

Topics and Speakers Will Include:

Dr. Frank Gumerlock, "Predestination Before Calvin: A Ninth Century Monk and His Doctrine of Grace"

The Rev. James T. Dennison, "The Eternal Generation of the Son of God"

Mr. Scott Sanborn: "The Semi-Eschatological Justification of God with a Critique of N.T. Wright"

The Rev. J. Peter Vosteen: "The Emerging Church"

Our Second Graduation!

Mr. Benji Swinburnson will be graduating this year with a M.Div. degree.

The Address will be given by the Rev. Robert Van Kooten, Pastor, Sovereign Grace OPC, Oak Harbor, WA

The Charge will be given by the Rev. Larry Semel, President of the Board of NWTS

Come join us as we celebrate our second graduate!

Make Plans for Our Annual KERUX Conference and NWTS Graduation, **May 9-12**. Please contact us at 425-787-5144, or brian_nwts@yahoo.com for more information



17711 Spruce Way, Lynnwood, WA 98037



His story is...

Our Story

"Jesus Reveals His Glory" John 2:1-11

John alone records for us this story of the miracle at Cana. Why does he do so? When Rudolph Bultmann commented on this text, he thought the answer was simple: the wedding of the Greek god Dionysius. Bultmann thought that John 2 was proof positive of the influence of Dionysius (the Greek god of drunkenness and revelry) on the early Christian community. Well, the only thing that interpretation proves is that Bultmann was being paid far too much to spin such nutty ideas out of his own head!

What then is the purpose of this story in John's gospel? Is it simply to teach us about Jesus' approval of the estate of marriage – as he celebrates the new love of a young Jewish couple? Perhaps, but Jesus teaches us very clearly about his views on marriage elsewhere (cf. Matt. 19:1-12). There must be some other reason, but what is it? Well John tells us plainly why he records this story, and we read of it in John 2:11: "he thus revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him."

But what kind of glory is this? John has made this clear in the first chapter: "In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was God" (1:1). Jesus' glory is the glory of God: "And we have seen his glory, glory of the only-begotten from the Father" (1:14). John has told

us this plainly in the prologue of his Gospel, and now Jesus clearly demonstrates the truth that he is God by performing a miracle that only God could do: changing water into wine. Indeed, the glory that Jesus reveals is none other than the glory of God himself!



Mr. Benji Swinburnson

But why does Jesus display this glory? Is it merely to impress us with the tricks he is able to perform? Certainly not! Jesus reveals the glory of God so that you and I, who read and hear of it in this story, can be made partakers in it. Jesus tells us this plainly in John 17:24: "Father, I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am and behold my Glory." Jesus reveals the glory of God, not just that you may behold

it and gaze with awe and wonder upon it, but that you might participate in the very fellowship and life of the infinite, eternal, Triune God!

But what happens when the glory of God comes into contact with a sinful world and sinful human beings like you and me? This text proclaims that when the glory of God comes into the midst of the age of sin and death, nothing less than a new age of salvation is brought about! How is this so in the text?

Look with me at John 2:6 – do you notice the water jars? They are not just any ordinary

From Andy Vanderhoff, Student in the M.Div. Program:



Andy with his newest daughter Annie.

I have been attending NWTS part time for 3 years. Attending part time would take me 10 years to finish my degree. This January my wife and I paused to take a look at the year to come. It became clear that I needed to concentrate on God's calling. Working full time with five kids makes it difficult to take more than one class at a time

We prayed about it and decided to attend NWTS full time in the fall. We aren't sure how the finances will work out, but we are sure God is calling. Even as he takes care of the lilies of the field, he promises to take care of us.

As I attend classes and interact with the faculty of NWTS, my love for Christ and my understanding of the riches of his word grow deeper. The close personal attention of the faculty alone would be enough to make it a worthy institution, but when coupled with true redemptive-historical theology and a Christ-centered hermeneutic, NWTS receives my unreserved endorsement.

My prayer is that God would raise others to heed the call of the gospel. My hope is that those who have never heard the good news would experience the love and grace of Christ.

Jesus Reveals His Glory, cont.

clay water pots, but jars used by the Jews to hold water for ceremonial washing – washing that signified the need for cleansing from sin. But Jesus takes *those* water jars, and miraculously fills them with the best wine anyone at the wedding had ever tasted. Do you see what Jesus' mighty act is proclaiming? Jesus' glory brings about nothing less than a new age of salvation. There is no more need for ceremonial cleansing – constant reminders that the once-for-all sacrifice had not yet been made. Break out the new wine of eternal celebration! For this glory has power to forgive, cover, and eradicate the filthiness of stinking dead sinners like you and me (cf. John 11:39-40).

Admittedly, this is somewhat difficult to see upon the first reading of our story. Indeed, there is something still hidden and obscure about

Benji's Future Plans: *"I plan to pursue licensure at the next meeting of the Presbytery of the Northwest of the OPC, where I am currently under care. I also plan to serve as a year-long intern at Lynnwood Orthodox Presbyterian Church beginning this coming summer."*

the glory of Jesus – his hour had not yet come (2:4). Yet nevertheless, we find ourselves in a wedding setting, and Jesus' glory is being revealed. Yet the main participants in a wedding (bride, best man, bridegroom, etc.) are hardly mentioned in the text. We only hear once from the master of the feast, the bride isn't even mentioned, and the bridegroom appears far off center stage!

Or does he? Look with me at the statement of the master of the feast in 2:10. Here we read his declaration to the bridegroom, whom he thinks is responsible for this great wine. This is an instance of Johanine misunderstanding – where the character misses the true meaning of a saying or an event. Who is the real bridegroom? Who is really responsible for the new wine? Jesus! He is the eternal bridegroom, whose glory is proclaimed in this text.

Alumni News: *Adam King, our first graduate ('05), is Pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Lyndon, Vermont. Adam was ordained by the Westminster Presbyterian Church in the United States on September 16, 2006 at Mays Landing, New Jersey. His new congregation is located in the "Northeast Kingdom of Vermont", a quaint name for the three northeastern counties of the Green Mountain State. After driving cross-country, Adam began his ministry on January 21. Benedicat tibi Dominus et custodiat te!*

Though it is obscure and somewhat hidden in chapter 2, the glory of Jesus as the bridegroom is more fully revealed later in John's gospel. Do you remember John the Baptist's famous declaration in 3:29-30: "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." And at the end of John's Apocalypse (19:6-7), we see the greater glory of Jesus, the bridegroom: "Hallelujah, for the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give him *the glory*, for the marriage supper of the Lamb has come!"

It is to that marriage supper that this text invites us. Not to the wedding of Dionysius or any mere human beings. This text in John chapter 2 is a beautiful wedding invitation – to see, behold, and marvel at Jesus' Divine glory, and by faith become a partaker of its heavenly benefits. "He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him" (2:11) – do you?

—Benji Swinburnson, Senior Student

NWTS Notes: *Prof. Jim Dennison has been teaching Sunday School at Westminster Presbyterian Church, PCA, in Everett, WA (Fred Zoeller, pastor).*

Rev. Marc Renkema, adjunct professor of Practical Theology, traveled to Sendai, Japan in January to participate in the installation service of the Rev. Murray Uomoto as missionary from the Presbytery of the Dakotas, OPC, to Japan.

From the Director of Development:

At Northwest Theological Seminary we want to especially give thanks to the Lord for his gracious provision for the future. We have been informed that NWTS has been named a beneficiary of a trust fund by a supporter who recently passed away. We do not as yet know the exact amount NWTS will receive, and we do not know exactly when we will receive it, but the amount will be greatly appreciated. We expect to know more in the coming months, and hope to begin receiving funds in the fall.

In the meantime, we continue to struggle financially. December giving was the lowest it has been in several years, and the coming months will be crucial for the survival of our institution. ***Will you consider helping us through this time by giving a little extra?*** We are hopeful, and excited to see what the Lord will do in the months and years to come at NWTS.

How You Can Help NWTS at This Critical Time:

- *Pray without Ceasing!*
- *Donate Your Used Car by Calling 1-800-553-3018*
- *Direct Financial Contributions*

Two Students for Fall 2007

Two students have expressed their interest in continued studies for Fall 2007, one full-time in the M.Div. program, and one part-time in the M.R.S. program. ***Continue to pray that God would bring more students!***

Recruiting Tour, April 16-30, 2007

In April, Brian Belh plans to do a two week recruiting tour in the east. Along the way, he plans to visit: Dordt College, in Sioux Center, IA; Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL; Kuyper College in Grand Rapids, MI; Grove City College, in Grove City, PA; Geneva College, in Beaver Falls, PA; and Covenant College, in Lookout Mtn., GA. ***If you know of any students in these places that are thinking about seminary, would you tell them to look for Brian when he is on campus?***