



the Bridge

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Dying to Lead: A Theology of Leadership

Our theme, "Courage to Lead," could be seen as quite strange. If leadership is viewed primarily as an exercise of power or at least a prestigious honor, it would not take much courage to lead. In fact, we might be "dying to lead," eager to get our way and the recognition we properly deserve.

In Mark 10:35-45, James and John ask Jesus, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory" (10:37, TNIV). The other disciples become upset with the brothers, apparently because they too desire these coveted positions. And if we are honest, we easily see ourselves in the request of the brothers. We naturally want to be in charge and enjoy the status that leadership brings.

Jesus, though, offers an alternative vision of leadership. He asks the brothers, "Can you drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" (10:38). Jesus employs images that point to his suffering and sacrificial service,

which ultimately lead to the cross. Interestingly, these images also invoke thoughts of our own association with Jesus' death in the Lord's Supper and baptism. He continues, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first



POWELL

must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (10:43-45).

To a group of disciples who are "dying to lead," Jesus says that in order to truly lead, they must first die. Christian leadership is not about power and status, but suffering and service.

While Jesus' vision challenges the one viewing leadership in terms of power and privilege, it also confronts one who simply abdicates the responsibility to lead. If leadership involves suffering and service, perhaps it is best to let someone else lead. It is

easier to avoid getting involved, or if we must, to only manage rather than provide bold leadership.

But Jesus was a leader. Jesus provided bold leadership that ultimately led to the cross, and he calls us to do the same. While we may lead in different ways, followers of Jesus are not given the option of being passive observers in the world.

How do we avoid the extremes of reckless leadership and cowardly leadership in order to grow as courageous leaders? Let me offer two suggestions. One, we must carefully attend to the example of Jesus and, as his disciples, strive to imitate him in our own lives. We grow as courageous leaders when we follow the Courageous Leader. And two, we should pray that God will bless us with humility and courage, since ultimately these virtues are gifts of the Holy Spirit. With God's grace and assistance, we can die to ourselves, take up our cross and lead with true courage.

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Dean's Note

Academic Challenge

Imagine sitting in a room on one side of a long table. On the other side sit three professors and the dean, who ask questions about your research for up to two hours. You assume they all know more about your subject than you do, and at any point any one of them could ask a question you will not be able to answer — or worse, raise an issue you cannot defend. This committee has the power to either reject your dissertation (or thesis), accept it as is, or accept it with additional research or corrections.

The oral defense, as well as the commitment to a three-year process of research to get to this point, takes courage.

The Association of Theological Schools defines the standards for academic research in ministry as the ability to: "(a) identify a specific concern in ministry, organize an effective research model, utilize appropriate resources, and evaluate the results; (b) reflect depth of theological insight in its relation to ministry; and (c) function responsibly under supervision appropriate to the project" (ATS Bulletin 37, 1986).

Three students successfully defended their doctor of ministry dissertations this year. Each one addressed a topic that demanded careful research and professional writing. Each one grew through the multiple drafts as they sought to understand the problem or clarify the validity of the results. Theories seem to be easy to generate, but appropriate execution of an

acceptable methodology is another issue. Professors invest hours reading each draft and making suggestions or challenging conclusions.

Augustine Tawiah, president of Ghana Bible College, completed a dissertation that began with a series of seminars among preachers in Ghana to address a serious cultural challenge to Christians in Ghana — Akan funeral rites and ceremonies. African Traditional Religion continues to control social values through these lavish funeral rites in opposition to basic Christian values and beliefs. His research proposed a process church leaders could use to develop appropriate Christian funeral practices among the Akan.

Leon Sanderson, senior adult minister and worship leader for the Church of Christ at White Station in Memphis, developed a program for Christian grandparents to increase intentionality in passing on values and faith to their grandchildren or "foster" grandchildren. Since so few children are blessed to live near their grandparents, the church provides the only context for multigenerational relationships that affirm the worth of the elderly and strengthen the faith of the young.

Jon Partlow, pulpit minister at Pennyryle Church of Christ in Madisonville, Ky., addressed the role of self-disclosure in preaching. Preachers often struggle with the challenge of disclosing their own journey of faith as they hold out the completeness of God's Word and keep the focus on God.



HUFFARD

Three additional students successfully defended their master of arts theses:

- ▶ Paul Birston, *Jesus' Powerful Use of Language for Effective Preaching: A Sample Rhetorical Analysis of His Hyperbole for the Judging Hypocrite (Matthew 7:1-5)*
- ▶ JoEtta Deaton, *The Doctrine of Creation and Gender Subordination: A Complementarian View*
- ▶ Chris Shrock, *C. S. Lewis' Moral Argument for the Existence of God*

Each of these students courageously encountered an academic challenge. What would the world be like if all "Christian media," televangelists, preachers, Bible teachers, Christian journal authors, church bulletin editors, and Christian publishers went through some process of defending their methodology and conclusion? Far too many speak and write with no accountability for a public that often lacks the critical reasoning to see through ignorance, hidden agendas and impure motives. We can be too easily satisfied hearing what we want to hear. The academic challenge calls for the truth. As anyone who has been through it will tell you, serious truth seeking is a humbling experience, thus the call for courage and a lot of work.

▶ Dr. Evertt W. Huffard
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God's Love Touches Cambodian Children

In Siem Reap, Cambodia, children earn money by selling books and souvenirs to tourists.

The tourists buy the books because the children are cute. The children sell the books because they will be punished if they don't.

It is a hard life for these street children. But in March, God's love reached into the streets of Siem Reap and touched some of these kids.

In this case, God's love took the form of an international body of Christians coming from around Asia to encourage Cambodian believers for a six-day camp in Siem Reap. Nathan Wheeler (na_wheeler@yahoo.com), a master of divinity student at the Graduate School of Religion and missionary in Cambodia, was part of the leadership that made the camp happen. Wheeler explains one key goal of the camp: "Asians encouraging other Asians and showing new Christians and seekers that Christianity is not just for Westerners."

One of the poorest nations in Asia, Cambodian culture is looked down upon by some other Asians. The fact that the camp was funded by Asian Christians is itself a testimony of God's love. "The Moulmein church of Christ in Singapore [had] been praying for and thinking about Cambodia a lot," Wheeler reports. With their lead, members of nine congregations across Asia attended.

Dave Hogan (M.Th., 1987; dhogan@pacific.net.sg) brought a group of young

people from Singapore. He notes the significance of the retreat: "I cannot fully comprehend its meaning for the young churches of Asia who are just beginning to get a sense of what it will mean to participate in cross-cultural missions in Asia, but I am convinced that this is a new beginning in the history of the church in Asia."

"Each day we spent time in worship, sharing, singing class, and in outreach to poor street children," Wheeler explains. "It was amazing the way these hard, rough kids softened in such a short time. We invited these kids [from Siem Reap's streets] to come play games, sing songs, and have a meal with us."

Quoting John 1:12, Wheeler puts the weekend in perspective. "These little kids that I thought were almost unreachable — used and abused by a harsh economic system — received something they had long lost: the right to become children of God!"

Wheeler and his wife, Cheryl, moved to Cambodia in 2004 to plant churches in the urban area of Phnom Penh. "Our goal," he says, "is to develop an indigenous network of house churches." While there, he continues his education by taking online courses and one-week intensive courses in Memphis.

"Harding Graduate School of Religion has been a real blessing to our ministry here," Wheelers says. "The ability to study via distance learning has allowed me to continue learning while on the field. Even classes I



Nathan Wheeler addresses young people from nine countries.

thought would not apply to mission work have helped me have a clearer view of ministry and of the Lord."

"My classes at the Graduate School of Religion are like a lifeline that keeps me connected to mentors and others of faith and service while I'm surrounded by spiritual darkness in Cambodia. One of the most important things I have learned from the Graduate School of Religion is that I don't have all the answers — God is still working in my life to shape me, and I need to afford Him every opportunity to teach me and be open to where He may be leading."

God is still working in Wheeler, in Siem Reap and throughout Asia. We long for the day when we will hear of a young Christian from urban Cambodia who first heard of the church by hearing music in the streets. He will know the moment when he was touched by God's love.



Christians gather for worship and ministry in Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Five Receive Awards

The Student Association selected Jimmy Hinton to receive the Jack P. Lewis Ministry of Study Award.

Chris Shrock received the academic award for the master of arts degree. He has been admitted to a Ph.D. in philosophy program at Baylor University.

Kristen Thomas received the academic award for the master of arts in counseling degree. She will work toward marriage and family therapy licensure in Gainesville, Fla.

Shawn Griffith received the academic award for the master of divinity degree. He plans to do long-term mission work in Australia.

Leon Sanderson received the academic award for the doctor of ministry degree. He is a seniors minister and worship leader in Memphis.



Thirty-four Graduate at 2007 Commencement

Thirty-four graduates crossed the stage May 5 to receive their degrees from

Harding University Graduate School of Religion. The Honorable A C Wharton Jr., mayor of Shelby County, addressed the graduates, calling them to live lives of ethical service to their communities. Drs. Evertt Huffard and Bill Flatt brought the faculty address.

Amy Elizabeth Hagedorn
John David Hawkins
Christopher E. Straw

▶ MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING

Mary Robyn Butterfield
Jeffrey Ted Cline
Luke DeLaVergne
Sarah SueAnn Graves
Veronica Day Liggins
Erma Lee Simpson
Kristen Denise Thomas
Mike L. Tinker
Kenneth C. Winters Jr.

▶ MASTER OF DIVINITY

Matthew C. Bogard
Kerry Rex Butts
Daniel Paul Cherry
Shawn Timothy Griffith
James Allen Hinton
Joshua Daniel Israel
Joshua Noel Pangburn
Howard Fredrick
Vosburgh
Max Jason Whaley

▶ DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Jonathan Andrew Partlow
Leon B. Sanderson
Augustine Tawiah

▶ MASTER OF ARTS

Paul Birston
JoEtta Hyne Deaton
John M. Jones
Thaddeus S. Martin
William Kent McClelland
William J. Nagel
Andrew David Phillips
Scot A. Poirier
Christopher Andrew Shrock

▶ MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Jonathan Patrick Grizzle



HINTON



SHROCK



THOMAS



GRIFFITH



SANDERSON



Dr. Harold Redd, who addressed graduates on behalf of the Harding University board of trustees, and his wife, Joyce, greet commencement speaker A C Wharton Jr., Shelby County mayor.

Kirby Pines Church of Christ: Small Church With a Big Heart

It was a cold March Sunday morning during the winter of 1995. Sleet and freezing rain had caused many churches to either cancel worship services or to advise older members not to risk coming to church because of the weather. A small group of faithful residents at Kirby Pines Retirement Community in Memphis decided to take action and have a worship service anyway. Dick Sawers invited several members of the church to his apartment for a worship service including communion. Among those in attendance at the Sawers' apartment were Doris Johnson and Wesley and Warner Stepherson.

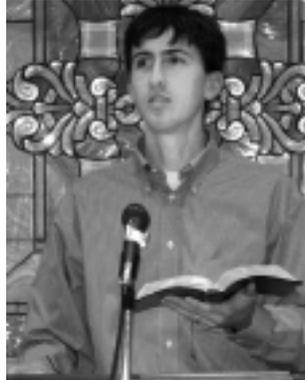
Afterward, discussion led to the possibility of having a service each week at Kirby Pines. They contacted Larry McKenzie at the Highland Street Church of Christ for ideas. Highland had an evangelistic program called REACH, and McKenzie felt

they could meet the needs of Kirby Pines residents. McKenzie called several congregations to conduct the service on a monthly basis. Of the 650 residents at Kirby Pines Retirement Community, about 60 are members of the church of Christ.

The Graduate School of Religion had the opportunity to continue the service for a congregation that had asked to be relieved of that responsibility in June 1999. On June 20, 1999, the Graduate School conducted its first worship service at Kirby Pines. On Sept. 16, we will conduct our 100th service.

It has been a win-win relationship. The residents have the opportunity to attend services each Sunday morning regardless of weather conditions. They have an inspirational service with outstanding speakers. A collection is taken each week and given to the church that has conducted the worship service.

Graduate School students



Jason Whaley preaches at the Kirby Pines service.

have the opportunity to get experience preaching to a small group. "Since I am 31, and most of the residents are significantly older, preaching there has helped me develop more skills in communicating the Gospel cross-culturally," says Jason Whaley (M.Div., 2007; jaznic@gmail.com). Whaley has spoken at Kirby Pines every other month for about three years. "It has expanded my world in general and opened up new relationships," he says. "The Kirby Pines congregation has fueled us with a lot of encouragement that only comes from God through devotion to Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit."

The Graduate School receives the collection on Sundays we conduct service. Members are very generous, and the amount they give places them third in the amount received from the 57 churches that support the Graduate School. The Kirby Pines Church of Christ may be the smallest in attendance, but their faithfulness, generosity and encouragement are second to none.



The church of Christ meeting at Kirby Pines Retirement Community supports Graduate School of Religion students through scholarship funding and encouraging those preaching at the worship service conducted there monthly.

Yeldell to be Honored at Annual Dinner

On Sept. 29, the Leadership Council of Harding University Graduate School of Religion will honor Nokomis Yeldell for his



YELDELL

more than 50 years of ministry. The celebration will begin at 6 p.m. at University of Memphis Holiday Inn on Central Avenue. Call (901) 761-1355 for reservations to this special event. We expect the \$50 per plate event will be at capacity.

Brother Yeldell, the minister emeritus of Norris Road Church of Christ in Memphis, served as full-time minister for only two congregations during his ministry. He has blessed many others with financial, spiritual and moral support. He has also blessed many Christian schools with his service as a member of the board or advisory committee.

At the dinner we will announce the establishment of the Nokomis and Dollie Yeldell Endowed Scholarship Fund. If you are unable to attend the dinner but would like to honor the Yeldells with a gift to their scholarship fund, you may send it to the Graduate School of Religion, 1000 Cherry Road, Memphis, TN 38117.

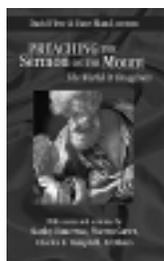
BRIEFS

Fall Courses Still Open

Several courses for the fall semester have not yet filled to capacity. To enroll, visit www.hugsr.edu or call the admissions office at (800) 680-0809.

Sermon on the Mount Book Released

Co-edited with David Fleeer, Dave Bland's book, *Preaching the Sermon on the Mount*, is now available at booksellers. On the book jacket, Walter Brueggemann comments, "These probes of the Sermon



on the Mount are rich, varied and suggestive. . . . The book offers a convergence of deep faith, powerful rhetoric, sensible world-awareness and missional urgency; just what is now required!" Bland may be reached at dbland@hugsr.edu.

Marriage Mentoring Available in Spanish

Dr. Ed Gray, professor of counseling, has published his nationally known *Marriage Mentoring: 12 Conversations* program in a Spanish language edition. For more information, contact Gray at egrays@hugsr.edu.

Faculty/Staff

Women and Ministry Course Slated for Fall

“Women and Ministry” will be offered again this fall, offering participants the opportunity to explore the unique role women can play in churches and other ministries. The course is offered each fall, last year filling to capacity.



HUFFARD

The course is taught by Dr. Ileene Huffard (ihuffard@fhu.edu), director of Freed-Hardeman University's graduate education program in Memphis, and Candi Wood (candi.wood@agape-meanslove.org), program coordinator for AGAPE in Memphis.

The course is an in-depth study of the biblical and sociological role of women in history and as related to churches of Christ. It explores the growing areas of

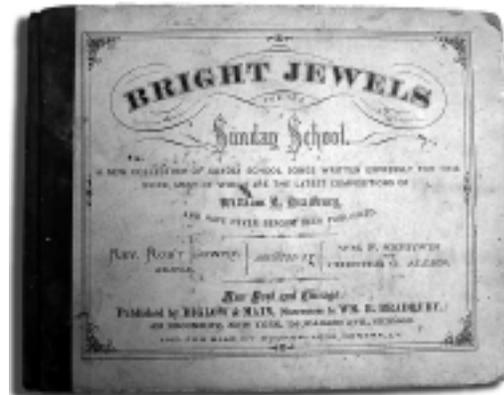
ministry, leadership and influence women are experiencing in the church today and principles necessary for preparation.

In addition to reading and research, the course incorporates the Uniquely You in Christ profile, which helps students discern their giftedness in ministry. The course also incorporates small group process time outside of class to network and process concepts from the class.

Library Receives Holland Hymnology Collection

In January Dr. Harold Holland of Tulsa, Okla., donated a 260-volume hymnology collection to Graves Library. It includes a wide spectrum of hymnbooks, gospel songbooks, handbooks, companions to hymnals, books on the history of hymnology and gospel music, and biographies of hymn writers. Included are a number of 19th-century hymnals dating from as early as 1852.

Among the collection are hymnals edited by the following members of the churches of Christ: Holland Boring, Thomas Cobb, Alton Howard, Verna Howard, Reuel Lemmons, E. G. Sewell, Joseph N. Slater and William W. Slater. The collection reflects Holland's lifelong interest in hymnology, especially within the churches of Christ.



The library received a copy of Robert Lowry's 1869 hymnal *Bright Jewels* from the donated collection of Dr. Harold Holland.

Church Audit Courses Available for Fall

Four church audit courses have been announced for the fall 2007 semester. Church audit courses allow members of supporting congregations to audit selected courses for only a \$25 administrative fee. Students may get more infor-

mation from the Admissions Office at (901) 761-1356 or hgsadmissions@hugsr.edu.

- ▶ "Family Issues in the New Testament," Dr. Allen Black, 6-8:45 p.m. Tuesdays
- ▶ "Women and Ministry," Dr. Ileene Huffard and Candi Wood, 6-8:45 p.m.

- Thursdays
- ▶ "Old Testament World," Dr. John Fortner, Aug. 24-25, Sept. 21-22, Oct. 26-27
- ▶ "Transformational Teaching," Dr. Jerry Bowling, Aug. 31-Sept. 1, Nov. 2-3, Dec. 7-8

Anderson Named Alumnus of the Year

Lynn Anderson (M.A., 1965) was named Alumnus of the Year at the Alumni Dinner

April 5. President of Hope Network Ministries, Anderson is a nationally recognized speaker and author.

Hope Network Ministries has the goals of developing small mentoring groups of ministers and elders and producing resources to empower ministry leaders. To find out more, visit www.lynnanderson.org.

“By participating with Lynn in his shepherding seminars, I have seen firsthand the positive impact he is having on the kingdom of God,” says Dr. Evertt Huffard, vice president/dean. “In this year of ‘Courage to Lead’ at the Graduate School, his example shines brightly as a beacon to congregational leaders drawing strength from his lifetime of courageous leadership.”

Anderson’s books include *They Smell Like Sheep*, a newly released *They Smell Like Sheep, Volume 2*, and *Longing for a Homeland*, all published by Howard Books.

Anderson’s most valuable



LYNN AND CAROLYN ANDERSON

asset is his network of resource people. He has friends and colleagues everywhere. He has connections with the best information, and he is called by God to get that information to the people who need it most. He feels called by God to consistently, passionately and effectively coach and equip church

leaders for the 21st century.

“Lynn represents the kind of leader developed at Harding Graduate School,” says Christine Parker (MAC, 2002; welcomememphis@bellsouth.net), president of the alumni council. “He is a leader transformed by the grace of God, but also a leader transforming other leaders.”

Clyde Lewis Granted Honorary Doctorate

At the May 5 commencement exercises, Clyde Lewis (clewis@harding.edu) was recognized for his many contributions to the Graduate School by receiving the doctor of laws degree from Harding University. Lewis has logged more than 7,000 volunteer hours and was responsible in large part for the digitizing of L.M. Graves Library’s card catalog.



Dr. Huffard presents Clyde Lewis an honorary doctorate.

Graham Tapped for Worthy Woman Award

Corinne Graham was named Worthy Woman by Associated



GRAHAM

Women for Harding at the April 20 meeting in Searcy, Ark. She was also named Member of the Year for the Memphis chapter.

“Corinne has been a faithful, loyal supporter of AWH from time immemorial,” says Barbara Taylor, president of the Memphis Chapter. “She is loving and tough, someone you want to have on your side! And she is great fun to work with.”

West Lectures Scheduled

The W. B. West Lectures are slated for Nov. 1-2. The annual lectures, sponsored by the Student Association, bring to campus a scholar who has published work related to the year’s theme. The lectures open to the public begin at 7 p.m. Thursday.

Complex Perspectives

It might strike us as odd that soon after meeting a man he just called down from a tree, Jesus invites himself over for dinner. But even more unusual than this boldness is his selection of host, for he invites himself into the home of a tax collector. If you are going to invite yourself to someone else's house, at least go somewhere that will be socially advantageous, right? Apparently not. Jesus seeks an opportunity to simultaneously address both the diminutive derelict and those seeing themselves as too righteous for such ministry encounters.

While its quick pace and colorful nature has made it celebrated among youths, the story speaks volumes about present day ministry for people of all ages. Jesus is interested

in seekers, not stereotypes. One gets the feeling while reading Luke's record that members of "the crowd" think they see something. They think they see Zacchaeus, while in reality they only see his occupation. Jesus sees both.

This story demonstrates the complexity of ministry. Zacchaeus is not a predictable character, not completely defined by terms like rich, short and tax collector. Yet the fact that this simplified perception has failed should not surprise us. Just one chapter earlier another tax collector was exalted above a Pharisee because he approached God humbly. And earlier in Luke's Gospel, we get a glimpse of many fringe people finding a home near God's heart, like a shepherd (2), a man with leprosy (5), a sinful woman

(7), and a Samaritan (10).

As I reflect on my time at the Graduate School of Religion, I cannot help but think about the idea of perspective. Some might understand the purpose of education as focusing, in hopes of finding clarity. I have found, though, that my education has broadened my perspective, which has produced a greater sympathy. Since the world is complex and filled with complex people who experience complex stories, a challenge exists for Christian leaders to see things differently. This challenge is confronted most faithfully by those who are able to see individuals among crowds and stories among stereotypes.

► Bob Turner, M.Div. student, bturner00@yahoo.com

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