



Volume 1, Issue 1

April, 2008



## “Practical” Preaching—by Jerry Wragg

One of the dominant reasons so many sermons focus on moralistic “practicalities” is because of entrenched misguidance about application in preaching. It seems we have systematically trained this generation to believe that behavioral changes are equal to whole life change. Said another way, we’ve come to think that new actions equal new spirituality. True, all authentic exposition exhorts the will of the hearer and calls for life change, but what does this mean and how is it accomplished?

Many books and articles on the subject make the case that the difference between boring exegetical sermons and powerful exposition is “practical application”. Are they correct? I believe this assertion is only partially on target. Preaching for life change is the duty of all shepherds charged with feeding the flock. However, just how true life change occurs cannot be reduced to making general (or even specific) suggestions as to how one might “practice” the principles of the sermon. What’s the missing piece? The problem arises from not understanding the importance of preaching the implications of a text be-

fore we suggest practical life changes. By implications, I mean every way in which the scriptures confront and expose wrong thinking, errant convictions, unholy motivations, and idolatrous affections. It is not enough to explain the meaning of the ancient text in its context, assume contemporary parallels, outline some principles, and offer circumstantial “ways to apply” the principles.

The Bible is clear that life transformation occurs when the mind is renewed (Rom 12:2). Preaching should first renovate the hearers reasoning, confront their humanistic worldview, cement new theological convictions, bring sinful motivations under the captivity of Christ, and smash all idols of the heart. By the time a sermon has traversed these crucial “implications” — first for the original hearers and then for today,— practical life changes will become much clearer as the Holy Spirit applies the surgical word, renewing the heart and mind.

What about application? Should preachers load the end of a sermon with practical ways of changing one’s life? Many are con-

vinced that without such a practical list preaching is simply information. Let me suggest that application should involve two kinds of material: (1) The preachers own life changes which have resulted from new convictions, fresh theological depth, and corrected thinking; (2) General suggestions for practical change that naturally and universally rise from the implications of the text. Congregations should be cautioned, however, that such suggestions are limited and mere behavioral changes without mind renewal will lead to superficiality, weakness, and hypocrisy. They should be encouraged to walk by faith, think deeply about the implications by meditating on sound biblical truth, and never become dependent upon someone else’s practical suggestions. Where the universal practice of a principle is obvious, change your life, keeping in mind, however, that the Spirit may desire other specific changes in your personal life that others cannot see and wouldn’t themselves be helped by application in their lives.

*This article was an in-class assignment students recently read and discussed with Jerry Wragg (professor and Chairman of the Board).*

# Summer Session 2008: BC501 Biblical Counseling—Dr. Wayne Mack



**Classes will be held on Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 8:30am - 4:30pm, August 5-20, 2008.**

Dr. Wayne Mack—After nearly 20 years of pastoral ministry, Dr. Mack began teaching college and graduate courses in biblical counseling at The Master's College and Seminary; Westminster Theological Seminary; Biblical Theological Seminary; and the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation. Dr. Mack was instrumental in developing and expanding the undergraduate major in Biblical Counseling at The Master's College, as well as planning and supervising the development of a master's degree in Biblical Counseling.

Wayne is a charter member of the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors (NANC). For much of this time, he has served as an executive board member and holds the status of Member of the Academy in this organization. Currently, Wayne and his wife live and minister in South Africa, teaching Biblical Counseling at Grace School of Ministry located at Grace Fellowship Church in Pretoria.

## Admission Requirements

Requirements for admission to TES are:

- Acceptable testimony of saving faith in Jesus Christ
- Acceptable explanation of desires for vocational ministry
- Affirmation by leadership of home and/or current church
- For the M.Div. program, a com-

pleted bachelor's degree from an institution recognized by TES

- For the diploma program, an acceptable level of education and applicable ministry experience
- Completed application process (if viewing this newsletter on your computer, [click here](#) for downloadable application. Otherwise contact the seminary office for one.)

## Purpose Statement of The Expositors Seminary



The purpose of The Expositors Seminary is to magnify the glory of God

by serving the local church through training, equipping, mentoring, and affirming men who are called by the Lord Jesus Christ into the ministry of the gospel.

Our purpose is accomplished through an educational program within an environment of spiritual fellowship that emphasizes an unre-served commitment to the worship of God, the authority of Holy Scripture, the pursuit of personal holiness, the priority of the local church, and the mission of penetrating the world with God's truth.

## April/May Chapel Schedule

- 4/2 Jeff Crotts
- 4/9 Rich Hines, Aurora Ministries
- 4/16 Dr. George Zemek
- 4/23 Dr. Tom Holland, Wales Evangelical School of Theology
- 4/30 Paul Seger, Biblical Ministries Worldwide
- 5/7 Chris Pixley, Pastor-Teacher, Grace Bible Church, Brandon
- 5/14 Q & A Chapel
- 5/21 Lance Quinn, Pastor-Teacher, The Bible Church of Little Rock

## 2008 Calendar

- April 2—Registration for Summer Session and Fall Semester
- May 21—Final Day of Spring Semester
- August 5—First day of Summer Session
- August 25—Orientation / Registration for Fall Semester
- August 26—First Day of Fall Semester
- September 4—Final day for late registration and add/drop a class w/o penalty
- October 29—Registration for spring semester

# About The Expositors Seminary

## Facilities

The Expositors Seminary (TES) is located at four church campuses:

- Grace Immanuel Bible Church in Jupiter Florida
- Grace Bible Church in Brandon Florida
- The Bible Church of Little Rock in Little Rock , Arkansas
- Grace Community Church in Jacksonville Florida

Each church ministry provides a healthy model of church life and expository preaching.

## Unique Church-based Training

Theological education is the task and responsibility of the church. Scriptures

declare the church of the living God to be, "the pillar and support of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). The training at TES takes place within the context of the life and oversight of local churches. Faithful and proven pastors, teachers, and leaders from all four churches unite to provide the student with an education that combines informed scholarship with pastoral mentoring. Most classes take place on Tuesday and Wednesday at each location.

## Use of Technology

Although TES is located at four local church campuses, all four classrooms are seamlessly integrated over a dedicated private network for one real-time classroom experience. Each of our campus churches has a state-of-the-art classroom that is linked to the others by real-time video technology. This allows for gifted pastors and teachers from each church to instruct students in all four locations simultaneously with live interaction between the student and his teacher.

Each church campus provides a resource center for the student which includes primary reference volumes for biblical research, periodicals, and exceptional access to online libraries. Students are given access to [seminarylibrary.com](http://seminarylibrary.com), a digitized library containing thousands of searchable, hi-resolution books that normally reside in only the best theological libraries.

## M.Div. Curriculum

Our focus is to offer one degree, the Master of Divinity. The curriculum presents a study program in graduate level theological education to provide a pastor-teacher with the necessary exegetical, theological, and practical skills needed for pastoral or missionary service. Students are mentored by experienced shepherds who know the pain and pleasure of tending a flock and have proven faithful in expository preaching and pastoral ministry.

## TES Catalog

If viewing this newsletter on your computer, [click here](#) to download the catalog. Or contact the seminary to have one mailed to you.



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*Because Truth Matters...  
For Life and Ministry*

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**We're on the Web!**

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