



SUMMER 2017

# BAYLOR TRUETT SEMINARY

The Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching

## The Preacher's Briefing



### Welcome to The Preacher's Briefing!

Greetings from the Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching and welcome to the Summer 2017 edition of The Preacher's Briefing. We hope that you will find the links below to be beneficial to your preaching and teaching.

We want to again remind you The National Symposium on Preaching: God's Word and our words -The Significance of Preaching from the Prophets to the Present and Beyond is coming up at Truett Seminary, September 11-12, 2017 The symposium will be unlike any other event we have hosted, -and we believe unlike any other event out there. The symposium will bring together today's leading voices on preaching. It will also be a place where a diverse group of preachers, professors, and pastors will come together and talk about what it means to preach. We will have a strong representation from both the Evangelical Homiletics Society and the Academy of Homiletics. The lectures will be well worth the price of travel and registration, but the conversations

in hallways, over coffee, and in hotel lobbies will be invaluable. Registration is now open at [www.Baylor.edu/truett/preachingsymposium](http://www.Baylor.edu/truett/preachingsymposium). Seating will be limited and on a first come first serve basis so sign up today!

Additionally, as you think about your preaching and how you can better hone your craft, we want you to think about the Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching. We have set out with a mission to help ministers be more effective in their preaching. We are open to your recommendations on how we might better accomplish that mission. Any new venture you can dream up, we would love to hear your idea, whether possible or not. Please send an email to [Preaching@baylor.edu](mailto:Preaching@baylor.edu)

Now it is time for the Preacher's Briefing, and if you find it helpful, pass it along to someone else who might benefit.

### **Astronaut John Glenn Was a Committed Presbyterian**

Former astronaut and senator John Glenn recently passed away at the age of 95 and is being remembered for his Christian faith as a long time Presbyterian. Glenn shared that seeing the earth from space only made him appreciate God's creation all the more. Glenn added that the scientific teaching such as evolution does not have to be in conflict with faith.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2gEAqNp> | RNS

### **Americans Love and Hate Jack in the Box Tacos**

A report from The Wall Street Journal noted that Americans ate 554 million fried tacos from Jack in the Box over the past year. Many fans of the taco admit that it gross and disgusting, not even closely resembling a traditional taco, but the flavors are appealing enough to keep them coming back. Jack in the Box is a burger chain that goes beyond the usual fare, offering tacos, egg rolls, and stuffed jalapeños.

Source: <http://on.wsj.com/2iWPavQ> | WSJ

### **Stories Can Inspire Action and Change**

While a story can serve the purpose of grabbing an audience's attention, it's even more effective when tapping into emotions so that listeners will change their attitudes and behaviors. Through good storytelling and imagination, leaders can communicate who they are, where they hope to go, and how others can join them.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2kSnYAi> | Insead

### **We Are More Aware of Loss Than of Gains**

A study of food and drink supersizing found that consumers are significantly more aware of products that shrink than they are aware of products becoming larger. When a drink is supersized, consumers don't notice just how much more they receive. However, when a drink size is limited, consumers can very accurately determine how much less value they are receiving.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2kSsheX> | Insead

### **Indian Monks Make Cheese for Income**

When the monks of the Benedictine Vallombrosian Order in Bangalore, India sought ways to earn an income, they ruled that making table wines, as Italian monks often do, would not work well in India. However, there has been a strong demand for all kinds of cheese in India, but imported cheese is too expensive. After contacting restaurants with samples of the monastery's cheese, the order produces over 220 pounds of cheese daily when the monks aren't practicing contemplative prayer.

Source: <http://n.pr/2kSQK3J> | NPR

### **This Woman Can Perfectly Remember Every Day of Her Life**

Jill Price is one of the first people to be diagnosed with highly superior autobiographical memory, or HSAM, which enables her to remember the details of her life with striking clarity. Each date in history tends to have a personal memory that she associates with it, so her mind is constantly scrolling through vivid memories each day. Researcher Dr. James McGaugh believes studying her memory could alter memory research.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2kJXLQv> | The Guardian

### **Couple Plans to Travel to Mars on Their Own**

Software developers and explorers Tom and Tina Sjogren have scaled Mt. Everest and traveled to both poles on earth, but they are now working on plans to travel to Mars. The couple hopes to simply explore the planet and then return, rather than setting up a colony. The initiative is called Pythom Space, based on an Egyptian story. The couple hopes to launch in 2020.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2kLfU8> | The California Sunday Magazine

### **Mike Ilitch of Little Caesars Paid Rent for Rosa Parks**

When Rosa Parks moved to Detroit, she found support through lawyer, and Little Caesar's founder, Mike Ilitch, who recently passed away. Although Ilitch kept his support for Parks a secret, a judge in Detroit has revealed that Ilitch paid for Parks' new apartment after she was attacked and robbed in her home. Ilitch was also the owner of the Detroit Tigers and Red Wings.

Source: <http://cnn.it/2kRLh8W> | CNN

### **Suffering Helped Katherine Wolf See the Cross Clearly**

In 2008, Katherine Wolf experienced a massive stroke at the age of 26. The former beauty queen has been on a long road to recovery, but along the way she found a deeper experience of the cross and the sufferings of Christ, finding the promise of new life to be the source of her hope and encouragement. Wolf and her husband have launched a ministry called Hope Heals that ministers to those who face similar struggles.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2kRKQv8> | Christianity Today

### **Meditating Mice Help Researchers Understand Brains**

Meditation has been proven in several studies to have a positive impact on the physical and psychological health of those who practice it. A recent study on mice who were "meditating" helped confirm the positive results of meditation for anxiety and stress hormones, leading to greater mental health. The study laid the groundwork for future examinations of meditation.

Source: <http://lat.ms/2mmmoDt> | LA Times



### **Upcoming Events**

**Texas Baptist Women in Ministry Conference**  
Feb 2-3rd  
Truett Seminary

**Friends of Truett Dinner – June 29th – Atlanta, GA**

**Preaching Fall 2017 Preacher's Workshop: Dr. Robert Creech – (Date TBD)**

**Pastoral Preaching (exact date TBD)**



[Truett Seminary Opens in Houston in Fall 2017!](#)

## Former KGB Spy Settles Down in Georgia

East German Jack Barsky had moved to America in the 1970's in order to spy on American interests and to recruit spies for the KGB. However, Barsky became disillusioned with Russia and managed to stay in America after the fall of Communism. He remarried after his marriage fell apart and his current wife led him to convert to Christianity.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2LH1P7y> | The Guardian

## Soldier Helps Police and Military Understand Killing

Former soldier and West Point psychology professor Lt. Col. Dave Grossman has been the leading authority in training police for the dangers they face. While Grossman has been helpful in guiding officers through the anxiety they face after killing someone, criminal justice experts have questioned Grossman's equating of police with soldiers and his emphasis on killing.

Source: <http://mjm.ag/2LGWop2> | Men's Journal

## Lost Pregnancy Leads to Weeks of Waiting

Jessica Grose shares about her experience with a miscarriage, as she learned after seven weeks of pregnancy that her child had not grown. A week later an additional ultrasound found that the child had died from a rare disorder that is 99% fatal. Some try to comfort her that the lost pregnancy is a blessing because the child would have died upon birth, leading to a wide range of emotions.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2LGWAoc> | Lenny Letter

## Coffee Expert Travels the World to Study Beans

Coffee expert George Howell had discovered light roast coffee on the west coast early in life, invented the frappuccino, and then sold his coffee chain to Starbucks for \$23 million in the company's stock. Howell has since continued to open coffee shops, give presentations on coffee beans, and travel the world in search of the ideal beans.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2LH0Lk1> | Lucky Peach

## Society Rewards Rudeness

Author Rachel Cusk writes that rudeness is often welcomed in society and those who are rude often receive no consequences. However, those who tell the truth will be criticized and even punished. She has seen many of these encounters at the airport where women of color have especially been targeted by those in authority.

Source: <http://nyti.ms/2mmEBAG> | NY Times

## Is Religion The Reason Behind Human Evolutionary Success?

Evolutionary psychologist Robin Dunbar suggests that religion is one of the things that allowed humanity to survive and thrive. "You need something quite literally to stop everybody from killing everybody else out of just crossness," says Dunbar. "Somehow it's clear that religions, all these doctrinal religions, create the sense that we're all one family."

Source: <http://hrlt.us/2md7p2d> | Miami Herald

## Why We Need to Hold Onto Civility?

Civility is often shown through courteous behaviors, such as saying please and thank you, and these simple gestures can go a long way to shaping how people view us. Civility also means listening to others and acknowledging people in daily interactions. Those who fail on this basic level have a much harder time in relationships, especially at work.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2myrdgQ> | Leadership Now

## How One Pastor Approaches Parenting a Daughter

Ron Edmonson writes that raising a daughter calls for both spiritual and personal encouragement. Parents should model Christian practices such as prayer and reading the Bible, while also showing how to have a happy, encouraging marriage. Edmonson adds that he would teach his daughter that she is worthy of respect, teach her to be courageous, and take her out regularly.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2myJFWZ> | Ron Edmonson

## Pastor Shares Keys to Raising a Son

Ron Edmonson writes that he would raise his sons to read the Bible imaginatively, acting out the scenes from the Bible that would resonate with them. He adds that he would focus on modeling how to love a woman well, how to live courageously, and where to find confidence spiritually.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2myFWbS> | Ron Edmonson

## Are You Enjoying Social Media?

Seth Godin writes that people who check their phones all of the time appear to be just about as unhappy as people who smoke all of the time, which is not very happy. He notes that people who smoke often appear to need to do it even if they don't enjoy it, and that perhaps the same has become true for checking our phones.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2myK5fS> | Seth's Blog

## Don't Leave Transformation Up to Chance

When an organization goes through a change, the details and responsibilities cannot be left up to chance. Everyone needs to take ownership of the change process and they can't rely on one person to make the change happen.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2mRs4Wn> | MIT Sloan Review



[Transcending Mission: The Eclipse of a Modern Tradition](#)

## What You Lose By Not Taking Risks

Leaders who play it safe too often may lose momentum and miss out on key opportunities for growth. Both personal and corporate growth may suffer, and many hopes and dreams will be held back, discouraging church members. Also, there is a risk of creating a false reality where there is a constant fear of danger and risk.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oHjJVZ> | Ron Edmonson

## Gardener Makes a Cathedral Out of Living Trees

New Zealand gardener and landscaper Barry Cox is a devout Catholic who has built an elaborate outdoor cathedral out of living trees planted around an iron frame. Cox has also added a prayer labyrinth across from it. The cathedral took four years to make, using a hydraulic spade to uproot and replant trees on his property.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oKjf2c> | Shareably

## PREACHING NEWS

### Pastors Say "No Thanks" to Political Pulpits

While Donald Trump's religious outreach during his campaign for president centered on repealing the limitations of the Johnson Amendment from 1954, pastors aren't interested in that change. In fact, a survey of 112 church leaders, who identify as evangelicals in the NAE, found that 90% are not interested in endorsing politicians from the pulpit. Those who responded said that the Gospel should be the focus of ministers.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oze4oY> | RNS

### Pastors Accept Their Role in Racial Reconciliation

A survey of Protestant pastors found that 90% believe their congregations are open to a sermon about racial reconciliation. However, only 45% have preached a sermon on racial reconciliation in the past three months. This may be because 73% do not sense a desire in their congregations to preach about the topic.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2o1D6U> | Facts and Trends

## PREACHING RESOURCES

### Kansas City Pastor Focusing on Political Unity

Reverend Adam Hamilton, a methodist pastor from Kansas City is intentionally trying to pastor across the political divide. "When you have a congregation like ours that's divided on both sides of the political spectrum ... the question is how do I continue to be pastor for all of these people? And how do I help them hear each other?" writes Hamilton.

Source: <http://n.pr/2kr1ip3> | NPR

## Are Pastors Ready to Carry Heavy Burdens?

Eric Geiger writes that pastors bear an emotional and spiritual weight for their people that is constant and intense. While pastors can manage their time and responsibilities, the weight of a pastor will follow them around. They need support and renewal in order to bear this weight without burning out.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oGKzNU> | Eric Geiger

## China Continues to Find Space for Religion

The people of China have long looked for religious and spiritual outlets in their atheist nation. A new book, *The Souls of China*, documents this search for meaning in the 1980's and 1990's that led to gatherings in parks for meditation and exercise. Chinese leaders cracked down on these gatherings and installed exercise machines instead. However, church and temple construction continue in China as the government reckons with finding ways to work with religion, sometimes taking over its message.

Source: <http://on.wsj.com/2ozjO24> | Wall Street Journal

## PREACHING TIPS

### Every Leader Will Face a Crisis of Belief

Doubts and uncertainty are common for leaders, and Ron Edmonson believes that every leader will have a crisis at one point or another over a big decision, a major change, or a new project. Leaders aren't weak if they have doubts or a crisis. If they have done their work and trusted God, they can't be expected to do more.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oGIHox> | Ron Edmonson

### Why Christians Need to Talk about Video Games

Video games have never been more popular in the U.S., with 63% of households having at least one gamer who plays at least 3 hours per week. In addition, 48% of households own a dedicated game console. However, many churches have failed to critically engage with the gaming industry, what gamers are drawn to, and the shifts toward greater diversity, storytelling, and cooperative experiences in video games.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2oxxkmG> | Christ and Pop Culture

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