent with TBS's mission – a 10/40 window church plant project being led by a TBS graduate, and to Boys and Girls Country in Hockley, Texas.

We will soon initiate financial accreditation through the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ecfa.org). ECFA provides accreditation to leading Christian nonprofit organizations that faithfully demonstrate compliance with established standards for financial accountability, transparency, fundraising, and board governance. Their statement of faith is quite compatible with TBS's Core Values and would assist us in sustaining our commitment to financial responsibility and honoring of our donor's wishes.

Thank you again for your continued prayers and grace. Hallelujah!

## From the Board

By Heidi Arneson  
Board Chair



As Chair of the Trustees, I am privileged to work with a dedicated group committed to making the teaching and training of the Word of God available and accessible to both laity and persons called into full-time ministry.

I am privileged to know some students and alumni and hear their stories of the huge positive impact their TBS educational experience has had on their lives and ministries, including some with global impact!

Many students hold full-time jobs and/or currently work in ministry and want to be better equipped in their current jobs, while others hope to move into full-time ministry and desire to be as effective as possible in their work. All are intentionally investing in themselves in order to invest in the Kingdom of God at a greater level!

Many more students would love to attend TBS, but family and job demands prevent them. But, if they had ways to help financially offset the cost of attending, many would.

Thank you to those that have made it possible for students like these to attend, and please let us know if you want to specifically support a student in need of financial help.

It is my honor to be a small part of The Bible Seminary and advancing the Kingdom of God through this ministry. I invite you to learn more about the locations we serve, and the courses offered at both the lay and graduate level, and then consider what your participation looks like, as a student, prayer warrior, volunteer, financial supporter, to name a few.

In closing Jesus said in Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but MY WORDS WILL NEVER PASS AWAY."

I love knowing that heaven and earth will pass away but the WORDS of the LORD NEVER PASS AWAY! I am thankful for The Bible Seminary that teaches the WORD! Learning and knowing the WORD is a forever work. It is a work that is NEVER wasted – NEVER EVER!! What a return on investment!

Together we can get the WORD out and make an eternal life and death difference in the lives of others in our community and around the world!

**Everyone** who comes to Christ is *called* to serve in the local church and participate in fulfilling The Great Commission. The Bible Seminary (TBS) provides theological education and preparation for ministry to enable or enhance that calling. Student options range from taking a Bible Certificate class up to earning a graduate degree.

**TBS** delivers *distinctive* experiences rooted in the entirety of scripture. Students obtain a solid academic base, grow as a part of the seminary community, and gain practical ministry experience in their individual context. Students benefit from face-to-face classroom interaction, a low student-teacher ratio, and competitive overall cost. Actual ministry application is observed in some courses as local churches and other contexts serve as classroom locations.

**God** is *using* TBS to expand His kingdom through our student's lives and ministries.

Representing various church traditions, ethnicities and backgrounds, and a plethora of ministry organizations locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally, your financial support can help continue this work and nurture its growth.

**You** can *leverage* your giving through TBS to provide professional ministry training, technology tools and extraordinary learning opportunities. You may give toward General Operations, or designate funds towards scholarship funds that help make it possible for students to attend.

**We** are excited about what God has done, is doing, and will do through The Bible Seminary, and *invite* you to join this important endeavor by donating to support the building of His kingdom!



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"They read from the Book of the Law of God making it clear and giving the meaning so the people could understand what was being read." - Nehemiah 8:8

- **Non-denominational theological education** offered in association with churches and ministries, faculty, and ministry leaders in our area and from around the world.
- **Programs** range from non-degree Bible exploration up to graduate degree advanced professional ministry training.



## Core Values

**Lordship** – Because He is Lord (Phil. 2:11), we will continually ask Jesus Christ to sit on the throne of the seminary and on the throne of the lives of its faculty, administrators, and students for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

**Bible** – Because the Bible is the fully true Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16), we will offer and require the study of all 66 books of the Bible before graduation with a degree. We will seek to creatively integrate classical theological disciplines and ministry training by studying books of the Bible...

**Prayer** – Because apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5), we will continually seek to plug into the Vine Jesus Christ through yielding to Him in prayer. We will offer a unique emphasis on prayer...

**Unreached Peoples** – Because the return of Christ awaits the evangelization of all people groups (Mt. 24:14), we will keep our eyes on the unreached peoples of the world and train our students to have a heart for the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) by seeking to reach millions of souls for Jesus Christ.

**Local Church** – Because the local church is God's plan (Mt. 16:18), we will be based in the local church and have a symbiotic relationship of service and training with local churches and parachurch ministries.

**Community** – Because we were created for community (Gen. 1:26; Rom. 12:5). We will seek to build a campus-based fellowship where the "one anothers" of Scripture are lived out, where authenticity and accountability are practiced, and where integrity is modeled and taught.

**Compassion** – Because God has a huge heart for the poor and overlooked (Mt. 25:31-46), we will strive to motivate, equip, and train students to minister to "the least of these" as a lifestyle.