The Robert C. Cooley Center for the Study of Early Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Exploring the Historical Foundations of the Christian Faith

Explorations

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Fall 2011

Exciting Changes

Going Digital

A Note from the Director,
Dr. Rollin Grams

This summer, the Robert C. Cooley Center for the Study of Early Christianity takes another step forward into the digital age. Last fall, we announced the beginning of the Cooley Center’s website, and from now on, the content of Explorations will appear in the various menus of that website. So, please note that articles, resources, current issues and news about the Center will now appear online, along with other items of interest. Patrons will, however, receive updates and other important information via a quarterly mailing. Mark Poe, the fellow for the Center, continues to oversee the content for the website that he and other scholars of the Center are producing. Do check it out soon at www.gordonconwell.edu/cooley_center.

Exciting Partnership

The Cooley Center and BibleJourney

By Dr. Alison Littauer

The Biblical Literacy Project of the Cooley Center has sponsored, with great success, three semesters of BibleJourney, an in-depth, exegetical teaching program that equips both leaders and laity in Scriptural understanding and application. Participation thus far has included more than 40 Charlotte-area churches.

The goals of BibleJourney are: 1) to provide participants with a comprehensive grasp of the main figures, events and themes in the Bible and their ongoing significance for our lives 2) to enlighten participants with background information and resources that clarify God’s revelation in its original settings 3) to equip participants to interpret the Bible correctly by introducing appropriate tools and methods.

The success of BibleJourney this pilot year means that we are planning to offer it in offsite locations in fall 2011. Cooley Center Director Dr. Rollin Grams will begin the New Testament portion of the Charlotte campus BibleJourney program in early October on Monday evenings.

For more information on BibleJourney, contact Dr. Alison Littauer at the Charlotte campus at (704) 940-5814 or alittauer@gcts.edu.

Support for the Center

Our Going Forward Campaign is a program designed to raise funds and expand the work of the Cooley Center. We are pleased to announce that this ongoing campaign has good momentum. Through a number of gifts and pledges, close to $60,000 has been raised toward the goal of $290,000. We are so grateful for the support of the Center’s Patrons and others in the important work of exploring the foundations of our faith through the study of early Christianity. If you are considering a gift or would like to have a conversation about giving to the Center, please contact Dr. Alan Cellamare at (704) 940-5815 or acellamare@gcts.edu.
A host of new additions to the Robert C. Cooley Collection in Biblical Archaeology and Early Christianity have been made during the past several months, according to Senior Librarian Robert Mayer. The Collection now holds current subscriptions to several important journals relating to biblical archaeology and early Christian studies, including the new journal, *Early Christianity* published by Eisenbrauns. In addition, subscriptions to the Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion, Near Easter Archaeology, Palestine Exploration Quarterly, Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Israel Exploration Journal, and Tel Aviv have been added during the past year.

The major book addition to the Collection is the *Fathers of the Church* series published by Catholic University Press of America. This collection will be added over a three to four year period and currently, approximately 40 of the 122-volume collection have been added. This series provides scholarly English translations of major Christian writings from the first five centuries of Church History and is invaluable for research in early Christian studies. This series joins the multi-volume *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Word* published by Brill as two important anchors of the collection. While both are cataloged as part of the Cooley Collection, they are kept on the Harold Lindsell Library reference shelves so that students and others in the Gordon-Conwell community have regular access to them.

As we go to press, plans are nearly complete for renovation of the Cooley Collection room. This renovation will allow for more space for Collection holdings as well as space for our newest faculty member, Dr. Catherine McDowell, who will join the GCTS faculty in August. The expansion will also allow space for the new Ben Witherington collection, a major collection related to biblical and early Christian studies. Cataloging on the Witherington is expected to get underway before the end of 2011.

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**Exciting Additions to the Cooley Collection**

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**Exciting Opportunities**

**Forthcoming Events**

at GCTS - Charlotte

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**Patron’s Lecture** October 4, 2011

“The Image of God in the Garden of Eden”

- 7:00–8:30pm (Chapel) - Light refreshments will be served at the Rotunda area following the lecture.
- Guest Lecturer: Dr. Catherine McDowell
  Assistant Professor of Old Testament, GCTS - Charlotte

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**The Robert C. Cooley Annual Lecture Series**

February 12, 2012 (Time still to be determined)

“The Story of the Bible: Text, Translation and Preservation”

- Lecturer: Dr. Scott Carroll, Director of *The Green Collection*.

One of the world’s foremost scholars on ancient and biblical texts, Dr. Carroll has a working knowledge of 13 ancient languages. He is a consultant to National Geographic and the BBC.

His presentation will focus on the Bible’s impact on history and culture. Dr. Carroll’s childhood residence was in Charlotte, NC.

- Also as part of the Lecture Series will be *The Green Collection*. Among the newest and largest private collections of rare biblical texts and artifacts in the world, *The Green Collection* is a compilation of more than 30,000 biblical antiquities. The Collection is named for the David Green family, founders and leaders of national retailer Hobby Lobby, Inc. The principal holdings of the collection include:
  - The third largest holding of cuneiform tablets in North America (over 10,000 pieces)
  - The second largest holding of Dead Sea Scroll manuscripts outside museums in Israel and Jordan.
  - The largest holding of biblical papyri in North America.
  - An extensive holding of early biblical manuscripts, codices, and many illuminated texts.
  - A portion of the Gutenberg Bible and multiple first editions of the English Bible through the King James Version.

- Display: Dr. Carroll will bring a selection of rare and ancient Bibles for an on-site display. Dates, times and location of the display are forthcoming.