

Our Story

What does the incarnation of the Son of God have to do with our story? Much in every way! The good news that accompanies the birth of Jesus is this: “he will save his people from their sins” (Mt. 1:21). What is promised to Joseph is confirmed to the shepherds: “for unto us is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord” (Lk. 2:11). Our salvation story is directly identified with his incarnation story. If God the Son does *not* become man, there is no salvation. If the great and mighty Son of the Highest does *not* become an infant, there is no forgiveness of sins.

We rehearse, we read, we sing, we meditate upon this story together with the church of all ages. The church to which Matthew sent his gospel delighted in this story, as did the church to which Luke directed his gospel. Even the majestic gospel of John brings together the Son of God’s story and our story: “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (Jn. 1:14). Something sublimely wonderful and profound is revealed in the blending of God’s story with ours.

With what measure do we measure the love of God? Is it the immensity of his almighty heart? Indeed it is! Is it the longsuffering of his infinite mercy? Indeed it is! Is it the miracle of the incarnation? Surely it is! God the Son became man so that men and women may become the sons and daughters of God. The incarnation of the second person of the Godhead was the supreme demonstration of God’s love to sinners. For the incarnation is the beginning of the story of our salvation. The end of the story is crucifixion, resurrection and glorification. What wondrous love is this, O my soul! That the Son of God would humble himself to be born, to live, to die, to rise again, to be seated in glory for my sake.

And so we are identified with Christ in his incarnation (he was born to save his people); we are identified with Christ in his righteous life (Christ has become righteousness to us); we are identified with Christ in his crucifixion (we are united with him in the likeness of his

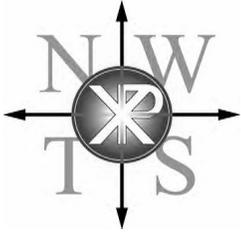
death); we are identified with Christ in his resurrection (God has made us alive together with Christ); we are identified with Christ in his glorification (God has seated us together with him in heavenly places). The incarnation is foundational to our story of union with Christ – union with his life, death, resurrection and glorification.

The remarkable career of our Savior from cradle to cross to empty tomb to glory was for us. He became a child, he grew to adulthood, he died on a tree, he rose from the grave, he ascended into heaven because he loved us, because he wanted to save us, because he wanted his life and our life to be marvelously intertwined.

If we are drawn to this babe in a manger, it is because as a babe he has drawn near to us. If we are melted to gratitude by his broken body nailed to a cross, it is because as the crucified one he has bowed his head to receive the curse for us. If we are exhilarated by the startling news, “He is not here; he is risen,” it is because as the resurrected one he has raised us from death to life. If we are blinded by his heavenly glory, it is because as the ascended one he has seated us at the right hand of the majesty on high.

The incarnation is a revelation of God uniting our life to his – of God the Son taking us into precious union with himself in order to redeem us. If the story of the incarnation is sweet to us at this time of the year, it should remain as sweet as we daily live out of our union with our Lord. The union of the divine and human natures is the foundation of our union with our Savior.

Once and for all, in the fullness of time, God’s very own Son as lived out our story so that we may be joined to his story. O how he loved us! Rejoice that we are his now and through all eternity. “Glory to God in the highest!”

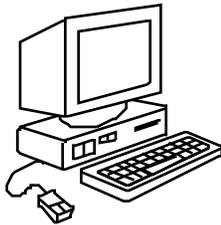


Recent News from NWTS

1. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws were registered with the Secretary of State of Washington. We are officially a non-profit, educational corporation.
2. Applied for and received a Federal Employee Identification Number (EIN).
3. Contacted dozens of potential donors in order to secure financial pledges for the work of the Seminary.
4. Asked Sessions and Congregations to consider incorporating NWTS into their budgets for 2001.
5. Received several inquiries from potential students.

NWTS Website Up and Running

With the kind assistance of Eric Fholer, Diane Garcia and Scott Hunter, Northwest Theological Seminary has a website with pertinent details about the school. Go to Kerux.com and click on the NWTS logo (located on the first page). You will be able to read our Mission Statement, examine our class schedules and course descriptions, survey our degree programs (M.Div. and M.A.R.), consult our fee schedule and print off an application form. In addition, faculty biographies are posted there as well as on-line versions of "Our Story". For those who would like to read more about our distinctive emphases, a list of books and articles is posted under "Preparation". You are also welcome to browse the Archives of *Kerux: A Journal of Biblical-Theological Preaching*.



Please encourage men and women whom you may know to be interested in theological education to check us out.

We Need Your Financial Help

As the year 2000 draws to an end, we prayerfully ask that you consider NWTS in your year-end giving. Our goal is to raise \$220,000. Please keep in mind that in addition to cash contributions, gifts of appreciated stocks and bonds are welcome (you may be able to save some taxes by donating them to the seminary; check with a tax advisor for details). We are an infant institution and as most infants, we need special care and attention at this time. We invite you to hold us up in your prayers as we work toward the first day of classes on September 4, 2001.

Checks may be made payable to Northwest Theological Seminary and mailed to:

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Questions and comments? Contact Jim Dennison:
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Our Distinctives

In our first newsletter, we described briefly our commitment to biblical theology in the tradition of Geerhardus Vos. Permit us now to explain another of our distinctives, namely classic Calvinism in the Old School tradition. B. B. Warfield maintained that Calvinism was Christianity come to its own. Warfield was enlarging on the robust Reformed tradition which arose in John Calvin himself, was embraced by the continental and Westminster divines and promoted by the Old School of American Presbyterianism. Confessionally passionate about the "system of doctrine" of the Reformed standards, Old School advocates were also passionate Presbyterians. When 20th century modernism forced the Old School tradition out of mainline Presbyterianism, J. Gresham Machen carried the torch of Old Princeton to Philadelphia. Northwest Theological Seminary is firmly committed to this historic Calvinism in the Old School Reformed tradition. In systematic theology, Calvin's *Institutes*, the theology of the Westminster standards, Hodge's *Systematic Theology*, Warfield's extensive writings and John Murray's volumes will be recommended and studied. Furthermore, we regard it as a great honor and privilege to espouse the Reformed system of doctrine as expressed by Peter Martyr Vermigli, William Ames, Jonathan Edwards, Robert Dabney, Louis Berkhof and J. Gresham Machen himself. In addition to our hearty endorsement of biblical theology, we are fervently committed to the Reformed dogmatics of the Calvinistic giants of the past. Please examine our schedule of classes (see our website), where you will notice that nearly 24 hours (of 102 in the M. Div. Curriculum) will be devoted to instruction in Systematic Theology, the Westminster Confession and American Presbyterianism (an elective in the Three Forms of Unity has been proposed).