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Interview with Dr. Brug

On the November 20th 2007, I conducted an interview with Dr. John Brug. I knew I wanted to do an interview on a Seminary Professor who was still actively teaching – thinking this would give a more accurate picture of what that Seminary Professor was like during his teaching years. I highly esteem our body of professors, and I am grateful for their clear teaching of the Bible and their emphasis on the gospel. I know Christ more fully because of such teaching. While I could have picked from any of our professors, I decided to do this interview with Dr. Brug because his Psalms commentary was recently published. I wanted to know what went into a work like this, and I also wanted to get to know more about Dr. Brug. So on a rainy Tuesday in November I conducted this interview to learn a little about the background of Dr. Brug, and to learn about the writing of his Psalms commentary.

One of the things that really struck me is how the Lord led Dr. Brug into the ministry. Early on he was blessed with a strong Christian upbringing. A household where going to church every Sunday was a given. Dr. Brug remembers how his grandfather would often read his German Bible. He went to ^{MLS}Northwestern College partly because that is what some of his cousins did. But the Holy Spirit also worked through the Word of God to lead him into full-time pastoral ministry. Brug recalls his high school Romans class which inspired him to think about pastoral ministry. What I learned from this discussion about going into full-time ministry is that God uses many different things to influence a person to make that decision. A bit of this decision had to do with

Christian up-bringing. Some of it had to do with the fact that his family was doing the same. And some had to do with the Holy Spirit working on his heart through God's Word. The Word of God is incredibly powerful and because of the Holy Spirit's power it leads Christians to do many wonderful things.

Another thing I learned is what inspires a person to write a commentary. Dr. Brug wasn't asked to take on this project. But he saw an opportunity to serve others. His two main goals of writing the commentary were to give a tool to pastors as they preached and conducted Bible study, and to point directly to Christ in the Psalms. He wasn't fueled by arrogance, thinking he would write this commentary to make a name for himself. Rather, he saw that his gifts could be used to serve. I praise God for men who dedicate their lives to serve others so that they can grow in the knowledge of Christ.

Could any pastor write a commentary? Brug said that some definitely could. And some already have – as many pastors in the WELS have contributed to *The People's Bible* series. What I liked about his answer to this question was his reference to the bible study he produced on Revelation. At that same time Dr. Becker was working on his commentary for Revelation, and Becker, who had read Brug's bible study, said they arrived upon the same conclusions. He was pointing to the fact that pastors do serve as commentators as they teach God's Word. And through sound hermeneutics and precise training our pastors can arrive upon the same conclusions about the truths of God's Word. Pastors obviously do their commentating on a smaller scale. So could I be a commentator? In a sense I will be every time I conduct a Bible Study. I was encouraged by his answer to this question.

Finally, one of the things I will take away with me is the importance of daily Bible reading. I asked Brug how one can dig ever-deeper and mine the gems found in Scripture. He didn't point me to a specific Hebrew or Greek grammar. He didn't tell me to look to the apparatus in my Hebrew Bible, or consult the variants in Greek. He didn't mention the name of any one commentator. Rather, he emphasized the importance of reading the whole of God's Word so that a person can let Scripture interpret Scripture. He went as far as saying this Bible reading should be as regular as your daily meals.

I greatly enjoyed my interview with Dr. Brug. I think I learned some great things about the man, and about what it takes to write a commentary. I was encouraged by our time together, and I pray he was encouraged as well. To God be praise for men who share his truth. To him be glory for the work of our Savior, Jesus Christ. May we continue to preach his gospel to the ends of the earth. May he continue to bless us with the gifts to do so, and with a rich measure of the Holy Spirit.

Bibliography

Brug, Irene. "Let Your Light Shine." Forward In Christ. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, March, 2006.