



**Abstracts of Recently Completed Dissertations
in the School of Theology at Southwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary**

“Factors Influencing the Sermonic Structure of Jean Claude and his Influence on Homiletics.” By J. Denny Autrey. Supervised by Steven W. Smith.

This purpose of this dissertation is to evaluate the influence of Jean Claude on homiletics. This objective will be accomplished by answering two questions; first, what were the factors of influence that helped formulate Claude’s theology of preaching resulting in his sermon structure? Second, is his approach to sermon structure a viable tool for effective exposition?

One’s individual approach to preaching is contingent upon a number of elements. These elements impact one’s philosophy of ministry. The resulting philosophy will determine how an individual approaches sermon preparation in order to fulfill the task required for effective communication.

Effective preachers reflect a high view of Scripture and a passion to present the message of the text from proper biblical interpretation. The initial interest for this study was Charles Simeon. It was determined that the source for Simeon’s inspiration for his sermon structure stemmed from the work of Jean Claude. Claude’s “An Essay on the Composition of a Sermon” links the changing face of exposition from the method used by the early church fathers through the Reformers and into the current era of expository preaching. Argument is presented that Claude modified the seventeenth-century expression of exposition.

The development of this thesis will reveal an evolution in the expository method and its effectiveness. Claude’s method brought greater clarity to the exposition of a text. His approach to sermon structure altered the art of exposition, producing a more focused method of expressing a subject. Expressing the main idea of the text, Claude’s perspective, enhanced by the use of an introduction and conclusion, produced a unified theme for preaching. Often labeled textual exposition, this method is still used effectively today. Beginning with the seventeenth century, a historical analysis clearly demonstrates Claude’s influence today.

“A Text-Driven Application of the Apocalypse: A Historical-Contextual Focus on the Seven Churches in Order to Accomplish Text Driven Application.” By Vern Charette Jr. Supervised by David L. Allen.

This dissertation argues for a historical-contextual focus on the seven churches of Asia in order to accomplish text-driven application from the Apocalypse. Chapter one introduces the problem the dissertation addresses, providing its thesis, background and methodology. Chapter two establishes

the need for making direct text-driven application within any text-driven sermon, including sermons from the Apocalypse. Chapter three defines text-driven application as well as identifies the necessary hermeneutical principles for employment. Chapter four analyzes the apocalyptic genre to determine its function and provides an audience analysis and exegesis of the seven churches of Asia. Chapter five provides a model of text-driven application from a challenging pericope, namely, Rev 11:1–13. Chapter six concludes the dissertation with a summarization and restatement of the thesis.

“An Intentional Philosophy of Preaching: An Examination of the Relationship between William Perkins’s Homiletic Method and Doctrine of Revelation.” By Adam Lee Hughes. Supervised by Steven Smith.

This dissertation argues William Perkins’s homiletic was connected to his theology; thus, his preaching method was derived from an intentional preaching philosophy and was not simply a stylistic decision. The argument for the connection is based primarily on Perkins’s philosophy of ministry which is explicit in his work *The Calling of the Ministry*. Chapter one establishes the relevance of the dissertation, traces the current scope of scholarship in the study of Perkins, and identifies the thesis statement as well as the method to be employed in the remainder of the dissertation. Chapter two sets the context for the remainder of the dissertation by describing the historical, biographical, and theological milieu out of which Perkins’s homiletic grew. Chapter three defines the four concepts of Perkins’s preaching ministry from *The Arte of Prophecy* for the purpose of identifying a base by which his theory may be observed in his practice. This chapter also examines Perkins’s extant sermons, searching for the presence of each of the four parts of his homiletic theory. Chapter four searches for a clear understanding of Perkins’s doctrine of Revelation. Again, the idea is to locate a consistent connection from Perkins’s homiletic theory and praxis through his doctrine of Revelation. Chapter five attempts to understand explicitly why Perkins believed it was imperative for a connection to exist between one’s homiletic and bibliology in his preaching ministry. This task will be accomplished by identifying and defining Perkins’s understanding of a true minister, in short his philosophy of preaching, from part one of his text *The Calling of The Ministry*. Chapter six offers eleven implications for contemporary homiletics based on the existence of Perkins’s intentional preaching philosophy, namely the impetus for the connection between his preaching method and his doctrine of Revelation. The conclusion provides suggestions for further research, as well as a summary of the conclusions drawn from this project.

“A Comparative Study of the Human-Environment Relationship of Two Evangelical Groups.” By Dae Jung Kim. Supervised by William Goff.

This dissertation assesses the formative, theological, and ethical factors of environmental ethics within two evangelical groups: the evangelical left and the evangelical right. It presents their beliefs in a proper human-environment relationship, and applies these beliefs to the stewardship of creation and relief of the poor. The introduction deals with a statement of the human-environment problem, definitions of significant terms, background and review of resources, the thesis statement, methodology and scope of the literature, and summary of the dissertation. Chapter two identifies formative factors of the two evangelical groups. This research presents the influence of secular or pagan environmentalisms on the development of the two groups. Chapter three investigates theological factors such as God, humanity, creation, and a proper correlation between humanity and creation. Chapter four examines the application of the two worldviews in the stewardship of creation and the relief of human poverty. These worldviews form two different environmental stewardships and influence the two groups' approaches toward the relief of human poverty. Chapter five discusses and critiques the general areas of agreement and differences of the two groups and provides an assessment of the two groups' environmental ethics.

“Baptist Primitivist: Internal and External Religion in the Theology of Thomas Grantham, 1633-1692.” By Spencer Franklin Plumlee. Supervised by Paige Patterson.

The purpose of the dissertation is to show that the primitivism of Thomas Grantham has a consistent theological framework focused on “internal religion” and “external religion.” Grantham, a General Baptist pastor in seventeenth-century England, has been the focus of three known dissertations, but none of these has dealt extensively with his theological framework. This dissertation will shed new light on the nature of Grantham's theological framework found in Book 2 of his *Christianismus Primitivus* (1678), the first systematic theology written by a Baptist. Chapter one exposes the reader to the need, purpose, and outline of the dissertation. The thesis of this paper uses terminology unique to Grantham's theology, and this chapter provides definitions of these terms. Chapter two provides an introduction to the life of Grantham, overviewing the cultural and theological context of seventeenth-century England. Chapter three argues that Book 2 of *Christianismus Primitivus* should be the lens through which Grantham's theology should be read as it displays his theological framework: “internal religion” and “external religion.” Within this argument, the third chapter explains the priority of “internal religion” and the supportive role of “external religion.” Chapter four outlines the development of Grantham's theological framework, theologically and historically. The fifth and sixth chapters focus on Grantham's conception of “internal religion,” showing its nature to be conversion and the Christian life. Chapter five addresses conversion, in which Christology

and theology proper function as the theological emphases, and chapter six addresses the Christian life, in which Grantham posits a present and future development. The seventh, eighth, and ninth chapters examine Grantham's conception of "external religion," respectively examining the nature, ordinances, and officers of the church. Each chapter shows that Grantham understands the church to focus on development and protection of "internal religion" within its membership. The final chapter summarizes the conclusions of this dissertation.

"A Defense of Christian Idealism." By Gregory E. Trickett. Supervised by John Baker Howell, III.

In the literature on substance ontology, i.e. ontological studies concerning the nature and number of substances that constitute and comprise all of reality, idealism has received short shrift. The lion's share of the discussion is taken up with the two major and normative positions, dualism and materialism. Even within this discussion much ink has been spilled either declaring the death of dualism in favor of materialism or defending dualism in light of these allegations. In this dissertation, the writer undertakes to do three things: first, present a viable, Christian idealism in the spirit of George Berkeley; second, defend that view against the major alternatives in the substance ontology debate and defend it against the most significant philosophical and theological objections; and third, show that the view affords the Christian with certain benefits. In so doing the author hopes to help situate idealism in the current discussion surrounding substance ontology issues and to bring glory to God in an exercise of academic worship.

Abstracts of Recently Completed Dissertations in the School of Church and Family Ministries at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

“The Effect of Paternal-Adolescent Spiritual Communication upon Adolescent Attitudes toward their Father, Life Satisfaction, and Family Satisfaction.” By Brent James Baskin. Supervised by Johnny Derouen.

The problem of this study was to determine the differences in three areas of relationship satisfaction (life, family, and father) as experienced by adolescents across two groups of paternal-adolescent dyads. Adolescents in group one participated with their fathers in adolescent family-focused spiritual conversations. Adolescents in group two did not participate with their fathers in adolescent family-focused spiritual conversations.

An assessment was administered to adolescents in randomly assigned groups who were in the seventh through twelfth grades during the 2012-13 school year. Adolescents in the control group did not participate in adolescent family-focused spiritual conversations. The treatment group participated in adolescent family-focused spiritual conversations with their father three times a week for four weeks. The students were from seven churches in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and from Heritage Christian Academy in Rockwall, TX. An independent samples t-test was used to determine if there were differences between the two groups.

The independent samples t-test did not show a difference between the two groups on the Family Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, or the Child Attitude toward Father scales. Thus, alternatives to sit-down family-focused spiritual conversations for fathers must be considered by youth leaders and educators to see increased improvement in these areas. Further study is needed to determine why sit-down family-focused spiritual conversations proved difficult for fathers.

Since no differences occurred, all means were tested using grades as the independent variable. A significant difference between high school adolescents and junior high adolescents was found with high school adolescents scoring higher on the Family Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction and Child Attitude toward Father scales. Therefore, ministers should work to continue to connect younger adolescents to the family. Additionally, the higher scores for high school adolescents may open the door for family and paternal spiritual influence.

“Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament as Evidenced by Jesus and Peter.” By Gregory J. Lawson. Supervised by Chris Shirley.

This dissertation argues that patterns of discipleship exist in the New Testament based on the life and ministry of Jesus and Peter. The foundational pattern for biblical pattern is based on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. An additional pattern is developed in the New Testament with the life and ministry of Peter. Peter follows Jesus' pattern thus expanding and reinforcing

the concept of discipleship inherent within the life and ministry of Jesus.

Chapter one introduces the thesis in the context of a historical and contemporary discipleship deficiency. Chapter two introduces the pattern of Jesus with a focus on Jesus' discipleship patterns, the importance of the Word, modeling, and commissioning. Chapter three explores Peter's pattern of discipleship with a focus on: the importance of the Word, the sufferings and the glory of God, commissioning of disciples, and leadership development. Chapter four provides a synthesis of the conclusions drawn from the project as well as suggestions for further research.

**“The Study of the Relationship between Spiritual Maturity and Marital Commitment among Married Individuals in Selected Korean Churches.”
By Jong Cheon Lee. Supervised by William Michael McGuire.**

The problem of this study was to determine the relationship between two dimensions of marital commitment, as measured by the Dimensions of Commitment Inventory, and specified predictor variables of spiritual maturity among married individuals in selected Korean churches. Two dimensions of marital commitment were personal and moral commitment. The selected predictor variables of spiritual maturity were awareness, realistic acceptance, instability, grandiosity, and disappointment, measured by the Spiritual Assessment Inventory.

Spiritual Assessment Inventory (SAI) and Dimensions of Commitment Inventory (DCI) were administered to a convenience sample of Korean married individuals attending the ten Korean churches located in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. The total of subjects who were included in the analysis was 241. Two standard multiple regressions were utilized to examine the relationship between two dimensions of commitment (personal and moral) and the five predictor variables of spiritual maturity. The first multiple regression examined the relationship between personal commitment and five subscales of spiritual maturity: awareness, realistic acceptance, instability, grandiosity, and disappointment. The second multiple regression examined the relationship between moral commitment and five subscales of spiritual maturity: awareness, realistic acceptance, instability, grandiosity, and disappointment.

The first multiple regression analysis showed that awareness was a significant positive predictor of personal commitment. However, it showed that realistic acceptance, instability, grandiosity, and disappointment were not significant predictors of personal commitment. The result of this study showed that Korean married individuals who had high levels of an awareness of God tend to have high levels of personal commitment. The second multiple regression analyses showed that awareness was a significant positive predictor of moral commitment. However, it showed that realistic acceptance, instability, grandiosity, and disappointment were not significant predictors of moral commitment. The result of this study showed that Korean married individuals who had high levels of an awareness of God tend to have high levels of moral commitment.

“A Framework for Curriculum Design for Equipping Russian German Cross-Cultural Missionaries.” By Mickey R. Stockwell. Supervised by Chris Shirley.

The problem of this study was to create a theologically sound and missiologically effective framework for designing curricula for the equipping of evangelical Russian-German cross-cultural missionaries.

The Delphi Technique was used to obtain unbiased recommendations from Russian-German missionaries for inclusion in curriculum for training cross-cultural missionaries. Twenty experienced and respected missionaries were chosen by missiological experts in the Russian-German context to participate in the study. Responses from the open-ended questions from the first round were synthesized and the missionaries were asked to rate the responses on a scale of 0-5. Responses were prioritized according to the means and standard deviation scores obtained. A group of three missiological experts from the Russian-German context used the information provided to develop the framework for curriculum development.

The hypothesis of this study was that a theologically sound and missiologically effective framework could be developed to guide cross-cultural curricula creation for equipping evangelical Russian-German missionaries. The following research questions were used to gather appropriate information used in developing the framework.

1. What core theological subjects should be included?
2. What key missiological elements should be incorporated in a curriculum design?
3. What are the desired skills and expected outcomes considered necessary to be effective missionaries?
4. What are the common deficiencies in current training programs?

Missionaries were eager to participate because there is a need for holistic-integrated training for cross-cultural missionaries. Theological and missiological subjects are fairly common across cultures; therefore, responses in these areas were typical. Missionaries enthusiastically responded in the areas of skills and attitudes, and deficiencies in current programs. A panel of missiological experts from the Russian-German context utilized responses to develop a culturally appropriate framework for curriculum development based on the needs of students and the desired outcomes of mission sending agencies.