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ON THE COVER
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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Mark Young, PhD

MANAGING EDITOR
Andrea Weyand

MAGAZINE STAFF
Michael Roberts
Rochelle Smith

EDITING
Jessica Schroeder

WRITING
Rochelle Smith

PHOTOGRAPHY
Rochelle Smith
Denver Seminary

DESIGN
Cahoots Communications, Inc.

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ADDRESS CORRECTIONS OR SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS CAN BE SENT TO:
Denver Seminary
Attention: Magazine
6399 South Santa Fe Drive
Littleton, Colorado 80120
magazine@denverseminary.edu
800.922.3040 or 303.761.2482

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DENVER SEMINARY®

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

"Are you living a questionable life?"

I heard a speaker pose this question and it caught me off guard. First, I had to figure out what he meant by "questionable." Did he mean, "Am I living in a way that causes people to doubt whether I'm honest?" No. He was urging us to ask ourselves, "Am I living a life that makes people wonder, 'What's different about you?'"

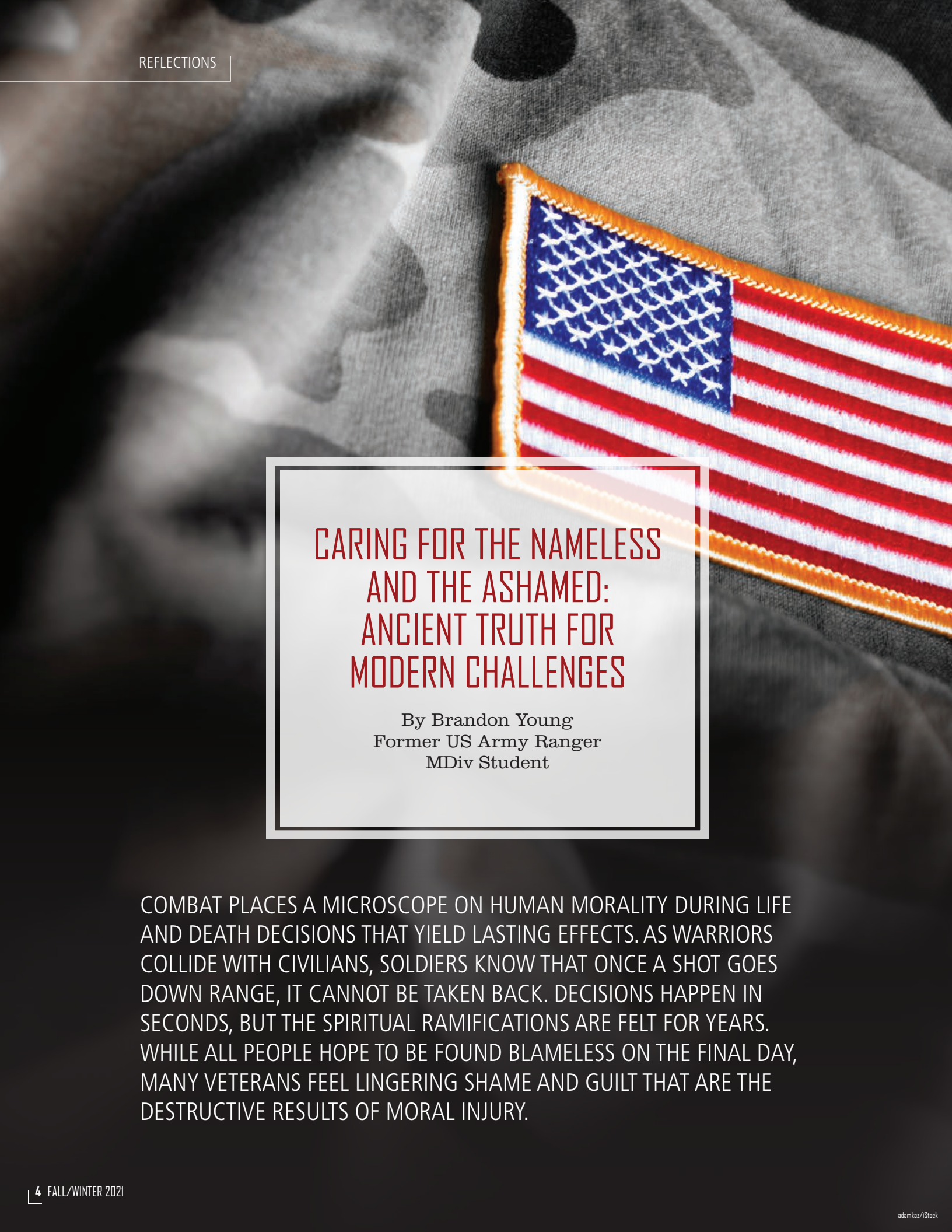
What a thought-provoking question. It feels a little intrusive and a lot convicting. God's people are supposed to be different. And if folks aren't asking us why we're different, then we're not living out our identity and calling as people whose lives have been revolutionized by the gospel.

"What's different about you?" In our polarized world, one of the ways we can be different is to take to heart Matthew 5:9, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God."* In this age of outrage, Jesus' words feel more like a gut punch than a blessing. Being a peacemaker sounds like good sentiment, but it doesn't make much sense when people are screaming at you, mocking you, and accusing you of all manner of perceived slights and offenses. Peacemaking is counterintuitive. And, honestly, sometimes we don't want to be peacemakers. There's a perverse pleasure in being outraged. It absolves us from the hard work of reconciliation and provides self-justification for demonizing those who disagree with us or lash out at us. Being outraged, however, is like an addiction; it feels good at the moment, but it ultimately destroys us. By wooing us to sink into our own grievances and those echoed in the tribe where we find solace, it starves our intellect, robs us of courage, and withers our souls.

You want to live a questionable life today? Be a peacemaker even when it feels like the last thing you want to be. And remember Jesus' promise in Matthew 5:9 that peacemakers will be called children (literally, "heirs") of God. Making peace with our enemies reveals the character of our God and carries on the presence of His name for generations. And Paul reminds us that Jesus "made peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:20).

Blessed are the peacemakers!





CARING FOR THE NAMELESS AND THE ASHAMED: ANCIENT TRUTH FOR MODERN CHALLENGES

By Brandon Young
Former US Army Ranger
MDiv Student

COMBAT PLACES A MICROSCOPE ON HUMAN MORALITY DURING LIFE AND DEATH DECISIONS THAT YIELD LASTING EFFECTS. AS WARRIORS COLLIDE WITH CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS KNOW THAT ONCE A SHOT GOES DOWN RANGE, IT CANNOT BE TAKEN BACK. DECISIONS HAPPEN IN SECONDS, BUT THE SPIRITUAL RAMIFICATIONS ARE FELT FOR YEARS. WHILE ALL PEOPLE HOPE TO BE FOUND BLAMELESS ON THE FINAL DAY, MANY VETERANS FEEL LINGERING SHAME AND GUILT THAT ARE THE DESTRUCTIVE RESULTS OF MORAL INJURY.

Associate Professor and Chair of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Programs at Denver Seminary and Retired Air Force Chaplain Dr. Jan McCormack defines moral injury as 1) the injury (or wound) to the soul experienced as a result of a traumatic event; 2) a disruption in an individual's confidence and expectations about his/her own moral behavior (or others' capacity to behave in a just and ethical manner); or 3) the injury or wound in the soul that results when two deeply held ethics (or beliefs) collide and must result in choosing one over the other. While the label "moral injury" may be new, evidence of its prevalence can be seen from America's last campaign in Afghanistan all the way back to Israel's first campaign in Canaan.

SETTING A BIBLICAL PRECEDENT

At the onset of Israel's Canaan campaign, Joshua dispatched two spies armed with his orders and God's law. This law included a prohibition of engaging in covenants with the inhabitants in the land, which the spies violated in their first engagement with Rahab of Jericho. Rahab hid the spies from the city guard, and in exchange, the spies guaranteed the safety of her family during the assault on Jericho. Many view this covenant as a first echo of the blood of Christ that extends mercy throughout eternity. Yet in the forging of the deal, the spies saved their lives, henceforth becoming exegetical fodder for scholars and pastors. They are often labeled as fools ensnared by the trap of a Canaanite harlot or dismissed as pragmatists who chose survival over obedience.

While Rahab is remembered for her act of valor, the spies are forgotten, though they operated with equal merit. Rahab's life was literally in their hands. They had little to gain from engaging in a covenant with Rahab. Secrecy was out the window since their presence in Jericho and their mission had been compromised. And though the gates were shut after Rahab sent away the guard, an exit window existed in the wall. It is hard to imagine that these warfighters could not have easily dispatched Rahab and made their exit without the need for a covenant. The spies assumed great moral distress in their call to grant mercy though they were anointed to distribute justice. They made a character-based call anchored upon their faith in the Lord. And they demonstrated a clear example of how moral injury occurs when forced to choose one conflicting value over the other.

While the law forbade the spies from making a covenant with a Canaanite, the law also forbade them from taking innocent lives. Though they chose mercy in earnest, we see clues of how devastating it must have been for them. The Hebrew word for "innocent" is used three times in

three verses by the spies (Jos. 2:17, 19, and 20), each in relation to themselves being exonerated from guilt if Rahab failed to follow through on her end. Guilt was already in the equation. The Hebrew word for innocence is interpreted elsewhere as free from obligation to oaths, free from guilt, and clean—a need that every veteran seeks in healing the journey post-combat. I certainly did.

My first of four rotations as a US Army Ranger to Afghanistan was in spring 2002. We were sent into the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area trained, equipped, and anointed by the American people to bring the fight to the enemy. Our task force's mission was to kill or capture high value members of the Taliban and Al Qaeda networks. We had our orders and knew our non-negotiables. They were written in the Ranger Creed and The Army Values; they are etched upon my heart through hardship and pain. Resolute to accomplish our mission, our expectations conflicted with reality quickly once we experienced full spectrum warfare, complicated greatly by the presence of civilians on the battlefield.

During one of our first missions, my squad had established a hide site watching over a cluster of compounds on the border. We looked for signs of enemy presence—weapons, military-aged males, the lack of female presence—and relayed intelligence to HQ. We were concealed and out of reach from the locals, or so we thought. On the second day, the sounds of goats and their young shepherd came jingling through, forcing a decision between the mission and the man. Unarmed and uninterested in our activities, we let the goat herder go. Imagine our rage when we walked up on a string of rockets rigged to fire at our safehouse. We were lucky to find the rockets before they ignited that day. We were not so lucky other days. We will never know what part that shepherd may have played, or the countless other similar circumstances. But we will all question whether we made the right decisions when our values collided on the battlefield.





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FAITH IS OFTEN THE DETERMINING FACTOR

Every warfighter knows that life and death decisions unfolding in real time are far more complicated than the accounts of combat in text or on screen. And every veteran remembers the decisions to pull or not to pull the trigger when justice and mercy hang in the balance between life and death. Rahab's profession of faith in God introduced that infamous ethical bind for the spies. In that moment millennia ago, they were stuck between the justice of the law (Ex. 34:12) and the mercy of the law (Ex. 23:7). They rightly chose the mercy of an innocent woman and her family, and in doing so, the character of the spies is revealed as faithful in the moment, and even more faithful in their honest retelling of all the events to Joshua upon their return (Jos. 2:23). They could have easily omitted the encounter with Rahab. They told the truth, refusing to compromise their integrity though knowingly violating the law.

When lives are at stake and actors must choose between two poor options, faith is often the determining factor that propels people to choose the hard right over the easy wrong. It would have been easier for Rahab to disclose the spies to the messengers of the king of Jericho, but it would have been wrong. It would have been easier for the spies to dispatch Rahab quietly on the roof and ditch her body in the flax stalks. It would have been easier for us to dispatch the young goat herder in the mountains. But those would have been the wrong decisions. It would have been easier for the spies to omit the report of Rahab and the oath to Joshua, but that would have been wrong as well. Rahab chose the hard path and was rewarded. The spies also chose the hard, right decision and are nameless and dismissed, a feeling that many veterans relate to, and one with dangerous ramifications.

Since the onset of the war in Afghanistan and Iraq, suicides among active military and former military personnel have continued to rise. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, closely linked to suicide, is also often exacerbated by guilt and shame and the burdens of moral injuries.


Though Joshua's spies remain nameless, the veterans of Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam, and America's other wars are our neighbors. Many suffer in silence, remembering the decisions they made in combat. We ended our twenty-year war in Afghanistan, and the moral injuries that veterans experienced in combat are resurfacing. They are also resurfacing within Vietnam veterans who have struggled with questions of shame and guilt since the fall of Saigon. **The opportunity to be the Church in the midst of this darkness is upon us. And the chance to point the hurting to Jesus is one we cannot dismiss.** Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28-30). May we be the people found walking into hidden places and pointing people to the Great Shepherd who brings rest for the soul.

Brandon Young

DENVER SEMINARY STUDENT, MDiv IN LEADERSHIP; FORMER US ARMY RANGER

Hear more about Moral Injury from Brandon Young on episode 78 of the Seminary's Engage360 podcast at denverseminary.edu/podcast, Apple Podcasts, or Spotify. Brandon Young is an MDiv student at Denver Seminary. He is a former US Army Ranger, co-founder of Applied Leadership Partners, and married to Kelly Young. They have two children, Jaden and Elliot.





“Preacher, worship leader, pastor, professor, encourager, mentor, and friend, Dr. Gilbert enriched our lives and changed Denver Seminary in profound and beautiful ways.”

– **Denver Seminary President Mark Young**

ON TUESDAY, APRIL 27, OUR DEAR FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE, REV. DR. FELIX GILBERT, PASSED INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

Felix was part of the Denver Seminary community many years, earning his Master of Divinity in 2008 and his Doctor of Ministry degree in May 2017. He joined the faculty in 2013 and served as assistant professor of Pastoral Leadership and Ministry and director of the Urban Initiative, as well as founding the Black Student Fellowship. He and his wife, Kotane, served as co-pastors of Restoration Christian Fellowship. Felix is survived by Kotane and their three adult children, Veronica, Gerald, and Eddie.

Through the bold vision and steadfast leadership and determination of Dr. Gilbert, Denver Seminary established the Black Student Fellowship Endowed Scholarship in 2019. Dr. Gilbert had and spread a contagious passion for equipping the Black community to share the good news of the gospel, and he saw seminary education as key to this pursuit. To honor Dr. Gilbert and his legacy, the scholarship was renamed the Dr. Felix Gilbert Black Student Endowed Scholarship in May 2021.

Dr. Gilbert invited all to participate in his vision of affordable, accessible, and theologically sound seminary education. It is because of community support and this shared vision that we can offer this scholarship. Denver Seminary is immeasurably thankful for the impact that Dr. Gilbert has had on our institution and our community. We are proud to honor his legacy by offering our students the Dr. Felix Gilbert Black Student Endowed Scholarship.

PEACEMAKING

IN A BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Dr. Richard Hess

PEACEMAKING AS PRESERVED IN THE BIBLE IS NOT SIMPLY THE END OF HOSTILITIES. PEACE IS PART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THE SEARCH FOR AND REALIZATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS THAT PROMISED PLACE WHERE THE WOLF WILL LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB AND WHERE, AS RALPH BUNCHE PARK (NAMED FOR THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO WIN THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE) IN NYC STILL PORTRAYS ON ITS ISAIAH WALL, THE TEXT OF ISAIAH 2:4:

They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Making peace on a national level must include an appreciation and respect for nations.

But where is peace? Ours is sadly a divisive age where political ideologies form the basis for demonization of other Christians, calling them names and attacking them. Sadly, this often overlooks the real persecution of the Christian church in North Korea, China, the Middle East, and other countries such as Nigeria, where in some places one's identity as a Christian is enough to be imprisoned and even put to death. It overlooks the assault on people in the womb where the laws restricting this in any way are being lifted and government finances are pouring in. The Church is the body of Christ and it is being torn apart. Where is peace?

Sadly absent in so many of these ideologies is that peacemaking begins with the confession of the image of God as created completely in every human (Genesis 1:26–28; 9:6). No matter who the person, we are not born somehow lesser, greater, oppressed, or oppressor in God's sight. We are born with equal value before God (and also before His Church), and with a transcendent value that cannot be quantified in any material possessions (and cannot be reduced to a materialist philosophy). It is the great Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, who loved us each so much that He died for us, rising from the dead and conquering it so that He might give us eternal life (John 3:16). He calls us to follow in His footsteps, with the promise that whatever the cost our salvation is won (Daniel 3:16–18; Matthew 5:10–12; 10:28) and the victory is certain (Psalm 2; 110).

The Kingdom of God relativizes all other kingdoms of this earth and the spiritual forces behind them (Ephesians 6:12). We may justly be proud of the good things of our nation, and we may repent of the bad things. No two nations or parties are equal in these matters, but all are to come under God's rule. For the Christian, the

kingdom of God must come first, and its values must guide us as God sought to do for ancient Israel. God wanted them and us to be priests on behalf of the world, interceding for peace and righteousness and living lives to accomplish that. May they and us, as Christians, fulfill our roles as a kingdom of priests (Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9). We are called to be channels of God's gracious desire to bless the nations of the world with His peace (Genesis 12:1–3) and even to sacrifice our lives (as the ancient burnt offerings where the animal was entirely offered to God [Leviticus 1; cf. Romans 12:1–2]). Peace from God does not come, however, by showing favoritism toward the wealthy or toward the crowd or toward the poor (Exodus 23:1–7).

Sadly absent in so many of these ideologies is that peacemaking begins with the confession of the image of God as created completely in every human.



While we may work for such values, true peacemaking begins with possessing that peace in our own hearts and minds. We are called to find peace in ourselves. Paul's blessings that the peace of God (Philippians 4:7) and the peace of Christ (Colossians 3:15) rule in our hearts draw upon the sentiment found in the ancient blessing of Aaron for the people of God, a blessing that concludes with the prayer that the Lord may give to His people peace or "shalom":

**The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace
(Numbers 6:24–26, NIV).**

Peace begins within our hearts. Without peace there, it will not come to the world around us.

With peace in our hearts, we will radiate the peace of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), the peace of a Spirit-filled life.

If we know peace in our hearts, then we can begin to express it in the world around us. We can bring healing to that world through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Governments and political programs can be useful (or not) for assisting in the bringing of peace. However, no program or political philosophy is perfect. All will fail without the courageous and clear engagement by Christians in overcoming this world by living according to a transcendent value system (Proverbs 4:23) in the presence of God's Spirit (Psalm 20:7).

When I think of peacemakers in the Old Testament, I think of the prophets. While they came with words of indictment and judgment, their tear-filled eyes saw beyond the sin and God's anger toward it, to divine restoration and the coming of true shalom. The words from Isaiah 2 are one example among many. Yet their courage to stand for what was true came at a great price. Jeremiah was despised as a traitor and imprisoned (Jeremiah 20:10; 37:15). Amos was denounced and driven from Bethel (Amos 7:10–17).

When I think of peacemakers in the Old Testament, I think of the prophets. While they came with words of indictment and judgment, their tear-filled eyes saw beyond the sin and God's anger toward it, to divine restoration and the coming of true shalom.

Hosea lived out the suffering and rejection that prepared him to be a peacemaker on a deeply personal level. Commanded to marry Gomer, she and Hosea had three children whose names speak of the end of peace: Jezreel, where the punishment





Irik Bikmukhametov/Stock

would come; Lo-Ruhamah, “not loved (by God)”; and Lo-Ammi, “not my people.” Even more personal than the identity of his children, was the breaking apart of Hosea’s marriage. At the beginning of Hosea chapter 3 we read:

The LORD said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes.” So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a homer and a lethek of barley. Then I told her, “You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will behave the same way toward you.” For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the LORD and to his blessings in the last days (Hosea 3:1–5, NIV).

Hosea’s experience paralleled that of God with Israel. Like Hosea’s wife, the people of Israel had sinned. His wife had sunk into shame and debt slavery. Yet Hosea did not hesitate when God told him to go and buy her back. The shekels and barley that he paid for her suggest a picture of collecting whatever he could find from his home and giving it all out of his love for Gomer. The depths of his love and desire to bring her back cost Hosea everything, all his material possessions and all his self-respect. Yet, he did not pause. He brought her back where she could be safe. It was the peace in Hosea’s heart that enabled him to look beyond himself and, led by God, enabled him to bring that peace to his wife and family. Making peace begins with God’s peace

in our hearts and progresses to those around us. This was the experience of Hosea, just as God applied it to His own experience with his people Israel. They had also ended their peace with Him by seeking after “lovers” and betraying Him. Yet the divine love would reach them wherever they were and return them to the fullness of the Lord and His blessings toward them, divine shalom.

**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not
let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**

We can know this peace. We can make peace with family and friends, and express it toward the world in which we find ourselves (whatever their response might be). Jesus Christ sends the Holy Spirit to fill and empower us with peace (John 14:26) and He promises us (v. 27, NIV):

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Go in shalom.

Dr. Richard Hess

**DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR
OF OLD TESTAMENT**

Dr. Richard Hess joined the Denver Seminary faculty in 1997. He earned a PhD from Hebrew Union College, an MDiv and a ThM from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a BA from Wheaton College. He is the author of several books including his most recent, The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction.



Choosing to See

By Andrea Weyand

Denver Seminary alumna Kate Lloyd exemplifies: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28–30).

As the program director of the Mile High WorkShop, Kate is helping grow community partnerships and employ and support men and women coming out of homelessness, addiction, and incarceration as they navigate the unfamiliar systems of employment.

When Kate enrolled in Denver Seminary’s Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program in 2011, she was on her way to serving as a therapist, specializing in marriage and family counseling. But when it was time for her to participate in practicum, she realized the space she thought she was called to serve really wasn’t her calling at all. Discernment, time, and prayer led Kate to complete her internship at Judi’s House, an organization dedicated to helping children and families grieving a death to find connection and healing. Following this assignment, she found herself at Shiloh House, then Open Door Ministries, and finally at Mile High WorkShop, where she serves today.

The people she seeks to help have shed understanding on the very real perils of living in a world that—in Kate’s words—“We can choose not to see or to see.”

Though Kate’s career path veered from her original vision of marriage and family counseling, this change in trajectory demonstrates that counseling encompasses much more than conversations within the walls of an office or via telehealth. Kate’s degree benefits her daily in her work with marginalized people. Additionally, Kate has learned that grace can be extended by all people to all people; she has discovered that even as she supports others, they in turn are teaching her about the world of addiction and homelessness, as well as life after incarceration. The people she seeks to help have shed understanding on the very real perils of living in a world that—in Kate’s words—“We can choose not to see or to see.”



ADJUST AND ADAPT

“Although I am not using my counseling degree for its original intention, I use the skill set I gained every day in my work with our participants and staff,” says Kate. She states that her time in seminary helped her to think critically about how to apply what she learned in the classroom to her daily work.

“In the classroom you learn a lot of theory and you are introduced to different kinds of approaches, techniques, treatment options, and diagnoses. I remember working with mentors who reminded me that the application of all that you learn is not always a clean, neat process. You have to be able to adjust with the person sitting in front of you and adapt to what they need based on what you know about them,” she adds.

Today, adaptability is key to the work that Kate does, as she works with those who are often unseen and unheard.



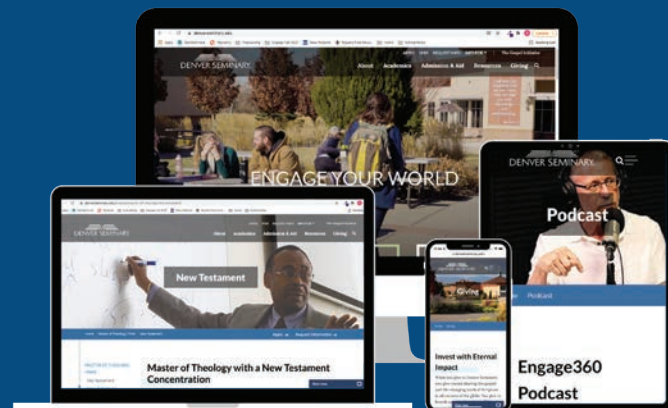
"I remember working with mentors who reminded me that the application of all that you learn is not always a clean, neat process. You have to be able to adjust with the person sitting in front of you and adapt to what they need based on what you know about them,"

"Denver Seminary helped me grow a sense of flexibility and to really see the person in front of me with respect and empathy. Academic theory may not fit them—I need to be the one to adjust to serve them, not the other way around. When I reflect on my time at Denver Seminary, that's probably the biggest thing I learned—how I can change to serve others, rather than expect others to change for me," she concludes.



Kate Lloyd earned a Master of Arts in Counseling degree from Denver Seminary in 2014. She is married to Joe Lloyd, a 2017 MDiv graduate. Their daughter, Charlie, was born in January 2020 and they also serve as

foster parents. Learn more about Mile High WorkShop at milehighworkshop.org.



Denver Seminary Launches New Website

Denver Seminary's new website is designed to make exploring the Seminary online a more inviting experience for all of our website visitors, particularly prospective students. With simplified navigation and an inviting new look, our hope is that site visitors will have a welcoming experience that encourages them to stay online and explore Denver Seminary further.

The new site also allows for more flexibility as we work to ensure our website remains a fresh and updated resource for all of our site visitors. Check it out at DenverSeminary.edu.

Denver Seminary's Free Online Courses

Denver Seminary's free online courses will bring our professors into your living room, office, and church with grounded Bible teaching that has been the hallmark of our school for over 70 years. We have four courses to choose from, and we invite you to share these with your friends, church leaders, and others.

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Finding and Following Your God-Given Calling, taught by Dr. Angie Ward

Unlocking the Parables of Jesus, taught by Dr. Craig Blomberg

What's That Book About?

taught by Denver Seminary President Dr. Mark Young

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ALWAYS AT WAR

By Professor Patty Pell

HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT WE ARE CONSTANTLY AT WAR? WAR LANGUAGE CLUTTERS OUR SPEECH AND PERMEATES OUR ATTITUDES. WAR AGAINST POVERTY, WAR AGAINST CRIME, WAR AGAINST DRUGS, WAR AGAINST FREEDOM, WAR AGAINST FAMILIES, WAR AGAINST OIL AND GAS, AND WAR AGAINST WHATEVER IS THE CURRENT RHETORICAL STRATEGY IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE'S STRUGGLE FOR DOMINANCE. ONE CAN FIND WAR LANGUAGE IN THE PAGES OF OUR HARD COPY NEWSPAPERS, IN THE NEWS INDUSTRY'S TELEVISION AND RADIO COVERAGE, AND ON EVERY CONCEIVABLE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM. WHOEVER DISAGREES WITH YOU IS NOW "AT WAR" WITH YOU.

On one hand, war language signals the seriousness of a challenge. War language is used because it communicates an existential threat that, in theory, spurs people to action. War language is used because those using it assume that highlighting a threat will inspire people to stand and fight.

But there is an insidious danger inherent in using war language because being at war requires *having an enemy*. The treacherous nature of this language is that as sinful, broken people we slide so easily from a war on "something" to a war on "someone." We can rapidly and uncritically move from a war on poverty to a war on the *people* who are impoverished. In our humanity, we have difficulty separating the rhetorical war language from those who represent that against which we "war." As humans, we find it nearly impossible to wage a war on a concept or even an injustice without waging war against an enemy, and the only response—in this world—to enemies is to destroy them.

Destruction of the enemy is the strategy when one is at war. Culturally, we have adopted war language in reference to almost any social concern, which leads us down a road where destruction of those with whom we disagree is not only accepted but encouraged because winning a war necessitates it.

Unfortunately, followers of Christ have not been immune to the use of war language. The Church has frequently embraced the same kind of vocabulary and framework, thinking that war language would inspire believers to zealous fighting in various culture wars, while at the same time communicate to the world that the Church cares deeply about the particular social concern or manifestation of immorality. What might be our response to the pervasive use of war language in the culture around us and in the church? Let's refer to four specific commands from Scripture.

THE SCRIPTURE COMMANDS US TO LOVE

The Old Testament commands Israel to love in three very specific ways. In Deuteronomy 6:4–5, Israel is commanded to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength. The command to love the Lord is foundational to Israel's re-orientation from life as an enslaved people under physical, emotional, spiritual, and economic oppression and into a life of liberation in relationship with a God of abundance. Israel had lived for hundreds of years as an enslaved people where their bodies were commodities, where they lacked human agency and where they were restricted from worshipping their God. When God rescues them and carries them "on eagles wings" to Himself (Ex 19:4), they needed to learn what it meant to be in relationship with Him as His people and how to protect and preserve the freedoms they had been given. Loving God with their entire being was foundational to Israel's identity and to their ability to live in freedom as a community and to preserve the holistic redemption they had received.

The second command to love is found in Leviticus 19:18 where Israel is commanded to love their neighbor: "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord." The love of God was to flow directly into love for one's neighbor. Love of God found its practical expression in the way Israel was to view those in the community. The love of neighbor was an active rather than a passive love, exhorting Israel to *treat one another in a way they would like to be treated* rather than just avoiding mistreatment.

God had commanded His people to love Him with every part of themselves and to love their neighbors. And just in case Israel wanted to define "neighbor" as people just like them and put boundaries around who they were required to love, God commanded them to love the foreigner. "The foreigners residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD" (Lev 19:34). The temptation for



humanity to love those who are similar and to exclude others is so strong that God explicitly commands Israel to see the “other” not as foreigners, not as those who differed in some way, but as the native-born—in essence to see them as neighbors. Thus, if they were neighbors, they had the right to be loved by those who loved the God of heaven and earth.

But by the time Jesus arrives on the scene, Israel had reverted to a very narrow and limited definition of who their neighbors were and whom they were responsible to love. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus explodes their understanding of who their neighbor is and for whom they were responsible. The implication in the parable is that those in the kingdom of God are responsible for everyone, even those who are different.

The ever-expanding circles of love that we see in Scripture reach a climax in the fourth command to love in Matthew when Jesus says, “You have heard it said love your neighbor and hate your enemy” (Matthew 5:43, NIV). Hating your enemy is not found in the Old Testament law, and yet it had become the way in which Israel approached their enemies; it had become embedded in their attitudes and actions. Israel had redrawn the boundaries and redefined who their neighbors were and whom they were responsible to love.

Jesus shatters this narrow understanding. The new community—the people of God’s kingdom—is motivated and powered by a different kind of love. They will love God, their neighbors, foreigners, and now their enemies! This love of the enemy is the ultimate reflection of what Jesus will do for His people and the ultimate expression of who the people of the kingdom should be. Jesus will give Himself up for sinners—He will lay down His life *in love* for those who reject Him, for all people. The Apostle Paul in Romans says it like

this: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (5:8). We could just as easily say: “While we were yet enemies of God, Christ died for us.”

The people of the kingdom are called to live in a new way. They are called to be motivated and powered by other-worldly love. It takes other-worldly love to love people who hurt you, those who persecute you, people with whom you disagree on really important matters, or people who actively work against you.

The social concerns and struggles in our communities and in the world are serious, complex realities, and there is genuine disagreement on many matters, but embracing war language justifies seeing others as enemies rather than neighbors for whom we are responsible and to whom we are called to extend love. Instead of trying to inspire a world through a rhetorical call to arms, the Church has an incredible opportunity to love God, love our neighbors, love the foreigner, and love our enemies. What kind of powerful witness of the kingdom of God might the Church be if our language and our lives rejected the battle and embraced the depth of love? Let us be conformed to His image.

Patty Pell

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Professor Patty Pell joined Denver Seminary in 2016. She received her MA in Biblical Studies (Old Testament) from Denver Seminary and BA from the University of Wyoming. She has published several books and study guides with InterVarsity Press including Esther: Character Under Pressure, Hospitality: God’s Call to Compassion, and Motherhood: Being Grounded in Christ.



BRINGING PARTS TOGETHER

By Debra Anderson

You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family" (Matthew 5:9, *The Message*).

Seminary gave me more questions than answers. My courses gave me tools, stoked my curiosity and left me wanting more. After so many lectures, my mind was swimming with interesting but disjointed ideas. I juggled conflicting assertions and what I needed was a way to make more affiliations between my learning and my life. I needed a way to make my learning come to rest in my way of living.

I took my wrestlings to my mentor at the time. He helped me align faithful belief with wisdom and action. After my year with him, I felt more assured that my pieces of knowledge all had a place to land. I felt more confidence and more connection between my intellect and my existence.

The work of a mentor is to breathe grace into a mentee's inner conflict. Mentors come alongside a mentee while they explore ambiguities. They ask clarifying questions about achievement, goodness, and significance so that mentees don't divorce

their learning life from their meaningful life. Mentoring helps remove barriers so that a mentee's uncertainty can find respite in Christ.

Grace from a mentor paves the way for wholeness in the life of the mentee. Wholeness, or *shalom* in Hebrew, grows when we become conscious of how our small part affects the whole of life around us. This becomes a positive source of inner confidence and a way of peace. The extent that a mentee will experience wholeness is the extent that he or she receives empowerment to integrate their well-being into their learning.

Some students might initially enroll in seminary for information, but if their mentor is a partner like mine was, they also learn *integration*. A mentor helps the mentee uncover meaningful linkages between learning and life. Splintered ideas turn into significant interpretations, and fragmented material gives way to fullness of mind. A mentor helps their mentee explore wholeness. When a mentee can learn more cooperatively in the context of their life and culture, their mentoring has been an act of peacemaking.



Debra Anderson, Assistant Professor of Training and Mentoring

Debra Anderson earned her MA in Christian Education from Golden Gate Theological Seminary in 2001. She has been a pastor's wife, church planter, conference speaker, Bible teacher, theological researcher, and writer.

NAVIGATING NEW PATHS

By Andrea Weyand

S

ometimes all it takes is a small ember burning inside to grow a little bigger before you take the next step on your faith journey. That's what happened with Ben Nugent, Denver Seminary student and US collegiate director of The Navigators. "A little piece of coal burning inside" ignited, and he began pursuing his master's degree.

For more than 20 years, Ben has served with The Navigators, a career that began not long after finishing his undergraduate degree at Illinois State University. Focused on developing disciples person-by-person and encouraging spiritual growth across all stages of life, The Navigators maintains a strong presence on college campuses—and Ben has spent much of his career supporting young adults in Colorado, Florida, and America's Heartland: Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska.

But not everyone leaves college ready to disciple, Ben noted.

"When you're on campus, ministry events are created for you. If you want to participate in Bible study, you'll be put in Bible study" he said. "To continue to disciple, you have to labor. You have to think about your neighborhood, your workplace, or your gym as your mission field."

BACK TO SCHOOL

While working to guide young adults on the path to discipleship, Ben found his own way back to school.

"I'd been debating for years about taking seminary classes," he said, adding that hermeneutics and church history have been passions that he studied on his own.

But life is not a simple path, and jobs, moves, and the adoption of two children took away what little margin Ben and his wife Melissa had for anything else. However, that ember inside continued to



grow until one day a colleague said, "Let's take a class together at Denver Seminary."

And that's how Ben Nugent, whose career has led him to college campuses around the country, landed in GS500—*Thinking Biblically and Theologically*—to kick off this next stage of life.

For Ben, who is still deciding on his actual degree path, taking one or two classes at a time makes sense, and the option to

attend on-campus or online provides additional opportunities.

"It's scratching an itch that I've had for so long," he said. "I'm building new and different relationships with a diverse group of students and faculty, and I'm widening my perspective on what evangelicalism is and what it means to be an evangelical."



Ben Nugent is a Denver Seminary student and the US Collegiate director of The Navigators. He and his wife Melissa have two children and live in Colorado Springs.

SCMHI: Developing Kingdom Partnerships and Networks



The conversation around mental health support in schools weighs heavily in Colorado, where students, teachers, and administrators grapple with the student wellness crisis and the many tragedies that have laid bare the need for resourced support and research-backed approaches for student and staff wellness. After two years of envisioning, creating, raising funds, hiring, networking, and conducting research, the School Counseling Mental Health Initiative (SCMHI) is bearing much fruit in partnership with Denver Seminary.

The team of five faculty and staff researchers, led by Dr. Adam Wilson, associate professor of counseling and director of SCMHI, has launched partnerships in three Denver-area school systems, and gathered data on the mental health needs of students, families, and educators in the K-12 schools in Colorado. Moreover, despite Covid, the team leveraged online resources to conduct two phenomenological research studies in the public and private school systems. Results have highlighted the growing mental health pressures students, parents, and educators face and the crucial need for adequate mental health support in schools.

“The data SCMHI uncovered is fascinating, but SCMHI is doing more than research—it’s developing kingdom partnerships and networks throughout Colorado, where SCMHI research impacts K-12 staff, and student lives,” said Liz Meier Thornton, research associate.

SCMHI research partnerships and study results have led to tangible changes in Colorado schools. Partner schools have begun increasing mental

health-related training for educators and families and updating policies and procedures that center around developing teams to address educator and provider burnout.

Yet, the need for further research is clear. Analysis of initial data has propelled SCMHI towards the next phase of quantitative research with current partners, while launching new qualitative projects with new partners. In addition, the team continues to network with private, public, and charter schools in Colorado to develop research partnerships to maximize the impact of this research.

Moving forward, the team will submit articles for peer-reviewed journals within the next year, present their research at the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, and share their information as booth hosts at the Colorado School Counselor Association conferences.

However, research on this changing field of study will not end soon. SCMHI will continue collecting data alongside a growing network of school systems and community partners and will disseminate results at regional and national levels to maximize the impact of this research.

Dr. Adam Wilson is an associate professor of counseling and the director of the School Counseling Mental Health Initiative. **Liz Meier Thornton** is a middle school counselor, research associate with SCMHI, and adjunct faculty at Denver Seminary. Listen to Adam and Liz on *Engage360* at denverseminary.edu/podcast.



**School Counseling
Mental Health Initiative**
Community.
Collaboration.
Change.

Creating a Credible, Compelling, and Compassionate Gospel Presence in a Messy World

By Dr. Mark Young
Denver Seminary
President



Few would dispute that creating a credible, compelling, and compassionate gospel presence in our secularized, polarized, and pluralistic society is complex and challenging, even daunting. Yet, that's exactly what the people of God are called to be and to do.

The Church is created to be the embodiment of the gospel of Jesus Christ in a broken and messy world, a community of the redeemed whose *raison d'être* is to point people to Jesus and the hope of redemption in Him. Peter's exhortation to the believers scattered throughout Macedonia is to "*live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us*" (1 Pet. 2:12).

The Church doesn't just *do* public theology; it *is* public theology. And in the public square, the way we engage the tough issues of our day, both in message and in practice, can enhance or hinder the credibility of our testimony of the good news of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom.

THE GOSPEL AND HUMAN SEXUALITY: THE 2021-22 FOCUS

Through our conferences, forums, and workshops, The Gospel Initiative helps ministry leaders better understand and engage controversial issues in ways that are true to Scripture and to our mission to point people to faith in Jesus. Our desire is to focus not just on issues, but on people, particularly those who are often overlooked when the issues are debated—their needs, their questions, and their objections to faith in Jesus.

During the 2021-22 school year, The Gospel Initiative will focus on the subject of human sexuality. Topics to be explored include how

the biblical view of human sexuality differs from the predominant views of sexuality in the broader culture, how engagement in public discourse about sexuality either enhances or hinders the credibility of gospel witness, and how Christians can nurture a healthy and life-giving understanding of sexuality within their congregations.

On October 29, Denver Seminary and The Gospel Initiative held its first of three conferences for the 2021-22 academic year. During the *Compelling and Credible Witness: The Gospel and Human Sexuality* conference, Dr. Mark Yarhouse, director of the Sexual and Gender Identity Institute at Wheaton College, spoke about how the Church can address human sexuality in a biblically responsible and missionally meaningful way. He was joined by Dr. Elizabeth Norris, assistant professor of counseling at Denver Seminary, and Dr. Dennis Hollinger, president emeritus and distinguished professor of Christian ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary to further the conversation.

Save the date for the next events, at which we will welcome Dr. Preston Sprinkle, president of the Center for Faith, Gender, and Sexuality.

January 28, 2022

COMPELLING AND CREDIBLE WITNESS: THE CHURCH AND SEXUAL IDENTITY

April 22, 2022

COMPELLING AND CREDIBLE WITNESS: THE CHURCH AND GENDER IDENTITY

For more information, email gospelinitiative@denverseminary.edu or visit DenverSeminary.edu/tgi.

NOTABLE

News from the
Denver Seminary community



F.Y.I.



John Moreland Named Director of the Urban Initiative

Denver Seminary welcomed John Moreland as the director of the Urban Initiative in August. Moreland currently serves as the bi-vocational senior pastor of Denver Christian Bible Church, is a member of the Colorado Air National Guard, and has taught as an adjunct faculty member for Gateway Seminary. As director of the Urban Initiative, he will continue the work of extending the educational resources of Denver Seminary to Denver's urban communities.

A native of San Antonio, TX, Moreland was born and raised in deep Southern traditions. He felt called to lifelong service of Christian ministry and public service at age 5, began preaching ministry at age 15, and was ordained to the gospel ministry at age 18.

Moreland earned a BS in criminal justice from Wayland Baptist University and an MDiv from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He is currently a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry in Preaching and Pastoral Leadership at Denver Seminary.

Dr. Jan McCormack Honored with National Citizenship Award

Rev. Dr. Jan McCormack, associate professor and chair of Chaplaincy and Pastoral Counseling Programs, was awarded the 2021 National Citizenship Award by the Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America, in October.

This prestigious award is presented annually to recognize an individual or individuals who make a significant contribution in public service and who support the values and needs of US military members and their families.

As a retired Air Force chaplain, McCormack was one of the first generation of women who served as a military chaplain. She helped redefine military chaplaincy as an inclusive profession and her collaboration and contributions over the years paved the way for many to follow. In addition, McCormack produced *The Work of the Chaplain*, which has served as a foundational overview and introduction of chaplaincy through the last 100 years. She was also instrumental in developing and implementing one of the first Master of Divinity programs with an emphasis in chaplaincy.

"We are honored to celebrate Dr. Jan McCormack as she receives the National Citizenship Award. Jan's work has been critical and influential in the field of chaplaincy, and the transformative effects of her service will reach across the nation for decades to come.

– Denver Seminary President Dr. Mark Young

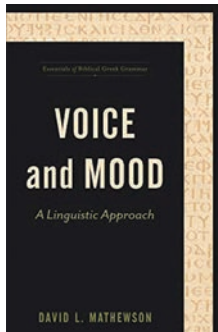
Denver Seminary has established the Clinical Pastoral Education Endowed Fund to honor the impact that Rev. Dr. Jan McCormack has had on Denver Seminary by investing in the CPE Program and subsequent longevity of the program at Denver Seminary. This fund provides a repository of resources to facilitate the advancement of the CPE program. Contact Chris Johnson, VP of Advancement, for more information.



Angela January ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE PHD IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION

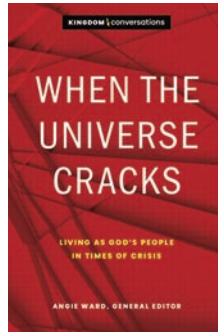
Angela January is the Seminary's new assistant director of the PhD in CES program. She is a US Air Force veteran, graduate of Duke Divinity School, licensed professional counselor, and board certified coach. She has more than twenty years of experience as a career counselor, leadership coach, and mentor in ministry and higher education settings including the Duke University Chapel and Portland Seminary.

Faculty Publications



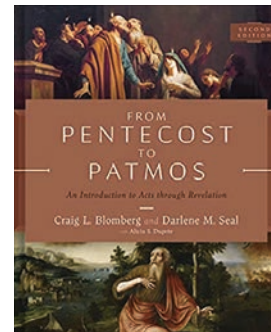
David L. Mathewson, PhD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT
Voice and Mood: A Linguistic Approach (Essentials of Biblical Greek Grammar)

This textbook examines two features of the Greek verb: voice and mood. Drawing on his years of teaching experience, Dr. Mathewson examines these two topics in Greek grammar in light of modern linguistics, especially systemic functional linguistics, and offers fresh insights.



Angie Ward, PhD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM
When the Universe Cracks

This book, edited by Dr. Ward, provides a multifaceted look at the role of crisis in the life of faith through a collection of essays from the front lines of evangelical faith and mission. This assortment of honest and realistic reflections helps readers navigate a world of crisis as faithful Christ followers.



Craig Blomberg, PhD
DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT
From Pentecost to Patmos: An Introduction to Acts through Revelation (2nd ed.)

Dr. Blomberg and Darlene Seal provide the context and clarity that readers need to better understand Acts through Revelation, showcasing the historical, linguistic, and theological implications found in each book. This second edition adds expanded footnotes and an up-to-date introduction to Paul as well as questions, maps, and diagrams.

Denver Seminary Welcomes its First PhD Cohort

This fall, the Seminary welcomed its first cohort of the PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision Program. Denver Seminary's CES PhD program connects students with professors and peers through interactive online environments with the benefit of a yearly in-person residency component on the Denver Seminary campus. Our graduates will be recognized as leaders in counseling, counselor education, supervision, and research.

SNAPSHOT

Kristy McGarvey

* SERVE



Kristy McGarvey joined Denver Seminary as the dean of students in 2020, bringing over 15 years of experience in Christian higher education, facilitating student and resident life at Wheaton College and Crown College. She holds an MDiv from Fuller Theological Seminary and an MA from Wheaton College.

The congruency of Kristy's deep love for the Church as God's people called to be engaged in the world and her experience in Christian higher education made Denver Seminary the perfect fit, as she considered moving from Chicago to Colorado. For Kristy, Denver Seminary is **"not simply a school that trains minds with information but one that prioritizes the holistic formation of students. It prepares them to engage from a place of being grounded in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the foundation of God's Word with the world God loves and desires to meet with this gospel."**

Since joining Denver Seminary, Kristy has worked to cultivate a sense of engagement and belonging around the Seminary's shared vision and values—whether students are part of the global community or living on our Littleton campus. Her hope is that every student leaves Denver Seminary having deeply encountered God's faithfulness and been equipped for healthy relationships across their communities and world.



"We are thrilled to establish the Craig L. Blomberg Endowed Chair of New Testament Studies. Not only does this chair honor the contribution of one of the most influential evangelical New Testament scholars in this generation, it also honors Denver Seminary's commitment to remain at the forefront of biblical studies in the years ahead."

– **Denver Seminary President**
Dr. Mark Young

Dr. Craig L. Blomberg Endowed Chair of New Testament

Denver Seminary has announced the creation of the Dr. Craig L. Blomberg Endowed Chair of New Testament. As Dr. Blomberg looks toward retirement at the end of the 2021-22 academic year, the Seminary intends to honor his legacy and continue to build on the academic excellence that Dr. Blomberg and all of the Biblical and Theological Studies faculty have put in place to lay the foundation for a thriving future.

Endowed Chair positions are valuable for higher education institutions not only to recognize the distinction of outstanding faculty, but to provide additional support for the chair for use in research and teaching. These positions also serve to enhance the desirability and esteem of a program for prospective students. In addition, the Dr. Craig L. Blomberg Endowed Chair of New Testament will continue to affirm our core commitment to biblical authority.

If you would like to learn more about the Dr. Craig L. Blomberg Endowed Chair of New Testament or make a donation to ensure we are able to fully fund this and make it a permanent fund by 2024, please contact Chris Johnson, VP of Advancement, at chris.johnson@denverseminary.edu or 303.762.6924.

100% AGI Giving Opportunity extended to 2021

Charitable donors have an opportunity to grow their impact in 2021, thanks to the extension of a provision to the CARES Act. This provision may allow you to deduct up to 100% of your adjusted gross income for qualifying charitable gifts, potentially eliminating or greatly reducing your federal income taxes. For more information, please contact Chris Johnson, VP of Advancement, at chris.johnson@denverseminary.edu or 303.762.6924.



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