

MEET PTS



PROFESSOR TUCKER FERDA SEES TEACHING AS SHARING

Named this year to a tenure-track position as assistant professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Seminary, Dr. Tucker Ferda served PTS as visiting assistant professor from 2017-2020 and, before that, as instructor from 2013-2016. The entire Seminary community—especially the student body—is enthusiastic about his appointment. A true scholar-teacher-mentor, in the classroom and on the printed page Dr. Ferda offers strategies both for thinking critically about the Bible and for implementing academic learning in the circumstances and situations encountered in daily life. How did he form his approach?

If you ask Dr. Ferda, he credits his teachers. “I have been fortunate to study the Bible with some of the best scholars in the world,” he notes, “and they have filled me with an unending curiosity and sense of wonder about the New Testament.” He continues: “But those are not my only teachers. I have also been fortunate to sit at the feet of lay Bible study leaders who do not know a smidgeon of biblical Greek or anything about the world of the Bible. Yet with their KJV Bibles, worn from cover-to-cover, they spoke with deep Scriptural wisdom born of a faithful life. All these teachers have made me who I am.”

Dr. Ferda’s academic training in biblical studies began in college at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minn. He had initially planned to major in history and become a high-school history teacher, but thanks to the New Testament scholar who taught his required introduction to the Bible course, his eyes were opened. “I had always loved the Bible,” he recalls, “but I learned in college that you could actually devote your life to studying, teaching, and writing about it.” So he added a second major, biblical and theological studies, and after college pursued master’s and doctoral degrees focusing on the New Testament—the first at Duke University, and the second at the University of Pittsburgh. Throughout the process, he continued to read and learn along with fellow Christians in worship and Bible study.

“I think that good teaching is a kind of sharing,” Ferda notes. “I share with my students my passion for these endlessly fascinating texts which are theologically formative as well as historically interesting, and they share with me as well.” His classes aim to expose students to the breadth and richness of New Testament scholarship, while also “preparing them for how they will encounter the Bible in their individual contexts.”

Dr. Ferda has developed expertise in a wide range of areas in the field of biblical studies—the Gospels, life of Jesus, Old Testament in the New, history of biblical interpretation, Hellenistic Jewish literature, Dead Sea Scrolls, and the theological interpretation of Scripture, for example. In addition to being a frequent presenter at regional and national SBL meetings, Dr. Ferda publishes articles in top-tier, peer-reviewed biblical studies journals. Many of his interests intersect in his first book, *Jesus, the Gospels, and the Galilean Crisis* (Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019), available in the prestigious Library of New Testament Studies series. In 2015 he was named a Society of Biblical Literature Regional Scholar—an award that “recognizes and promotes outstanding entry-level scholars.” He is currently working on two more books, one on the second advent of Christ in the New Testament and its reception history, and another on portraits of discipleship in the four Gospels.

Dr. Ferda continues to be intent on finding ways to bridge the academic study of the Bible with everyday devotional and practical aspects of reading and teaching Scripture. He serves as a member and deacon at Pittsburgh’s East Liberty Presbyterian Church, and he frequently leads studies and provides pulpit supply in area churches. Today, he is the kind of scholar-teacher-mentor that others have inspired him to become. Just ask any Pittsburgh Seminary student who’s taken his classes!

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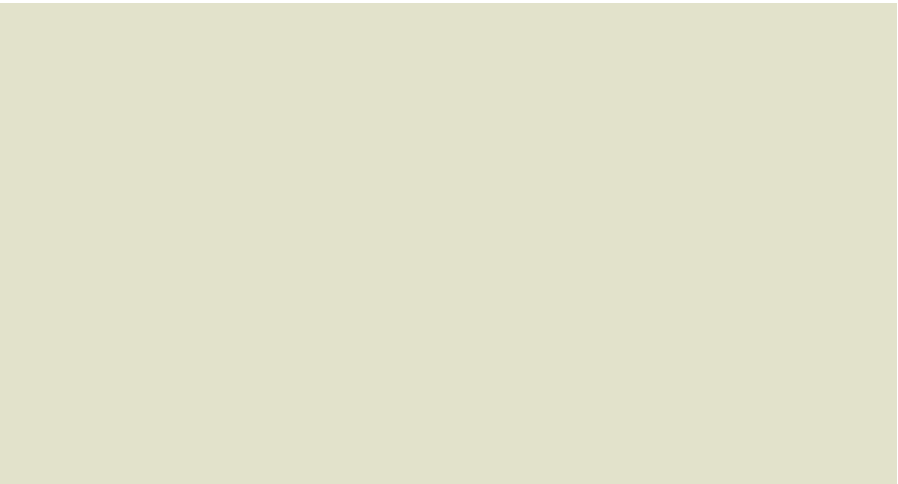
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