How awesome it is to serve the one and only true living God! Regardless of the season that we may be in, God remains sovereign and Jesus continues to hold the Name that is above every other name. How then should we respond? Our response begins with praise and adoration for the work that God has done through Christ and the cross, and too for the wonderful ways in which He continues to be at work amongst us through His Holy Spirit.
Welcome to this Easter edition of The Insider, the official newsletter of the Baptist Theological College. We have so enjoyed the start of 2019 which has seen great growth in our student numbers.

Over the past weeks and months we have welcomed numerous visitors to BTC - new prospective students, donors, as well as a few international theological educators who are seeking partnership opportunities with our College.

We have also held our annual Ministry Exposure Week for our contact students which proved to be a rich and fruitful time of gaining practical experience and exposure to work inside and outside of church walls across the country. A large section of this newsletter is filled with student feedback and pictures from this annual College highlight.

This issue pays special attention to the Easter season and we trust that the devotional reflections shared here would be an encouragement to you as you seek God intentionally during this time and beyond.

I wish to thank you for taking the time to read through The Insider. I urge you to take moments to pray for our College as you do so, particularly giving thanks to the Lord who is above all, and asking Him for His continued favor and provision for the work that we do here at BTC.
Easter always reminds me of the centrality of the concept of paradox to the Christian Faith. The cross of Jesus and resurrection of Christ are perhaps some of the greatest of all paradoxes. In fact, the Bible is full of paradoxes that give rise to the reality that God sees things from a different perspective. Isaiah 55:8-9 bears testimony to this:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

By definition a paradox is a seemingly absurd or contradictory statement or proposition which when investigated may prove to be well-founded. It has been said that without paradoxes, there is no Christianity. I wish to highlight a few paradoxes relevant to Easter:

1. Redemption
We triumph when we are defeated. The cross of Jesus is a remarkable paradox—God’s power on display through his humble, self-giving sacrifice! Love flows through the cross and demonstrates that the greatest thing we can do is to give our lives away for the sake of Christ.

2. Resurrection
We live by dying. The resurrection of Jesus is an incredible paradox and validation of the person and teaching of Jesus. At the resurrection we at God’s power and majesty in raising Jesus from the dead, yet at the same time, we bow in humble adoration that he would willingly give his life as a ransom. What a model for Christian living!

3. Reaching Out
We become free when we are made slaves. No one understood this as much as the Apostle Paul did when he declared that Christ was the centre of his life (Phil. 1:21). Through his divine exchange on the road to Damascus, Paul exchanges his worldly ambition and embraced a Kingdom vision. In Romans 15:20 he declares that it is his life’s ambition to proclaim Christ. Is this a reality in our lives?

The Christian life should be filled with paradoxes (take a look at 2 Cor. 6:8-10), which is a sign of true discipleship. An authentic Christian ethos is one that embraces the teaching of the Bible which stands against just about everything this world promotes. Where the world says gain, the Word says lose; where the world says win, the Word says surrender. We are called to exchange our life for another—to lose our life and gain another! If you’re a follower of Christ, look at this life differently—through the eyes of Christ. 
Glorious Signs

BY PROF. PIFF PEREIRA
ACTING PRINCIPAL

John’s Gospel opens with a profoundly rich prologue, and it is divided into two sections known as the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory. Well, you can see how I came to entitle this article. This title is particularly relevant because of what I want to share from the second chapter of the fourth Gospel. This chapter has reference to the most glorious of signs. John’s Gospel does not speak about “miracles”, but about “signs” instead. They are signs because they point to something else – that is, to the glory of Jesus, Messiah and Son of God. This second chapter, itself, is also divided into two parts; two short stories which are related to each other. They are the stories about Jesus changing water into wine, and about Jesus expelling traders from the Temple.

1. A Sign to Reveal His Glory (Jn.2:1-11)

The first story, I know, is one that is loved by people who have some knowledge of the Bible, and are given to drinking alcohol. They normally say that if Jesus made wine, then we must drink it. Needless to say, that that misses the richness of the story and its meaning. This was a special story. John selected this one and others from the many stories about Jesus (Jn.20:30 cf. Jn.21:25). Additionally, it was given priority, because it was Jesus’ first sign in which he revealed his glory (Jn.2:11). John tells us that through this revelation his disciples believed in him. The first sign produced the first believers (cf. Jn.20:31).

We are not exactly sure what ‘the third day’ in the story is referring to, but I think it was the third day of the wedding festivities, which normally lasted for a week. Nevertheless, the wine was up on that day. Jesus’ mother must have been involved in the running of things, because she was in the know about impending embarrassment to the groom’s family. She told Jesus that they had no wine, and instructs the servants to do what Jesus tells them to do. She knew that Jesus could do something about it; whatever! John mentions two important things though. The first is Jesus’ curious response to his mother (v.4); and the second is the fact that there were six empty stone jars normally used for Jewish ceremonial cleansing (v.6).

Jesus’ response to his mother is quite strange. Why would he say that his hour had not yet come? What was his hour? John actually often makes reference to Jesus’ hour. Early in the Gospel the hour of Jesus had not yet come; later on the hour is said to have come (cf. 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 12:27; 13:1; 17:1). The hour was referring to the time of his suffering and death. What has the hour to do with the fact that this wedding has no more wine? Jesus’ response then, must have had bearing on his death. Therefore, the provision of wine must have had a connection with him shedding his blood. This thought is enhanced by John’s mention of the six stone jars.

Is it not interesting that John should mention the number and detail of its normal use? Not only so, but the volume-size is also mentioned, in that it would be providing an abundance of wine (over 600 litres). The normal use of the jars was for Jewish ceremonial cleansing. What was meant for Jewish ceremonial cleansing was without immediate potential of cleansing because it was empty, and was by Jesus’ command filled to the brim. To provide, not what could only provide temporary and inadequate cleansing, but what was admitted by the Master of Ceremony as the best for last”. Jesus’ statement of the hour in the context of wine, must only have reference to his shed blood as a better means of cleansing than the Jewish system could provide.
2. The Sign of His Authority (Jn.2:12-22)

The second story, I believe, enhances the first while it speaks an important message of its own. As in the first story, John continues to show a discontinuity from the Jewish system in the second story too. The Temple, which was the ultimate place of Jewish cleansing, was also to be replaced by the resurrected Christ himself.

When Jesus expelled the traders from the Temple, he showed his zeal for the Father’s house (v.17). The Jews demanded a sign from him. John frames their request: “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” (v.18). Jesus again gives a startling response; rather in the form of a veiled challenge. “Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” (v.19). The Jews did not understand him, as people often misunderstood him. The Temple he had spoken of was his body (v.21). The authority of Jesus was the greatest sign of all; his resurrection. The resurrection of his body was the raising up of the true Temple, because in him dwelt the fullness of the god-head bodily (cf. Col.1:19 and 2:9). At the end of this second story, John tells us again that Jesus’ disciples believed in him and in his Word.

While the first story was about Jesus laying down his life, the second one was about him taking it up again (cf. Jn.10:17-18). The two stories go together to show the signs of his glory and of his authority. They were to replace the inadequate Jewish ceremonies and temple. Praise God for our Lord Jesus Christ and for providing an eternal redemption (Heb.9:12)! §
What a privilege it is to be invited by God to join Him in His mission. I think that perhaps all too often we neglect to see the richness of the opportunity that we have been given in proclaiming the gospel. This message that has transformed each of our lives is one which we are called to share freely and regularly with those we come into contact with.

D.T. Niles rightly reminds us: “Evangelism is just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.”

Each year our students are afforded the opportunity of engaging in the College Ministry Week. Every student is exposed to a ministry opportunity, whether urban ministry or that in a rural context; others take the opportunity to shadow a minister working in their chosen field, and our 1st Year students engage in Bible Read - a 6 day intensive reading through the entire Bible.

Regardless of their contexts, our students join in on the mission of God and proclaim Christ - the Name above all names. May you be encouraged as you read the testimonies of our students in the pages that follow. §
1st Year Students: Bible Read

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I did not know what to expect when I went to the Bible read; all I knew was that I wanted to learn more about God’s Word.

The Bible read has taught me to read the Bible not only because I want to prepare a sermon but because I must read the Word of God at all times - both for ministry purposes but also for my own spiritual formation.

In reading through the Bible I realized that the list is endless of people who have sacrificed their lives for the gospel. Some people went to prison or even gave their lives because of the gospel. Stephen was stoned to death, the 12 disciples were killed in different countries and continents for the sake of the gospel.

I was challenged to learn of the great commitment that people in the New Testament had for the gospel message. I had to repeatedly ask myself ‘What am I contributing to the spread of the gospel?’. Paul, Stephen, Silas and others have done their part, am I doing my part today?

Sitembiso Dlukulu

I honestly didn’t know what to expect going into the Bible read, the suspense was killing me as I expected this great presentation which would sum the Bible up in a week. I prayed before we left with my prayer partner asking God for Him to move while I was there.

When we jumped straight into reading the Bible my prayer soon got more complicated as I then asked for one word that would stick with me as there was so much information. By the end of the second day I started to get an overview of the Bible story which was an amazing one. One that was so deep it could never be explained by someone experiencing it.

It was so wide that even though the story was in one section of the world it affected the whole world. It was so high that one could feel God’s heart while the story was being told. By the time Friday came I grasped so much that on preaching Sunday’s message I had a clearer understanding of what was to be delivered. The Spirit added so much wealth to our communion service by reminding me of many of the Scriptures we had read.

This was truly a great experience and makes me proud to be a part of such a great visionary team as my fellow students. Some are still young yet the vision God has given them is one which cannot be taken lightly.

The world’s most valuable treasure was given to me in a week by the world’s Creator Himself.

Thomas Merime
2nd Year Students: Stilwater Mission Trip

Most of us were all very excited about going to Botswana. We were telling everybody about it, but honestly and quite sadly, when we heard that we were going to Kimberley, we were quite unhappy about the situation. If all had worked out according to plan we would have indeed gone to Botswana, but as we learnt, we can never override God’s will. Unfortunately our facilitator for Botswana was unable to host us, therefore providing the reason for us not to go to Botswana. Alternatively, there was an opportunity to be hosted by Norman Schaeffer and his wife, Gabi. Norman and Gabi are retired, but still willing to serve.

Upon arrival in Kimberley, it made complete sense. Soon we realised why God had sent us there: to provide the Stilwater community with hope. Whilst there, we dedicated the church building, which was sponsored by the Kimberley Baptist congregation to the people of Stilwater. It was a great experience. Further along in the week, our ministry continued with youth programs, evangelism, bench building etc. It was within this, that we were able to represent Christ accurately and lead people into a state of hope with the LORD - what a great privilege that was.

We could clearly see the invisible hand of God at work. Only He could achieve such great deeds within a community.

I wish to encourage you with my personal testimony from the outreach. Upon first evangelising to the people, we realised that there was not only a need for Bibles, but a request for Bibles. Along with the help of Kimberley Baptist, we received Bibles within the next day. I took an Afrikaans and an English Bible. When ready to head out to the streets, Dieckie, a man with whom I had built a bit of a relationship came up to me asking for a Bible. I said: “Dieckie, I really want to give you a Bible, but I want to talk with you first.” My intention was not to simply hand out Bibles, but to gift someone with a Bible. Dieckie and I continued with our conversation and suddenly he started talking to me about the Exodus which he vaguely remembers from a film he saw. It was quite pleasant to have someone without a Bible tell me about God’s redemption (even though he was unaware of the theological significance behind the text), I knew that Dieckie was serious about his desire for Scripture. In conclusion to our conversation, I gave Dieckie his Bible and watched him become a bit emotional upon holding it. It was beautiful. My heart was satisfied and I beheld a man who was truly proud to have a Bible; to not disregard the value of Scripture; to not become accustomed and forgetful of God; to just be glad that he can now grow with God on a personal level.

The following day, Dieckie helped out with the bench making and even invited some of his friends along to aid us. Dieckie was also active in assisting us in our ministries at the church regarding children and order. I am glad to have been a part of Dieckie’s journey, even if only for a short while. Dieckie was one of many changes.

It was truly a beautiful week.

Marno du Toit
It was a great opportunity and eye-opening experience. Some of us have experienced rural missions before but for many of us it was our first time to minister in this kind of setting. I saw God move in ways that displayed His greatness and the great depths that He would go to touch the lives of His children. We saw many who committed their lives to Christ, many who got healed physically and emotionally and strongholds that were torn down in people’s lives. We had kids programmes that accommodated approximately eighty children in music, dance and Bible teaching. It was really great to be part of this mission.

Werner Greeff
On arriving in Stilwater and engaging in door to door evangelism, I realized how much pain, there is out there. Getting into people's personal lives and seeing what they are going through, the hopelessness and helplessness. It struck me hard. I realized how I haven’t been as thankful as I should have been to God for all he’s given me. Just giving people that ray of hope through God's word, was astounding.

I remember evangelizing to a man and wanted to pray for him, because he had said he’s had a pain in his abdomen for two years. And as I was about to pray for him, I asked, "Do you believe Jesus can heal you?" he replied: "How much would you charge?" That shocked me. I told him no, you don’t need to pay because Jesus paid the ultimate price and so we can come to you for free because he has paid it all.

We prayed for him and when we went to visit him the next day he was super excited and said he got healed and can now go around the village as before he couldn’t leave the house due to this pain.

In all, I just thank BTC for such a wonderful opportunity. I never wanted to have anything to do with missions. I chose pastoral studies because I know I am a preacher but then going for this trip made me realize that ecclesiology isn’t focused on the four walls of the church but beyond that. So, I decided I will definitely be involved in the mission’s aspect of ministry, even if I don’t do it myself, I will endeavor to avail myself or finances. BTC was one of the best choices I made in life besides giving my life to Christ.

Godfrey Okafor
We met at College on Monday morning to pray together and head out to Troyeville Baptist Church. There we were to meet up with Pastor Colin Diesel.

We left in the middle of load shedding on the Monday morning which gave us ample time in traffic (which turned out to be an every-day blessing) to chat and bond with our class mates.

These car rides are always as much a part of the week’s work as the actual ministry itself. Growing closer together with fellow students who we will, Lord willing, one day be serving alongside in the field for the cause of the Gospel.

Monday saw us arriving at the Baptist Church of Troyeville where we had a brief tour of the oldest standing Baptist Church in Johannesburg. Pastor Colin shared with us about the ministry that the church engages in locally and encouraged us for the two days of evangelism that lay ahead.

We went out in groups, taking the gospel and pamphlets with the Church’s information to the people in the area. Each group was met with its own challenges. Praise God that we saw people profess faith in Jesus upon the sharing of the Gospel and we were able to encourage and pray for many others.

Tuesday involved the group meeting in Maboneng and being spread around the general area to do research for a church plant as well as sharing the gospel with any as the opportunity was afforded to us by God.

We shared with many and collected helpful data for Pastor Colin. It was very different form the Monday in relation to the environment and the people we encountered. Maboneng has far fewer transient travellers and far more business and blue collar workers.

From Wednesday to Friday we were at the Bellevue Baptist Church with Pastor Rafael. The groups were split into three teams which every day changed locations from the Door of Hope Children’s Shelter to Arupe, which focuses on teaching. Arupe organizes the teaching of English to adults in South Africa as well as a few sets of practical skills such as hair dressing, makeup, massage and computer skills to women who are deemed vulnerable who are currently refugees or asylum seekers.

All three areas had their own challenges and helped each group to gain exposure, appreciation and understanding of those specific areas of ministry within the inner city context.

Ministry week was a blessing to each of the third year students from BTC and we appreciate the opportunity from the college and the blessing of a better understanding of the ministries hosted by local churches in the inner city context.

We praise God for those who by the power of the Gospel professed faith in Jesus this week and we pray for those who had hardened hearts to the message of salvation.

Kyle Tamblyn
4th Year Students: Ministry Exposure

I thank God for the opportunity I got to go down to Cape town to learn from Dr Sipho Zondi who is the Pastor at Langa Baptist Church. Spending the week with Dr Zondi was very interesting and challenging for me as I had to be in church every day learning from all the different ministries that the church does. The week started with me being exposed to Kingdom Kids (Sunday school) then other ministries that the church has like The Joshua Project, Hands of Grace and LBC School of Ministry. Out of all the learning that I had to do I enjoyed the many sessions that I had with the pastor; from these sessions he gave me valuable lessons and in those lessons he took time to introduce me to his prayer life which was very helpful for me.

Among the many ministry opportunities I was exposed to, I was given an opportunity to preach in the youth service of Friday but the challenge came when the pastor told me an hour before the service that I will also have to preach in the second service after the youth service this was a very big challenge for me because I have never preached in two services in one day more that this being a challenge it was also a valuable lesson that I have to be always ready and prepared to minister the word of God.

Ministry week was really a blessing for me as I have learned many valuable lessons that I believe will help me in my walk with Christ.

Sandile Gobozi

During the exposure week I figured that exposure to what I am usually exposed to would be pointless, so I decided to spend a week with an organization called Abbas Pride. They are committed to coming alongside leaders in under resourced communities to care for and educate the children in any way possible. It was special. I got to see another side of the way things get done in ministry and the call that we all have on our lives as Christians.

From receiving material and building furniture as well as collecting food and distributing it to centers that Abbas Pride works with all around Pretoria, we did it all. It reinforced the reality that within South Africa, there are people who have more than they know what to do with, and there are people who have nothing. And this reality isn’t just far out there like we tend to think, but its right down the street.

Many eye-opening experiences took place during my exposure week, and I left with a heart heavy, but so challenged and inspired to be better and to do more.

Jesse Burnhams
The BTC Board - An Update

The Board of Directors play a pivotal role in the governance of our College and we are grateful to each one for their expertise and contribution.

Our Board members are:

- Dr Garth Aziz
- Mr John Buchanan (outgoing Treasurer)
- Rev Stuart Cranna (former Chairperson)
- Mr Garth Heydenrych (incoming Treasurer)
- Rev Gavin Johnston (minutes Secretary)
- Rev Johan Luface
- Rev George Ngamlana
- Rev Angelo Scheepers
- Mrs Juanita Sukhdeo
- Mr Gary Taylor
- Rev Harold Twine
- Rev Gavin Wood (Chairperson)

Changes in Board Members

Stuart Cranna has served as a member of the Board for close to five years and was voted in as Chairman after Dr Charles de Kiewit served his term. On behalf of the BTC Senior Management, Staff and Board of Directors we wish to thank you for your sterling service to us as the Chairman of the Board, and for guiding the College through a critical transition. We have appreciated your pastoral heart which has been shown through visits with our staff and your openness toward members of our Faculty. May our Lord bless your continued ministry in the Baptist Union of SA.

John Buchanan and his wife, Peggy are both graduates of BTC and have a rich history of service in Christian ministry in various avenues. BTC’s Senior Management and Board of Directors wishes to express our sincere thanks to John for his faithful and sacrificial service to the College for around a decade. John joined the BTC Board in 2009 and became the Treasurer shortly thereafter, using his business acumen and wisdom to carefully guide the College’s finances. We are thankful to the Lord for the way you have contributed to the growth and overall development of the College throughout your tenure and we wish you both everything of the very best.

Principal Vacancy

Applications are being sought for the role of Principal to lead the College through a potential upcoming amalgamation and to firmly establish BTC as the seminary of choice in Southern Africa, based in Johannesburg.

Suitable applicants would hold qualifications at doctoral level, including theology, with a good understanding of theological education and leadership.

Applications (with attached Curriculum Vitae) from suitable candidates should be directed in confidence to the secretary of the Search Committee at searchteam@btc.co.za.
Every Passover, Jewish families end the meal with the phrase "L’shanah haba’ b’Yerushalayim" ('Next year in Jerusalem') in the hope that they would be able to celebrate the Passover in sacred city of Jerusalem. This year, a group of 32 people associated with BTC (including 9 students and staff members) were blessed to go to the land of Israel and visit Jerusalem and contemplate (among other biblical truths) the incredible sacrifice that Jesus made on our behalf as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (Jn 1:29).

A visit to Israel and its holy sites has the potential to open one’s eyes to the truth of Scripture and give understanding to concepts such as Jesus being “living water” and “the Good Shepherd”, or unity amongst God’s people being like dew from Mount Hermon, as no lecture in a classroom can. It contextualises Scripture to see the routes Jesus walked to bring his good news to Samaritan communities, or to stand on Mount Carmel and contemplate that Yahweh alone is God, or to be on the Sea of Galilee and read of Jesus walking on water and consider our own faith. Therefore it is our desire to provide such opportunities at least once every 3 years, with this being our second trip so far.

A wonderful mixture of considering history, actively meditating on Scripture, worshiping God in song, prayer and testimony, and getting up to crazy antics (such as sloshing through Hezekiah’s tunnel or bobbing in the Dead Sea) – the trip to Israel was an incredible gift to all who went. All who came away were changed! There are too many memories to share or insights to pass on. But every time we open our Bibles, we understand a little better, and our witness to a Living God – Jesus Christ – carries more conviction. Our prayer is that many more would have the opportunity to go.
I had the amazing privilege of being a part of BTC’s 2019 Israel tour, and wow was it a privilege! The Holy Land is a special place, not only because our God revealed himself there in the past, but because He is alive today, and is still speaking into the hearts and lives of those journeying there. To walk the streets of Cana, share communion on the shores of Galilee, marvel at Masada, and look up to the hills and know where our help comes from, is to experience something which cannot be described in words. It brings the Bible to life, imparting something of the taste, smell, feel and overall scene of the place where the faith we stake our lives on began. Personally experiencing Israel brought Jesus nearer for me, making his humanity tangible and giving new depth to his humility.

Israel was not only a spiritually nourishing time for our group, but we also had the opportunity to share Christ with our Jewish tour guide and Muslim bus driver in a very direct sense, as they witnessed us open God’s Word, pray, and worship together on a daily basis. The tour also opened my eyes to the religious tension that many believers live under. Particularly in Jerusalem, the spiritual warfare is evident with Jews, Muslims and Christians each trying to make themselves known. Restricted religious freedom at some of the sights such as the ‘Dome of the Rock’, helped me to understand in a small way the lack of freedom so many Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith experience.

Overall it was a fantastic experience led by two of BTC’s lecturers who provided thought-provoking insights and a rich knowledge of the history and Biblical significance along the way.

Micaela Boy
Developing Competent Ministers

BY DR. TERREL MANIKAM
HOD: PASTORAL STUDIES

In recent times, the pastoral call and ministry has been in the spotlight with wide secular media coverage within the South African setting. Might I add, the media was not in any way lauding the pastoral ministry. The entire spectrum of pastoral ministry was painted with one brush stroke and cast off as fake due to the practices of a few “men of God” who are more concerned with flashy lifestyles, centered on prosperity. These lifestyles have to be maintained. So, the people that these men shepherd are fleeced to maintain their extravagant lifestyles. Hence, miracles and healings are manufactured to keep the people coming, to maintain this philosophy of ministry. It goes to show that when the Word of God is distorted, deceptive practices become operative within the ministries of false ministers.

Paul and Timothy encountered people like these in Corinth and condemned their behaviour in 2 Corinthians 2:14-3:6; 4:1-2:
Paul’s Encouragement Toward Pastoral Competence

“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life. And who is equal to such a task? Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God. Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you? You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life ... Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.” - 2 Corinthians 2:14-3:6; 4:1-2

However, Paul also highlighted behaviour that is commendable and makes for competent ministers. From this passage, we can extrapolate some lessons for those in pastoral ministry:

- 1. Competent ministers are sent by God (2:17) and led by God (2:14).
- 2. Competent ministers spread the fragrance of Christ that brings life to others (2:15-16).
- 4. Competent ministers gauge their effectiveness by the Spirit-produced fruit within the people they lead and not by human letters of recommendation (3:1-6).
- 5. Competent ministers have renounced secret and shameful ways and do not use deception (4:2).
- 6. Competent ministers do not distort the Word of God; but commend themselves before others and God through the setting forth of the truth plainly (4:2).

BTC has a commitment to the Lord to develop competent ministers within their individual calling and context. As a theological institution, our role is to train the called to ministry in handling God’s Word truthfully. The focus on personal spiritual formation is also key to pastoral integrity and service in order to disciple others so that Spirit-produced fruit is evidenced in the local church. Whilst fake ministers and ministries will always be around, even as they were present during Paul’s ministry, BTC remains committed to producing competent servants of Christ. By God’s grace and through His enabling, we will continue to do this for His glory! §
Amplify Is Coming!

BY DR. DESMOND HENRY
REGISTRAR

We are so excited to announce that 2019 will see the return of BTC’s annual conference which has been rebranded as Amplify Southern Africa. Through a new partnership with the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College, BTC is proud to be hosting one of Africa’s first strategic missions and evangelism conferences.

Amplify Southern Africa will be held on 30 and 31 July 2019 at Rosebank Union Church in Johannesburg and we look forward to hosting quality speakers from both within South Africa and abroad.

Plenary sessions will see the likes of Ed Stetzer, Micah Fries, Ternae Jordan, One Mokgatle and Tyrell Haag, among others, speaking to the conference theme: ‘Reimagining a simple gospel for a complex continent’.

A strong feature of this conference will be the workshops which will cover a number of different themes including strategies for younger leaders, church planting, and ministry in townships.

Registrations for Amplify Southern Africa are underway and we invite anyone who is interested in attending this conference to visit our website www.btc.co.za/amplify or contact us by email on amplify@btc.co.za.

We encourage you to attend this important conference as we seek to strategically think through missions and evangelism in our complex context.

We look forward to welcoming you in July!

- Ternae Jordan
- Tyrell Haag
- Micah Fries
- One Mokgatle
First Lieutenant Ernest Calvin Williams and 12 other men rushed the gate of the fortress in San Francisco de Macoris, Dominican Republic on 29 November 1916. As they pushed forward 8 men fell to rifle fire from the defenders, Williams and the remaining 4 pressed on. Just as the Fortress door was being closed by the Dominicans Williams threw himself against it, forcing an entry. Narrowly escaping death, he and his men eliminated the guards inside and took control of the fort and its prisoners. For this, First Lieutenant Williams was awarded the Medal of Honour.

Williams was part of the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. This is an infantry battalion that has engaged in combat operations since 1916. The 1st Battalion, 4th Marines motto was perfectly embodied by First Lieutenant Williams, “Whatever It Takes.” By rushing a fortress with 12 men and throwing himself into a door to gain entry Williams did whatever it takes.

The greatest embodiment of 'whatever it takes' is Jesus Christ. For God it saving sinners meant not sparing His own Son. For Jesus, we hear the motto 'whatever it takes' under toned in those words in the Garden of Gethsemane when He whispered, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done” (Luke 22:42).

Jesus did whatever it takes, and it took a great deal, it took the shame and humiliation of the cross, the breaking of that relationship between the Father and Jesus where He cries out "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me". Jesus threw Himself against the door of God's wrath that was meant to close on you and I. He gained entry and satisfied the wrath of God. Removed the penalty of the list of commandments written to condemn us.

What do we do at the sight of such grace and valour? We do whatever it takes. Not to free ourselves from the fortress prison, Jesus has done that. No, we do what it takes considering His freeing of us, to live for His name and glory. We do what it takes to kill sin in our lives, we don't make excuses for the things that enable our sin. We do what it takes to fulfil the duties God has given us, in the family, church and work. We don't make excuses: ‘that's just my temperament,' 'if only you knew what he/she, they are like,' 'no one can live like that'.

Paul enjoins us with these words as he reflect on the work of Christ, “we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us” (Philippians 4:13). You can live godly, you can do whatever it takes, since it will never take you what it took Him.
This brings us to the end of this issue of BTC Insider. We are excited to have seen our students engage in ministry as they have over the past months and look forward to observing their continued exposure to the work of God in and through the Church.

NEXT!

The next issue of BTC Insider will be released in June 2019. As we move toward the end of yet another successful semester we are expectant that God will continue to grow our College from strength to strength.

Partner With Us

Through your generous donations of any size, we are able to further extend our mission of equipping believers for ministry. Would you consider supporting us today? Should you wish to speak to someone regarding how best you can partner with BTC, please feel free to contact Dr Desmond Henry via email on des@btc.co.za.

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