



THE CORNERSTONE BIBLE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

Christ-Centered Focus  
Pastors as Professors  
Faculty - Student Discipleship  
Local Church Driven

## CHRIST-CENTERED PREACHING

Vincent Bradshaw

**What is the purpose of preaching?** Opinions vary. Some say it is to convert the lost. Others say it is to edify the saints in sound doctrine. Others, that it is to exhort the saints to good works and ethical living. These are all legitimate. However, at the Cornerstone Seminary, the primary purpose of preaching is to present Christ. Christ Himself is the *sine qua non* (the thing without which there is nothing) of everything, and His presentation not only encompasses and accomplishes the other goals, but fulfills the prime, overarching purpose for all existence which is the glorification of the Son of God. Christ Himself is the source of all Creation (“All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being,” John 1:3) and the source of all wisdom and knowledge (“Christ Himself, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” Colossians 2:2-3). He is the ultimate object of all worship (“that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,” Philippians 2:10) and He is to have first place in everything (“that He Himself might come to have first place in everything,” Colossians 1:1). He was the main theme of Paul’s preaching (“And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom,” Colossians 1:28) and He is the focus of Peter’s exhortation to the Church, “you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light,” 1 Peter 2:9). All people are to make Christ the focus of all that they do.



**Can one force Christ into the text?** No. Take a text like 1 Chronicles 7:25-27: “And Rephah was his son along with Resheph, Telah his son, Tahan his son, Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, Non his son, and Joshua his son.” Responsible exegesis always respects the single, intended meaning of the human author in its grammatical, historical context. The author did not mention the Savior here, and only fanciful allegorization would include Him in the mention of the last named person, Joshua, who happened to share the Savior’s name. Christ centered preaching is not contrived, inserting or assessing Christ to be in texts where He is not. However, biblical preaching must respect the context, and the ultimate context of every verse and everything that exists is the glory of Christ. Exegesis may occur without the explicit mention of Him, but preaching, which is broader, cannot. A preacher who talks about the textual details but quits without glorifying the Savior has been faithful to the textual content but not to the ultimate purpose of preaching. The task of proclamation is incomplete until the preacher links the existence and meaning of every verse to the existence and purpose of all things which is Christ. The Savior does not appear explicitly in every text, but His glory subsumes everything.

**Can a preacher ignore the textual details?** No. He cannot just preach Christ and ignore the details. He must be faithful to both text and Savior. Recently, a friend told of entering a church where the usher said: “Here, we only preach the Gospel.” The text was on an Old Testament historical passage but the preacher talked about nothing but the New Testament  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## Welcome New Students!

The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary warmly welcomes the following new students:

### To the Bible College:

Rich Andre  
Julian Moore  
Jason Puffer  
Alex Redd  
Jesse Wildman

### To the Seminary:

MaksVusik  
Bogdan Zagorodniy

Congratulations to our Spring 2016 graduates,

Mike Lucas  
*(see Testimony, Pg. 3)*  
Joseph D’Ambra



events at Calvary. When exiting, the usher gushed, “Here, we only preach the Gospel.” Christ centered preaching does not ignore the near context and sacrifice the details for the bigger picture. It includes both. It is not a pre-made, theological lens that eliminates all the details of progressive revelation and how God made the Cross more and more explicit in time through prophetic statements and graphic types. Christ-centered preaching is balanced. It explicates the unique features of every text within the overarching purpose of glorifying Christ. It is faithful to textual revelation and the glorified Savior.

**Can one just mention Christ haphazardly?** No. Uttering Jesus’ Name and mentioning the facts of His life does not automatically convert, edify or exhort. Every text has a purpose, whether evangelistic, didactic, doxological or hortatory, and Christ is the key to fulfilling that purpose. A preacher must present Him in this way. A preacher who presents Christ

unconnectedly may glorify Christ, but not through that text. To take a previous example, 1 Chronicles 7:25-27 edified the Israelites who were returning from Babylon so that they could rebuild their families and society upon biblical foundations after 70 years of separation and exile in a foreign, idolatrous land. This text does not mention Christ explicitly, but does ultimately point to Him as the ultimate Protector and Restorer of the people of God. Christ is intimately connected with every verse of Scripture (Luke 24:44), and no one could understand, obey or present a text without Him. The preacher’s purpose is to glorify Christ, especially through that text.

In sum, Christ-centered preaching is not forced, neglectful or disconnected in any way. It is faithful to exegesis, application and the doxological reason for the existence of all things. Christ Himself is the ultimate reason for every Bible verse.

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## You’re Invited

The upcoming conference, “Christ Exalted In The Trinity” is open to the public.

**CHRIST  
EXALTED  
IN THE TRINITY**

September 7–9, 2016

Exalting Christ Conference  
For Pastors & Church Leaders

Keynote Speakers:  
Bruce Ware, Scott Menez,  
Brian Borgman and Phil Foley

**GOD**

HOLY SPIRIT  
FATHER  
SON

 EXALTING  
CHRIST  
MINISTRIES

## A Graduate's Testimony

### Mike Lucas

Thank you all for being here this afternoon. This time really is a celebration of God's goodness and faithfulness to provide, and sustain two forgiven sinners to finish out training at the Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary. And the means He did that was through many of you, so I'd like thank a couple of people.



I also want to thank the fellow students at the seminary. Some of the best memories of my life are going to include the times swimming through the deep things of God with you during our breaks. It seems like on a weekly basis we would hear things that would blow our mind about God and his truth – and as soon as there was break, we would commence just fellowshiping and rejoicing together over the sweet things we learned.

I also want to deeply thank the staff, faculty, and the pastor-professors at the seminary. What makes the seminary so wonderful, so unique, and so Christ-glorifying is the kind of men who teach. Two men that personified the heart of the type of men who labor at the seminary are Steve Fernandez and John Carson.

Pastor Steve was my pastor for 17 years. God used Steve to teach me that I could trust the Bible as God's trustworthy, inerrant, authoritative, and totally-sufficient revelation of God. He taught me that I am forgiven of all my sin, and am fully justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone – and that this truth is "a hill to die on". God used Steve to remind me continually to trust in Jesus as my sin-bearer, as the full propitiation for my sin, and the only atoning sacrifice that fully satisfied the just wrath of the Father against sin. He taught me that Jesus Christ is my all-sufficient Savior, who contains incomparable infinite fullness from which I can draw for my every need. And because of Christ's infinite fullness, I ought to be part of God's great enterprise to proclaim Him among all peoples in all nations because He alone is preeminently glorious and worthy of highest regard. I will always be thankful to the Lord for Steve's influence in my life.

Pastor John was another man who exemplified the kind of shepherding we received through the seminary. I think this is best expressed in something I observed during one of his lectures. I had a chance to watch a video of his Biblical Counseling 2 class after Pastor John had already went home to be with the Lord. In the video of the class, it was time for a break, and all of the students went out of the class, leaving only John. As he sat in the

chair, already exhausted from teaching and enduring his cancer treatment, he prayed these words:

*"Sweet Jesus, Help me. Help me to teach these men, to counsel these men, to lead them to the truth of Your Word. Make them vessels of mercy to a people who need relief. They're suffering, sometimes by the hand of others, sometimes by their own hand; nonetheless they need relief. I pray for the families that they pastor: the wives and husbands and children they pastor. Make them a blessing, Lord. Those that hear them, those that seek their face, use them to point them to Your face, early, often. May Your people seek You that way; call on You in their day of trouble, and that You would grant them relief in all their troubles and in all their distress..."*

*What a comfort that is Lord Jesus, to have You with me through every trial and every tribulation, through every joy and every victory. You are such a kind and compassionate High Priest, Whom we desperately need but didn't deserve."*

Pastor John did not know he was being recorded while he prayed. It was a wonderful and quiet glimpse into his genuine heart. I was moved to tears at his fervent desire to see Christ glorified and His men trained to carry on the work of ministry.

So Joey and I, and every student at TCBS, we attend because this is the heart we want, and this is the heart these pastor-professors all have. We commit our lives to learn God's Word and know Christ more and more, because we've learned from these men that Christ is ultimately worthy of our lives and service.



*Professor Adrian Donato with graduate, Joseph D'Ambra. (left)  
Professors and Pastors pray for the graduates at the June 2016 ceremony. (below)*





THE CORNERSTONE BIBLE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

710 Broadway Street  
Vallejo, California 94590

Office: (707) 645-1043  
Toll-Free: 1-888-863-9258  
Fax: (707) 645-1399

## FOR INFORMATION

For the Bible College, please contact:  
William Lynch  
blynch@tcbs.org

For the Seminary, please contact:  
Todd Bolton  
tbolton@tcbs.org

TCBS.ORG

## What Makes The Cornerstone Seminary Unique?

**The exaltation of Christ:** For pastors, merely doling out Bible facts is inadequate. Exegesis, exposition and application of Scripture must ultimately spotlight, exalt and glorify the risen Christ. The Cornerstone Seminary aims to produce men whose sole passion is to worship Christ in everything, and to lead the people under their care in doing the same. A Cornerstone Seminary graduate is a God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Scripture-saturated, Spirit-filled man who shepherds the people of God in the exaltation of Christ with wisdom and care.

**Pastors who train pastors:** When it comes to training, like produces like. Only pastors can fully train other pastors. One who has never pastored a church is limited in equipping men for vital functions which they have never performed. At The Cornerstone Seminary, pastor-professors give men the knowledge and equipping they need to become successful pastor-teachers. In an era where many pastors have given up training their own, and have handed that responsibility over to seminars, agencies and other outside institutions, The Cornerstone Seminary seeks to produce pastors who can reproduce themselves in the church. The pastor-professors of The Cornerstone Seminary train laypeople for ministry in their own churches, and train prospective pastors for vocational ministry at the seminary level.

**Grounding in the original languages:** The Word of God enables a man to accomplish for Christ. It makes God's servants, "adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17). Its full power comes from the ability to handle the Bible in the original languages.

**B. B. Warfield wrote:**

*"No second hand knowledge of the revelation of God for the salvation of a ruined world can suffice the needs of a ministry*

*whose function it is to convey this revelation to men, commend it to their acceptance and apply it in detail to their needs... nothing will suffice for it but to know; to know the book; to know it at first hand; and to know it through and through. And what is required first of all for training men for such a ministry is that the book should be given them in its very words as it has come from God's hand and in the fullness of its meaning."*

The Cornerstone Seminary offers rigorous training in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, instilling in each graduate a passion for proclaiming the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

**A worldwide scope:** The Cornerstone Seminary is one of the few conservative, evangelical seminaries in the almost 9-million-person San Jose-San Francisco-Oakland statistical area. The Cornerstone Seminary seeks first to impact this large and unconverted region for Christ by training men to populate local pulpits, build up and plant local churches, strengthen existing ministries and propagate new ones. However, The Cornerstone Seminary also has a worldwide vision, and Cornerstone graduates and affiliates are currently ministering on every populated continent in the world.

**Accreditation from Christ:** In a societal context that is increasingly and openly hostile to Christ, The Cornerstone Seminary seeks its affirmation from Christ alone. Standards, methods, offerings and results all flow from biblical principles, convictions, faith and a desire to please Him. Since many forms of accreditation are veering toward conformity to ungodly legislation and encroachments and encumbrances unrelated to spiritual quality, The Cornerstone Seminary, like the local church, looks to the integrity of its God-given, biblically-qualified leaders and professors to ensure its faithfulness, fruitfulness and impact.

We welcome you in our pursuit of the glory of Christ,

Vincent Bradshaw  
Dean of the Cornerstone Bible College & Seminary

## MISSION

The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary seeks to partner with local churches to prepare, train, and propel into the world shepherds and mature servant-leaders who are God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Scripture-saturated and Spirit-filled.