

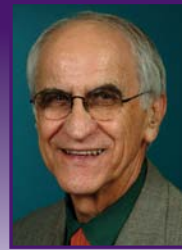


DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AN INTERVIEW WITH:



Scott Barfoot



John Reed



Ron Blue



Jerry Wofford

We have interviewed Dr. D. Scott Barfoot, Director of the Doctor of Ministry program; Dr. John W. Reed, Senior Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Studies and Director Emeritus of Doctor of Ministry; Dr. J. Ron Blue, Spanish-speaking Program Coordinator and Adjunct Professor of World Missions & Intercultural Studies; and Dr. Jerry C. Wofford, Adjunct Professor of Doctor of Ministry Studies and Professor Emeritus, The University of Texas at Arlington.

This compelling interview offers an inside look at our D.Min. program as well as some seasoned leadership thoughts for ministry leaders today.

It has been said that there is a crisis of leadership today more than ever before. Is this true and in your view what are the most pressing issues of leadership in ministry?

SCOTT BARFOOT There has never been a crisis of leadership, neither in the past nor even today. However, there has always been a crisis of Christ-like servant leadership. Leaders in every aspect of society, especially ministry leaders, have to step back and evaluate the values behind why, who, where and how they lead. In an age where leaders have misused their influence in profoundly destructive ways, I believe that the most pressing ministry leadership needs involve the restoration and cultivation of trust and communication in order to lead forward in advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ in the 21st century.

JOHN REED The crisis of Christ-like leadership continues unabated. The crucial areas requiring increased attention relate to three make-or-break issues. The first is the *character* of the leader. The ministry leader's character is crucial to being a life changing leader. The second critical leadership component is *vision*. Failed vision focus diminishes the effectiveness of a leader. Third, a true leader must be an *empowering influence* spiritually, emotionally and in dynamic modeling. The Dallas Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program seeks to energize students in these foundational dimensions.

RON BLUE There is always a great need for effective leadership. In light of the explosive growth of the Church around the world, there is a far greater need to provide leadership, especially in the southern hemisphere. The two continents in greatest need are Africa and South America. It is recorded that people are coming to Christ in Sub-Sahara Africa at the rate of 17,000 per day. And in Latin America evangelical churches are multiplying at an incredible rate. Dallas Seminary is taking the lead in providing well-equipped leaders in both continents. I am especially thrilled to see Hispanic leaders engaged in the DTS Doctorado en Ministerio program with classes in Spanish at our extension site in Guatemala.

JERRY WOFFORD Christian leaders tend to go one of two extremes—they are too controlling or are too laissez-faire. The leader needs to be actively involved in the church as an elder—indeed, as the leading elder. He should assure that the leadership of the church has a strong sense of vision and that this vision is pursued with passion and commitment.

What is the impact of globalization on the training of godly servant leaders?

RON BLUE The world is shrinking through globalization. We literally live in a global village. This increases the need to be engaged around the world in leadership training. Dallas Seminary provides the key to effective leadership with a biblical model of godly servant leaders. An emphasis on a strong dependence on God and spiritual character and a humble Christ-like approach in relationships provides truly effective leaders.

JERRY WOFFORD We are increasingly aware of the Christian community as global rather than local. With this awareness comes a responsibility and a desire to serve and enjoy the fellowship of people of different continental locations and cultures. Distance education, internationally conducted seminars, and partnerships among seminaries allow an expansion of the opportunity to carry servant leadership concepts and practices around the globe.

JOHN REED We must become an international team that highly values the contribution of spiritual leaders from every culture and background. The task is so monumental that every individual follower of Christ needs to be nurtured in the faith and trained to excel in the work of our Lord. That means our training of godly servant leaders must encourage in students mutual love and respect for ministry leaders of all cultures.

SCOTT BARFOOT At the time of Christ it was the Roman road that paved the way for the spread of the Gospel. Today it is the internet highway that serves a primary channel for communicating Christ. Globalization as a result of technological advancement provides a new window of opportunity to train and develop godly servant leaders on a global scale.

How many faculty teach in the Doctor of Ministry program and what areas of expertise do these faculty cover?

JOHN REED It has been my joy to have been part of our D.Min. program from its inception in 1980. During these years two issues of significance have dominated related to the quality of our faculty. First, students have consistently affirmed the expertise of the faculty and the way in which the professors have made the courses relate to real-life ministry experiences. Second, the students have appreciated the respect they have received from the professors. This has been expressed consistently in classes that are true doctoral seminars. The instructors have refused to be “talking heads” dropping pearls of wisdom from their learned lips. Rather the students and professors engage in collegial interaction designed to enhance the ministry effectiveness of each individual. I have personally learned as much or more from students than they have learned from me.

SCOTT BARFOOT We have over fifty faculty members from inside and outside Dallas Theological Seminary who teach our D.Min. courses and advise students in their dissertation projects. Our faculty cover a broad range of expertise in fields of ministry leadership, christian education, pastoral leadership, marriage and family ministries, church planting, spiritual formation, and women in ministry. We work diligently to match students with faculty that best suit the students’ personal needs and research endeavors. It is our world-class faculty in partnership with our exceptional students that sets our program apart.

RON BLUE The D.Min. program engages not only key professors on the DTS faculty but numerous adjunct professors from across the country and around the world who are proven leaders in their ministries. Every course is designed to be applicable to specific areas of ministry in which the student is engaged. The Spanish Doctorado en Ministerio courses are regularly taught by “co-professors.” Linked with a highly respected DTS professor is a fully-qualified Hispanic professor who provides special help in making the course fully relevant in the Latin culture. It is especially helpful for each student from numerous countries of Latin America and Spain to be able to complete all assignments in Spanish and relate everything learned to a specific Hispanic setting.

JERRY WOFFORD The D.Min. program at DTS draws on the scholarship and ministry experience of outstanding faculty with a broad range of expertise. Both in the classroom and in the research project, students are guided by faculty who are respected internationally as leaders in their field.

Why get a Doctor of Ministry Degree from DTS? What sets it apart?

JERRY WOFFORD The D.Min. degree at DTS is flexible and geared to preparing Christian leaders to meet the challenges of their particular ministry more effectively. It prepares them to be proactive in fully understanding the challenges they face, involving other people in analyzing these challenges, and leading these people to carry out the needed actions to succeed. These decision-making and leadership activities must all be accomplished in fellowship with and under the guidance of God.

JOHN REED There are many D.Min. programs available today. At Dallas Seminary we seek to develop a collegial spirit in that context. We want to facilitate the specific focus desired by students. Our stated purpose is to help students become more effective in the ministry to which they are called. While we feel we are strong in leadership, preaching, marriage and family, Christian education, and women’s ministry, the area that sets us apart is the empowering of students in their research and writing. The completion of the research project is usually the most difficult task faced by students. We seek to carefully instruct and energize students toward the successful completion of their dissertations.

SCOTT BARFOOT First, the Doctor of Ministry degree at Dallas Seminary allows students to engage with exceptional faculty who are known world-wide as experienced ministers, gifted writers and experts in their respective fields. Second, the program is uniquely flexible and can be customized to fit the student’s ministry leadership needs. Third, the student’s course plan allows for the transfer of up to 10 credit hours from other accredited seminaries and select certification programs and training conferences.

RON BLUE Dallas Seminary has an outstanding reputation of providing graduates who handle the Word of God with accuracy. DTS graduates are scattered around the globe in very effective ministries. I do not believe there is a seminary anywhere that has had a greater impact around the world.

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