

11-1-2008

Foreword

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Recommended Citation

Hegedus, Timothy (2008) "Foreword," *Consensus*: Vol. 33 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.
Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol33/iss1/1>

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Foreword

The articles in this issue of *Consensus* are presented in honour of Dr Erwin Buck, Professor Emeritus and former President of Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS) in Saskatoon.

We who are “Dr. Buck’s students” know the crucial impact he has had on us — “crucial” in the sense of its original meaning of “pertaining to the cross” (*crux*). Erwin bears faithful witness to the cross of Christ which gives us freedom and courage to engage the complex challenges Christians are facing in the modern world. Erwin’s commitment to the Gospel, the church and the academy has had a profound impact on all of us who have been blessed to have studied with him.

I once heard Erwin preach in the seminary chapel on the following text from his beloved Gospel of Matthew: “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old” (Matthew 13.52 NRSV). It strikes me that that verse describes Erwin so well. As a teacher and friend, Erwin has shared with us out of his treasure what is new and what is old. In faithfulness to the “old, old story of Jesus and his love” Erwin also challenged us again and again with new insights — and in so doing we have been profoundly gifted by the “treasure” that is Erwin Buck.

In his classes we came to know Erwin’s deep engagement with the Bible and critical questions of Biblical interpretation. He took us seriously as students and as human beings, inspiring us to think critically for ourselves and to integrate our classroom learning with faith and life. In Erwin’s classes at LTS I was initiated into Biblical criticism, and I appreciated so much his guidance as I went through the fires of questioning things I had never questioned before. I was grateful for his availability to talk with us outside of class hours, his listening and supportive pastoral presence, his impassioned preaching and his amazing intellectual acumen. It seemed like Erwin had read everything! Yet with characteristic humility he admitted to us that in fact it was impossible to keep up with everything in New Testament scholarship. On one occasion I came to class with a new book on Paul that I had found in the bookstore. By the next day he had read the book and was prepared to comment on it. I had never experienced a professor like Erwin before. He has been a compelling teacher, theologian, pastor and servant of God and the church.

Each of the authors who contributed to this volume of *Consensus* studied with Erwin Buck at LTS. Each essay reflects that commitment to critical thinking in service of the church which Erwin modeled for us and inspired in us.

Erwin, we offer this collection in gratitude for you and the gifts you have shared with us, with LTS and with the church. It is a way for us who have received so much from you to say to you: “Thank you, Dr Buck!”

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