

LENT DEVOTIONAL 2019



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Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of women and men for theologically reflective ministry and to scholarship in service to the global Church of Jesus Christ.

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Graduate Certificate in Ministry

Graduate Certificate in Missional Leadership

Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies

Graduate Certificate in Urban Ministry

Spiritual Formation Certificate

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Church Planting Initiative

Continuing Education

Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology

Miller Summer Youth Institute

Metro-Urban Institute

World Mission Initiative

Zeitah Excavations

FACULTY

In addition to their on-campus duties, our faculty are experts in their fields and are available to preach and teach. Learn more about their **topics of research and writing** and invite them to present at your congregation or gathering.

EVENTS

The Seminary hosts a wide range of events—many of them free!—on topics of faith including church planting, mission, vocation, spiritual formation, pastoral care and counseling, archaeology, and many more. Visit our **calendar** often for a listing of upcoming events.

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LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 27, 2019

SCRIPTURE

JOHN 8:12-20

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” 13 Then the Pharisees said to him, “You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.” 14 Jesus answered, “Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid because I know where I have come from and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. 15 You judge by human standards; I judge no one. 16 Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is valid; for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me. 17 In your law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is valid. 18 I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me testifies on my behalf.” 19 Then they said to him, “Where is your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” 20 He spoke these words while he was teaching in the treasury of the temple, but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

DEVOTIONAL

The Rev. John Cowie, D.Min. – Reformed Theology / Minister, Stockbridge Parish Church, Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, U.K.

“Then the Pharisees said to him, ‘You are testifying on your own behalf; your testimony is not valid.’”

One has to feel sympathy for people confronted by Jesus. He did not behave or talk the way they expected, so it was easier to judge his testimony to be invalid. Making assumptions about people is part of human nature. We learn by making associations and noticing patterns. My baby granddaughter is learning to identify human faces; soon it will be cars, trees, animals, and birds. She will learn to generalize and classify—doing so saves time and brainpower. Adults judge people by their appearance, color, accent, dress, speech, and by what we already know. We then make assumptions about what we can’t see—intelligence, trustworthiness, education, religious and political reliability, and so on. Listening to Jesus, the Pharisees could not make sense of who he was, so they relied on their knowledge and experience to disregard him.

When we talk about Jesus, we will meet people who disregard him, and who regard our testimony to him as invalid. We should never underestimate how persistent, consistent, and understanding of others we must be in our witness about Christ, nor should we underestimate the great personal cost that our hearers’ setting aside their hard-won knowledge and experience will involve.

PRAYER

Gracious God, we pray for the church’s witness to Jesus Christ—a witness that is often colored more by our preferences than by the light of Christ. Illuminate our understanding so that our faith and worship reflect you more clearly. And to you be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation for evermore! Amen.

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