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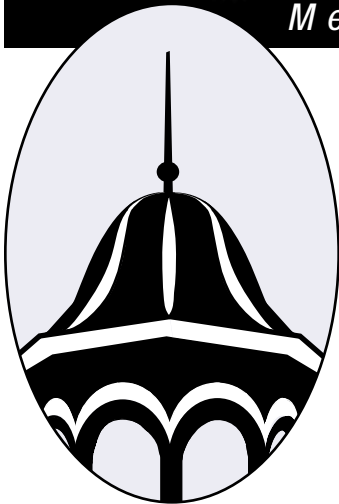
HARDING
UNIVERSITY

The Bridge

Memphis, Tennessee

Harding
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Reconciliation by Dr. Richard Oster, professor of New Testament

Even first-time readers of Scripture do not have to read far before sensing the significance of reconciliation in the storyline of the Bible. The reader does not have to get even 100 verses into the vast body of scriptural materials before reading of man's alienation from his Creator and his estrangement from fellow members of the human race. This two-pronged experience of alienation — vertical alienation from God and horizontal alienation from fellow humans — casts an undeniable shadow over the rest of the Bible.

Jewish Law, the prophets of Israel, and the corporate wisdom of Israel were all animated by this experience of alienation. At the center of Jewish Torah were the Ten Commandments, with its two-pronged emphasis on the need for the Jew's devotion and oneness with his Creator and the need for one's proper treatment of his neighbor in the arena of ethics. The prophets of Israel railed against their contemporaries who sought reconciliation to God through ritual and ceremony rather than a heart-felt repentance and devotion to God. These same preachers of Israel fulminated against the rampant interpersonal alienation manifested in the mistreatment of disenfranchised widows, orphans and aliens, as well as widespread

neglect of the poor. The sages likewise focused on the need for harmony and peace among family members as well as among the individuals and groups of Israel.

The writings of the New Testament make clear their continuity with the Old Testament in regard to the need for reconciliation. In a conversation with a Jewish scribe about the first and second greatest commandments (Mark 12:28-31), Jesus makes it clear to all Christians for all times that followers of Jesus share with Judaism the belief that the two great arenas for reconciliation are our relationship with God and our relationship with others. Unlike Judaism, however, Christians know that God's final solution for this problem of human alienation is found only in God's work through his son Jesus (Romans 5:10-11, Colossians 1:15-20). And this reconciliation is not just a one-time handshake with God at baptism. We must continue to hold hands with God. When some of the Corinthian Christians themselves had strayed from God, Paul commands them, "Be reconciled to God!" (2 Corinthians 5:20). Human reconciliation is also part of God's agenda for Christians. Jesus commanded estranged brothers to "be reconciled" to one another (Matthew

5:24), and the New Testament is replete with commands to believers to work hard to remove alienation between themselves and others. All of this is also a result of God's work in Christ (Ephesians 4:37).

The individual Christian cannot be satisfied with only experiencing reconciliation personally. God has given the church the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). In addition to making clear to the world God's saving reconciliation through the cross of Christ, the church must also promote reconciliation through its ministries and resources. In particular, the church must be committed to promoting interracial and intercultural reconciliation. Xenophobia and prejudice have no place in God's church as long as it hopes and claims to be a global religion. The home must also not escape the Gospel's message of reconciliation. Violence, apathy, neglect and bitterness are all enemies of God's vision for homes where reconciliation from the Gospel has taken root. Congregations themselves must also be immersed "in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Regardless of one's personal preferences, there is no future in expecting the church to return to early times. See RECONCILIATION Page 3

Herring Honored

The Class of 2003 honored Ruth Herring at May commencement. Student Association president Lance Hawley presented her with a plaque to thank her for her 33 years in the registrar's office. Herring plans to retire at the end of August.

Adjunct Publishes Book

Linda Oxford, adjunct professor of counseling, announced the publication of *Action Therapy with Families and Groups*, a book she co-edited with Daniel J. Wiener. The book was released May 15 by the APA Press. Oxford is clinical director at Agape Child and Family Services in Memphis.

Spring 2003 Dean's List

The following students took 9 semester hours and earned at least a 3.50 GPA during the 2003 spring semester: Heath Amos, Nathan Bills, Anna Burson, Steve Cloer, Mary Cunningham, Leoncio Dominguez, David Ellis, Luke Hartman, Michael Heim, Christopher Hill, Charles Kiser, Nathan Knappier, John Koch, Robert Logsdon, Joshua Marcum, Mack McFarland, Ben Roberts, Melissa Suggs, Marc Walters and Rusty Woods.

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From the Dean

Discovering Hope



Since our family moved from Nazareth 22 years ago, I have tried to visit the church there at least once every couple of years. For 10 days in June, I had the opportunity to serve the Christians in Nazareth and Galilee once again.

Short-Term Missions

Short-term mission trips can do a lot of good if they are well planned and if the local church participates in the planning. Harding University enjoys a rich heritage in missions. One of the reasons so many students participate in short-term mission trips or become missionaries themselves is the involvement of the faculty in missions. Our faculty at the Graduate School of Religion has been involved in 16 mission trips since 2000 to Germany, Switzerland, Ukraine, Hungary, Scotland, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Israel. All of these mission trips have been at the invitation of the local churches.

Such trips provide opportunities for in-depth Bible study, leadership development, continuing training for missionaries, and encouragement to Christians in small churches. My time in Galilee involved visiting an average of two families a day, participating in an evangelistic Bible study, preaching in Nazareth and Eilaboun, mentoring the local evangelist, and teaching four sessions on leadership. For the first time in their history, the church in Nazareth expressed hope in developing elders. In places like Israel, where churches are small and there are no missionaries, such visits bring a lot of hope and encouragement.

Two Fears – One Hope

We cannot discover hope when our fears dominate our lives. Paul faced many dangers in his efforts to bring hope to churches throughout the Roman Empire.

The political environment cannot be used as an excuse to avoid serving God anywhere in the world. The continuing Arab-Israeli conflict takes its toll on all aspects of life in Israel. In the past three years, more than 2,000 Palestinians and 700 Israelis have lost their lives. Tourism, a

primary source of revenue for both sides, could be years from building up again. The constant threat of aggression and terrorism cultivates daily tension. The economic forecast grows darker as businesses and government offices continue to face deep cutbacks. Thousands of small businesses have folded. Professionals such as engineers and lawyers have lost jobs. College graduates may search for two years to find a job. The "road map" to peace may seem tenuous and hopeless, but the mission of the church is never hopeless. Anywhere.



Dr. Huffard (far right) poses with friends in Israel.

Many questioned my wisdom in going, and I did give it much thought and prayer. I have observed that Christians in America will accept great risks in the globalization of freedom and democracy, but that the mission of the church suffers at the hands of the myth (or idol?) of personal safety. There are obviously places I would not go, but I could not see withholding support and encouragement from our brothers and sisters who live in this context all their lives.

Eternal hope became a reality in the world through a rugged cross. I assume it will continue to require daily crosses to discover the same hope for the world today. To our graduates who may be reading this today in the midst of tough ministry situations (inner city or a mission field "far away"), we appreciate your example of faith. May our fears of security never darken the discovery of the hope we all share in Christ.

— Evertt W. Huffard
(dean@hugsr.edu)



The Harding University Graduate School of Religion Class of 2003. Front row: Dr. Allen Black, Dr. Carisse Berryhill, Don Meredith, Dr. Tom Alexander, Dr. David Burks, Dr. Harold Redd, Dr. Evertt Huffard, Dr. Steve McLeod, Mark Parker. Second row: Gary Stotler, Anessa Westbrook, Mark Powell, Sheila Owen, Rod Cullingworth, Maureen McGowan, Dr. Phil McMillion, Dr. Bill Flatt, Dr. Dave Bland, Andrew Baker. Third row: Dr. Ron Newberry, Dr. Van Gilbert, Lance Hawley, Kerry Holton, Dr. Richard Oster, Paul McFadden, Dayton Blake.

Those Who Served

by Marcella Trevathan, editor

The full-time faculty of Harding Graduate School of Religion teach four classes each semester. Professors Berryhill, Black, Bland, Gray, McMillion, Meredith, Oster and Powell are excellent teachers and do their work well, but they often need a hand. The adjunct professors work alongside the full-time faculty to instruct, prepare and encourage the Graduate School of Religion students. Listed below are the 2002-2003 adjuncts. We offer our thanks for serving willingly and capably.

- Dr. Ross Cochran, Searcy, Ark. — “Faith Development”
- Dr. Mike Cravens, Henderson, Tenn. — “Human Sexuality and Sex Therapy”
- Dr. John Ellas, Houston — “Church Growth Through Small Groups”
- Dr. John Fortner, Searcy, Ark. — “Pentateuch,” “Exposition of 8th Century Prophets”
- Dr. Dale Foster, Memphis, Tenn. — “Testing and Assessment in Counseling”
- Dr. Stan Granberg, Portland, Ore. — “Leadership Development”
- Dr. John Mark Hicks, Nashville, Tenn. — “Theological Hermeneutics,” “Christian Worship,” “Providence and Suffering”
- Dr. Gary Holloway, Nashville, Tenn. — “History of the American Restoration Movement”
- Linda Oxford, Memphis, Tenn. — “Systems and Communication Theory in MFT”
- Dr. Harold Shank, Memphis, Tenn. — “Survey of the Old Testament”
- Dr. Philip Slate, Murfreesboro, Tenn. — “World Evangelism”
- Dr. Anthony Wood, Memphis, Tenn. — “Urban Ministry”
- Candi Wood, Memphis, Tenn. — “Women in Ministry”



Academic award winners Nathan Daily, Lance Hawley and Dr. Ron Newberry are shown with Dr. Evertt Huffard (second from right).

Reconciliation *continued from page 1*

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Return Service Requested



The architect's rendering shows the new facade for the library.

Library Expansion Campaign Reaches Goal

by Larry Arick, director of advancement

If you thought you heard a loud cheer coming from the general direction of the Graduate School last month, you were right! What caused the uproar? Our library expansion campaign reached its goal!

We needed to raise \$750,000 for the expansion. We raised \$813,007! Ground-breaking ceremonies should be held in early fall 2003.

Graduates of Harding University Graduate School of Religion pledged or gave \$155,259. They remembered how critical the library was to their degree programs and were pleased to support it. Advancement Council members pledged or gave

\$442,225, and men and women who have taken courses at the Graduate School pledged or gave \$43,610. The remainder came from friends of the Graduate School.

The expansion of the library by 5,000 square feet will accomplish several things:

- Enlarge the work area for staff.
- Locate Restoration Movement materials in one area for preservation and study.
- Reconfigure reader support areas to integrate technology, print and expert help.
- Provide a classroom that is technologically suited to today's research methods.

- Welcome all patrons into a pleasant learning environment.

Many volunteers worked together to reach this goal. Dave Phillips, minister at the Germantown Church of Christ in Memphis and a doctor of ministry student at the Graduate School, chaired the expansion committee. Working with Jane Tomlinson and a crew of volunteers, the committee visited with prospective donors and spent several evenings calling others. We thank everyone for a job well done.

Above all, we thank God for His grace toward us.