

LUTHER RICE COLLEGE & SEMINARY, INC.

3038 Evans Mill Road
Lithonia, Georgia 30038
Phone: 770.484.1204 / 1.800.442.1577
www.LutherRice.edu



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The mission of Luther Rice College and Seminary is to serve the church by providing biblically based on-campus and distance education to Christian men and women for ministry with an end to granting undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Luther Rice is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE).

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Spring 2021

PIONEER

Luther Rice College & Seminary

CONGRATULATIONS!



Has Been Awarded Membership as an Accredited Institution with

SACSCOC!

Dr. Kerwin Lee Interview on Page 3

A Personal Word



from **DR. FLANAGAN**

Biblical education has existed for thousands of years. In ancient days, people used to attend “schools of the prophets” to learn about the Scriptures from those who studied and “mastered” the interpretation and application of the Bible. Since 1962, Luther Rice has been a part of this rich history, providing biblical education and the application thereof, such as evangelism, preaching, ministry, and apologetics.

When God’s call is evident in our lives, there often is a need for study during or prior to ministry. Even though I had grown up in church, I needed to study the Word of God to understand it in a deeper way and to grasp more fully how to apply God’s Word in practical areas of ministry.


Having received a degree in mathematics, the study of the Bible opened up a whole new world to me. My journey eventually led me to a degree in New Testament Studies. I often say that I crammed five years of Seminary into nine—I was married and had

two children at the time, so I had to take longer to complete the program than some others.

Today, an entirely new method of delivery is available for biblical education—online education. During my years of study, it was necessary to live on or near the campus. All the classes were taught on site. Fast forward to today and students have the option of staying in the field and taking classes online.

Luther Rice has been a pioneer in the delivery of distance education. Now, distance education through the internet is commonplace. There are new opportunities with online education that were not available before. Classes can be offered around the world. All that is required is connectivity. The process allows for those who cannot afford to move to campus the opportunity to stay where they are and still receive a biblical education.

The barriers that once existed in getting a biblical education no longer exist. A call to ministry is a call to prepare. A biblical education through Luther Rice has been proven to be a pathway to greater and more effective ministry as testified to by our students and alumni.


President



Steven Steinhilber
Executive Vice President
Luther Rice College and Seminary
Steven.Steinhilber@LutherRice.edu
www.LutherRice.edu

For Immediate Release

Luther Rice Gains SACSCOC Accreditation

LITHONIA, GA. (December 8, 2020) – Today, Luther Rice College and Seminary was granted membership as an accredited institution by the Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees.

The announcement was made by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees during their December Annual Meeting. This exciting announcement is the result of many years of institutional planning, execution, and prayer among the Luther Rice Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff, students, donors, and alumni. SACSCOC accreditation will provide multiple benefits for Luther Rice students in the future, including opportunities for broader acceptance of transfer credits for post-Luther Rice work and recognition in the work place where a SACSCOC accredited degree is preferred or required.

Led by President Dr. James Flanagan, Luther Rice has now further strengthened its position to execute its mission of serving the church by providing biblically based, on-campus and distance education to Christian men and women for ministry with an end to granting undergraduate and graduate degrees. “Accreditation by SACSCOC has fulfilled a strategic goal that we’ve worked toward for decades. I am grateful for God’s guidance and my colleagues’ efforts to accomplish this milestone.” says President Flanagan.

In addition to SACSCOC, Luther Rice continues to be accredited by the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS) and the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE).

Known for its adherence to biblical inerrancy, ministry development, 100% online degree programs, and affordable tuition and fees, Luther Rice College and Seminary continues to be the trustworthy option for those committed to ministry and in need of an education.

Luther Rice College and Seminary is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctorate degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Luther Rice College and Seminary may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC’s website (www.sacscoc.org)

An Interview with Alumnus Dr. Kerwin Lee

By Dr. Steven Steinhilber



When did you start preaching?

The first sermon I preached was on the third Sunday of October 1982 in Fairbanks, Alaska. I was an undergraduate student. The title of the sermon was "Why Love the Lord?" from John 3:16.

How did it go?

I thought it went well then. Looking back, now that I've got a little training under my belt, it could have gone a little better.

How could you have improved?

It was a simple topical sermon. At that time, I primarily preached topical sermons. I now consider myself an expositional preacher.

Tell me about your sermon preparation.

Each month we have a monthly theme. Everything, including the sermon, is centered on the theme. The themes are developed a year in advance. I start developing my sermons approximately a month in advance of delivering them from the pulpit.

Have any preaching legends influenced your preaching?

E.V. Hill, A. Louis Patterson, and Adrian Rogers. Rogers stands out for me because he was biblical and practical. Hill stands out for me in terms of making sense, talking about life, and tying God into life experiences. Patterson was a master of alliteration.

Has your preaching methodology/approach changed over the years?

First, I transitioned to expository preaching from my earlier years of topical preaching. Second, my preaching has become more structured and more orderly. I now ensure that my sermons are structured to include an introduction, body, conclusion, application, and illustrations. Early on this was not always the case.

Your use of repetition is unique. Do you intentionally include it in a sermon?

My use of repetition is not planned out. Instead, I've done it for so long that it has now just become a part of me. I feel like it helps to emphasize particular points. People seem to pick up more with the power of repetition.

How do you incorporate stories, humor, and illustrations in your sermons so well?

I am an avid reader and I love listening to others and their stories. I always try to focus on how I can move from the unknown to known in Scripture. Stories help me do this. With regard to humor, it runs deep in my family. My mother was a very humorous person. I don't force it or intentionally write humor into my sermons.

Do you have any recommendations for preachers concerning humor?

Let humor come out of your personality and make sure there is a point. The audience must know how to practically apply it. Stories, illustrations, and humor must always lead into application.

How do you connect with your congregation so well?

I am intentional. I go into every sermon asking, "What can I do to engage the people?" Other keys to engagement are eye contact and asking questions. Asking questions during the sermon, while often rhetorical, keeps the congregation engaged and thinking. My background is in elementary education. My seminary professor, Bennie Goodwin, told me that if you ever learn how to preach to young people, you will never hurt for engagement. He also said that adults are just older young people. I don't preach to be deep but preach to be understood. Going into the preaching moment, I always make sure to be biblical, practical, inspirational, relational, and motivational. I try not to make the preaching moment just a time of discourse but a time to connect with the people and use inspiration to bring about transformation.

Continued from Page 3

How have your years as a college basketball player in Alaska impacted your ministry?

Playing basketball gave me the chance to experience working as a team. Working as a team is extremely important in the local church setting. You can be around a group of people and have one common goal, but you cannot reach the goal if you don't work together. I learned that everyone on the team brings different strengths and gifts to the table.

How did Luther Rice College and Seminary impact you as a pastor/preacher?

Diversity. Luther Rice gave me a different perspective of ministry. Up until my time at Luther Rice, all of my exposure and formal training had been in an African American setting. Luther Rice helped me appreciate diversity. Most importantly, Luther Rice taught me to stay biblical and make God's Word the standard in all I do, whether it's preaching, ministry, or worldview.

Editor's Note

Dr. Kerwin B. Lee is Senior Pastor and Founder of Berean Christian Church in Stone Mountain,

Georgia. This church began in 1996 with 200 individuals and has grown to over 10,000 members. In 2006, he established a second church location in Snellville, Georgia. A third campus was launched in Stockbridge, Georgia during the latter part of 2015. All three locations have experienced phenomenal growth since their inception. Dr. Lee's charismatic personality, contagious humor and attitude have attracted people from all walks of life.

Dr. Lee is also the founder of "A Word for the Times, Inc.," a non-profit ministry committed to providing exhortation, instruction and motivation for the Body of Christ through biblical and practical teaching/preaching. He is the author of several books which include: *Winning the Battle of Negative Emotions*, *Finding Joy in the Word of God*, *Feeding Your Soul with the Word of God* and *The ABC's of Church Leadership*. He also has a television and internet ministry that reaches people nationally and internationally. Dr. Lee graduated with his Doctor of Ministry degree from Luther Rice College and Seminary in 2014. He is happily married to Yolanda Thomas Lee '18, MABC and they are the proud parents of two sons, Kerwin II and Kernard.



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And have mercy on those who

DOUBT

J U D E 1 : 2 2

Dr. Evan Posey

One of the common issues that confront 21st century evangelism in the west is skepticism. Once thought to be a concern only for those outside of the household of faith, doubt plagues an overwhelming number of those within the Christian's ranks. A 2017 poll conducted by the Barna Research Group revealed that two-thirds of self-identified Christians either have or are still experiencing a time of spiritual doubt where they question what they believe about their religion or God⁵.

Christian apologetics tends to focus its efforts on engaging the lost through the pre-evangelistic work. However, current research calls the apologist and pastor to focus on those who are within the fold. Doubt is a serious issue in the life of the believer. Jude, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, calls the believer to "have mercy on those who doubt" (Jude 1:22). The first step in response to the call for mercy is identifying the various species of doubt.

In his book, *Dealing with Doubt*, Gary Habermas identifies the following types of doubt: Factual Doubt, Emotional Doubt, and Volitional Doubt⁶. Doubt, like the human soul, is not mono-chromatic. These categories of doubt are not mutually exclusive. Some doubts may contain a mixture of factual, emotional, and volitional issues.

Factual doubt is a species of doubt that is often expressed as "I don't know." The factual doubter is often concerned with the factual claims of Scripture and how they are reconciled with the factual claims of some other academic discipline such as philosophy, history, or the sciences. For example, a factual doubter may struggle with the alleged discrepancy between the scientific data and the scriptural data for the age of the universe. An encouraging and merciful response to the factual doubter would be to encourage critical thinking and research. Encourage the "problem solving" mindset that often characterizes the factual doubter⁷, while fostering trust in the reliability of God's word. While this may undoubtedly lead to more questions, loving the Lord with one's mind necessarily entails the rigorous pursuit of truth. Walk with the factual doubter through this rigorous pursuit of truth.

Emotional doubt is a species of doubt that is often expressed as "I don't feel." The emotional doubter is often concerned with the inability to reconcile the claims of Scripture, or the nature of God, with what they feel to be good, right, and true. For example, an emotional doubter may ask a question like "How can I be sure that I am saved," or "If God is good, how can he send people to hell?" The temptation here is to respond as you might with the factual doubter. However, the source of doubt requires a different approach. The merciful approach

with emotional doubts is one that is more pastoral than professorial. The emotional doubter requires a good listener, a good counselor, a good pastor. To be sure, good and sound theology is necessary. It certainly aids in resolving emotional doubts, but many emotional doubters require empathy before being open to the theology that helps one address emotional doubts.

Volitional doubt is a species of doubt that is often characterized, although not expressed, as "I don't want." The volitional doubter is often concerned with the prospect of being held accountable to a moral authority that will pass judgment on his actions. Consequently, the volitional doubter will present reasons why there is no God in order to escape this moral accountability. Volitional doubts are perhaps the most difficult to diagnose since they can be masked over by a faux intellectual or emotional doubt. The pastor may ask the emotional doubter, "If Christianity were undeniably true, would you believe it?" This type of question bypasses the intellect by creating a scenario where the truth of Christianity is a given and identifies whether the source of doubt is volitional. The merciful approach with the volitional doubter is to emphasize the Gospel, pray for the doubter, and lovingly serve in the doubter in hopes that God might sensitize the doubter to his sin and need for forgiveness.

Proverbs 26:4-5 encourages us to, "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes." Do you see the contrast? There is an appropriate time not to answer the doubter, and there is an appropriate time to answer the doubter. The pastor must exercise discernment and wisdom when identifying whether or not expressed doubts are genuine doubts. Not answering those who have sincere doubts, may lead them to affirm false beliefs that the Word of God denies. However, answering those who have insincere doubts, may lead the pastor into a spiral of defensiveness and foolishness along with the doubter.

Remember the words of the Lord in Micah 6:8, "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what the Lord requires of you but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." As far as it is within our power, we should do the right thing. As we relate to others, we should be merciful. As we walk with God, we should always be humble. Remember, those within your congregations who struggle with doubt look to you for mercy, understanding, and hope. Be sure to humbly point them to Jesus, who is the one who can "help our unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

⁵ <https://www.barna.com/research/two-thirds-christians-face-doubt/>, (Accessed on March 23, 2020).

⁶ http://www.garyhabermas.com/books/dealing_with_doubt/dealing_with_doubt.htm, (Accessed on March 23, 2020).

⁷ Ibid.

Take Advantage of a Wealth of Information



at Your Fingertips

Ms. Alisha Blevins

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M.A., Auburn University
M.Div., D.Min., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Speech and Communication



Dr. Danny Dieringer
B.A., Cedarville University
M.A., Richmond Graduate University
Ph.D., Florida State University
Adjunct Professor of Psychology



Dr. Dennis Dieringer
B.A., Cedarville University
M.Div., Grace College and Seminary
D.Min., Luther Rice College and Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Ministry



Ms. Nicolette Gordon
B.A., St. Lawrence University
BFA Communications, American Intercontinental University
M.A., Liberty University
Adjunct Professor of Counseling



Mr. Jonathan Henderson
B.S., Toccoa Falls College
M.A., University of Central Florida
Ed.S., Valdosta State University
Adjunct Professor of History



Dr. Marisa May
B.S., University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
M.A., Sam Houston State University
Ed.D., Liberty University
Adjunct Professor of Mathematics



Dr. Jeff Meyers
B.A., Baylor University
M.Div., Ph.D., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Evangelism



Dr. Howard Owens
B.S., Georgia Institute of Technology
M.Div., Columbia Biblical Seminary
Th.M., Ph.D., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Christian Missions



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Ph.D., Inorganic Chemistry, Northwestern University
Adjunct Professor of Physical Science



Dr. David Phillips
B.S., University of Arkansas
Th.M., Ph.D., Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Old Testament



Dr. Angela Scruggs
B.S., Middle Tennessee State University
M.A.M.F.C., Th.M., Ph.D., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Counseling



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M.Div., Westminster Theological Seminary
Ph.D., Regent University
Adjunct Professor of Leadership



Dr. Obbie Todd
B.A., University of Kentucky
M.Div., Th.M., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
Ph.D., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Adjunct Professor of Theology

How Readeest Thou?

Tips for reading the Bible better.



M

Professor Tim Skinner

any have heard the story of the man whose devotional reading of the Bible consisted of opening the Bible at random and claiming the first verse his finger landed on. One day, the man was desperately seeking the will of God and he prayed, "Dear Lord, show me your will for today."

The man opened his Bible, tested his finger technique and his finger landed on Matthew 27:5 which read: "And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went out and hanged himself."

Puzzled at this, the man attempted to try the finger method of Bible study once more. The second time his finger landed on Luke 10:37, "... Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise."

Certain that this could not be God's will for him, he prayed again, and again opened the Bible, and his finger alighted on John 13:27 which read: "... Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

If you study the Bible hit and miss, you usually MISS more than you HIT!

Devotional Bible readings have their purpose and are sometimes edifying for readers because they are actually reading God's sacred Word. But devotional readings of the Bible are sometimes referred to as the "hit-and-miss-approach," as they fail to show us the big picture.

Not reading the Bible in context can cause us to take things *out of context*. When reading the Bible, sometimes Christians fail to take into account that the rules of grammar and logic cannot be violated.

While the Bible is a supernatural book as it comes from God, it is also a human book: God used

ordinary human beings to record his truth to us.¹ Like any other writing, the Bible must be read without violating those rules.

Bernard Ramm, whose book, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* was a standard classic in Bible colleges and seminaries at one time, used to say that hermeneutics (a fancy word for interpreting the Bible) was a science and an art. It is a science

because it is guided by rules within a system; and it is an art because the application of the rules is a skill².

A student will be taught those skills in Bible college.

Here are some tips to energize your Bible reading:

- **Read purposefully.** Read the Bible mentally by asking the question, "What is the purpose the author has for writing this book?" The author generally reveals his purpose in the first chapter of any book. While this is not always the case, it is most of the time.

When we receive a letter in the mail, the first question we normally ask is, "What is the purpose of this letter?" If it is true for us, it was true for the writers of the Bible. They had a purpose for writing the letter/book and it usually follows the common rules of grammar and logic.

It has been said that the key to the front door is generally somewhere close to the door. For example, the key maybe under the welcome mat, above the door, hiding behind the shutter etc. For example, in I Corinthians 1, Paul gives us the key to I Corinthians in 1:10, "... That there be no divisions among you ..." Jude tells us in v. 3 of his epistle to "... exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith ..."

By understanding the purpose for the book, then

you will be able to put the details of the book in their proper purpose.

- **Utilize different translations when reading the Bible.** This is not to encourage anyone to change Bibles from their favorite translation, but sometimes reading from a different translation (and it is best to have as your main study Bible one of the more standard translations like the *King James Version*, *New King James Version*, *New American Standard Version*, *English Standard Version*, *New International Version* etc.) will allow you to see different perspectives on a passage.

You may want to try reading a passage from a paraphrase like the *New Living Translation*, *The Good News Bible*, *J. B. Phillips's The New Testament in Modern English* etc. Reading from a different translation will bring out differences in the text that require further study, and you see, you are already digging deeper, and that is the whole point of Bible study!

It definitely helps even to read your passage by just using a different Bible: not a different translation but merely a different Bible! You can see things that you would not normally see by just reading from a different Bible than the Bible you normally read from. I have a little black pocket Bible that I call my "miracle Bible" because it brings out things that I somehow miss if I just happen to be sitting in the Dr.'s office etc. Why not take a pocket Bible while you're standing in line at the Bank, the grocery store, or waiting for your food to come?

One of the most common excuses for people not reading the Bible is the famous line, "But I can't understand the thee's and the thou's!" My answer? Then get a Bible that doesn't have the thee's and the thou's!

- **Write down your observations in a notebook.** This is wise to do, as many of us can forget what we read. It will help us to remember better if we write down our observations. I studied under the incredible Bible teacher Howard Hendricks who wrote the classic *Living by the Book*³.

Dr. Hendricks believed there were three stages of Bible study: observation, interpretation, and application. The first assignment he ever gave us in our Bible Study Methods class was to take Acts 1:8 and write down as many observations as we could from that one verse. You can try that or take any verse in the Bible and write down as many observations as you can. Take Genesis 1:1 and write down everything you see in that one verse alone. You can create your own Bible commentary!

- **Read the Bible by asking selective questions** like, Who is speaking? and Who are they speaking to? Does this passage/promise apply directly to me? Little children are taught to sing the little song, "Every promise in the book is mine, every chapter, every verse, and every line." But this is not true; every promise in the Bible is not promised to us as 21st century Christians. God has not promised me a piece of real estate in the Middle East today situated between the River of Egypt and the Euphrates (Gen. 15:18). God will not part the Red Sea for us to cross over. God has not promised us as Christians that "every place that the soles of our feet tread upon will be ours" (Joshua 1:3).

What about the dietary laws of Leviticus 11? Are we allowed to eat pork, bacon, and spareribs? What about Lobster? Lobsters do not have scales you know? Will I have to cancel our Church barbeque at Hickory House? Will I have to cut my grass on Sunday since God forbids us to do any work on the Sabbath day? Are we required to observe Passover?

Questions like these teach dispensational truths, and much of what we do in our culture today require us to ask if some of the commands and requirements we find in our Bible are really addressed to us.

You will be surprised how much you will energize your Bible reading by following these simple procedures. Of course, you can really shake up your Bible study by enrolling at Bible college or seminary too. So, how readeest thou?

¹ See Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation* (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook Communications Ministries, 1991), 59-67.

² Bernard L. Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 1.

³ Howard Hendricks, *Living by the Book* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007).