

“He Being Dead Yet Speaketh” The Legacy of Rod Decker

Rod may have been mildly disappointed that I chose to take this Hebrews 11:4 phrase from the KJV rather than the NIV11 (“Abel still speaks, even though he is dead”), but let’s admit it: there are some texts which cannot be improved by modern versions (e.g. “certain lewd fellows of the baser sort” [Acts 17:5] or “it came to pass” [Luke 2:1]). But I do not think Rod would have objected to my stealing the application of this phrase to Rod’s ministry from comments made by Mike Stallard in the most recent issue of *Baptist Bulletin* (p 69). Rod has certainly left behind many books, articles, essays, blogs, and a website that will continue to bless us until the Lord returns.

My purpose in this essay is not to provide a biography of Rod’s life and ministry since others have already done so elsewhere.¹ Rather my goal is to summarize and catalog the contribution Rod has made with his keyboard.² I would like to organize this paper around the answers to three questions. First, what did Rod write about? Second, by what means did Rod write? Third, what lessons can be drawn from a study of Rod’s writing ministry?

Decker’s Subjects

Rod was truly a renaissance man, expert in many areas of NT studies and in other fields of theological inquiry as well. Yet, he was first and foremost a Greek teacher, and his love of Greek can be seen in the number of books and articles he dedicated to that subject. As a NT professor myself, I always enjoyed hearing from Rod in regard to Greek, but I learned early on that whatever Rod was writing about was worth my time reading and digesting. Though I may not have always agreed with Rod, he consistently demonstrated good scholarship, logical argumentation, clear writing, and charitable fairness in his works. No matter the venue (see the next section for more on this), Rod’s efforts were always professional and exemplary, showing both students and colleagues how conservative Christian scholarship ought to be conducted and articulated.

Using categories that Rod himself identified (with a couple exceptions), I would like to provide a listing of the things Rod has written. Each item will include the bibliographic information along with a short annotation (in most cases). While there are often two or more categories into which an article might fall (check the NT Resources website [www.ntresources.com] to see how Rod thought his writings should be organized because he often put items in more than one category), I have mentioned each item only once, hoping to conserve space. Several items went through a number of revisions due to their

¹See the article on Rod in the recent issue of *Baptist Bulletin* 80, no 4 (July/August 2014): 20-21. Also see the editor’s tribute to Rod on p 4 as well as the tributes of several colleagues on pp 66-67. Also see Kevin T. Bauder, “Until the Morning Star Arises,” *In the Nick of Time* (May 30, 2014) <<http://www.centraleseminary.edu/resources/nick-of-time/until-the-morning-star-arises>>.

²While “pen” might be the typical word to use here, Rod and the rest of us have not used pens to write anything of significance since high school or before.

use in various venues. I have chosen to include only the latest item (e.g. I include his book on temporal deixis in Mark but not his dissertation). Furthermore, Rod produced parts of his larger works on several occasions (e.g. his article on εὐθυσ in *JMAT* was taken from his dissertation/book). In these cases I have chosen to include the smaller portion only if it was formally published. Finally, I have listed items chronologically in each category beginning with the most recent.

NT/Koine Greek Grammar

- *Reading Koine Greek: An Introduction and Integrated Workbook*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.
 - Summary (from Amazon): This in-depth yet student-friendly introduction to Koine Greek provides a full grounding in Greek grammar, while starting to build skill in the use of exegetical tools. The approach . . . emphasizes reading Greek for comprehension as opposed to merely translating it. The workbook is integrated into the textbook, enabling students to encounter real examples as they learn each new concept. The book covers not only New Testament Greek but also the wider range of Bible-related Greek (LXX and other Koine texts).
- “The Function of the Imperfect Tense in Mark’s Gospel,” in *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History and Development*, ed. Stanley Porter and Andrew Pitts, 347–64. *Studies in the Language of the New Testament*, Brill Linguistic Biblical Studies. Brill, 2013.
 - Summary: The imperfect as used by Mark introduces indirect discourse and records offline information. This finding has implications for translation and exegesis.
- “The Grammar of Christology,” Bible Faculty Summit, July 2010, Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.*
 - Summary: It is important to distinguish between semantics and pragmatics when discussing the usage of tense, particularly when discussing the use of the imperfect tense in Mark.
- “Adapting Technology to Teach Koine Greek.” In *Studying the Greek New Testament: Papers from the SBL Greek Language and Linguistics Section*. NT Monographs 11. Edited by S. E. Porter and M. B. O’Donnell, 25-42. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009.
 - Summary: This essay seeks to “demonstrate some of the potential benefits in adapting current technology for use in teaching Greek on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to suggest a few of the pitfalls that might be encountered by those who choose to explore such means.”
- *Koine Greek Reader: Selections from the New Testament, Septuagint, and Early Christian Writers*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
 - Summary (from Amazon): Providing graded readings in Koine Greek from the New Testament, Septuagint, Apostolic Fathers, and early creeds, this unique text integrates the full range of materials needed by intermediate Greek students. Its many features include four helpful vocabulary lists, numerous references to other resources, assorted translation helps, a review

of basic grammar and syntax, and an introduction to BDAG—the standard Greek lexicon.

- “Practical Participles.” Unpublished paper, 2006.
 - Summary: An overview of the form and function of participles in the Greek NT.
- “An Introduction to the Middle Voice and Deponent Verbs in Light of Current Study.” Unpublished paper, 2005. “First written for use in an exegesis of Mark class” at BBS.
 - Summary: A discussion of the middle voice which argues that focus should be placed upon the meaning of the middle voice as subject-focused such that the question regarding deponency is actually irrelevant.
- Revision of Chapter 15: Introduction to Verbs from William Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, 2d ed. November, 2003.
 - Summary (from website): “This material replaces key sections of ch. 15 of Mounce (2d ed.) to provide more technical terminology, to clarify a few key points, and make a few changes where I happen to disagree with Bill.”
- *Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark in Light of Verbal Aspect*. Studies in Biblical Greek 10, ed. D. A. Carson. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.
 - Summary (from website): Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb provides a detailed grammatical study of the Greek verb in the Gospel of Mark focused on the question of temporal reference. Following the theory of verbal aspect proposed by several recent scholars, this study distinguishes between aspect and *Aktionsart*, semantics and pragmatics. It argues that temporal reference is not grammaticalized by the tenses of the Greek verb. Instead, *koine* Greek indicates these relationships through contextual means (temporal deixis). The full temporal range of usage of the verb in Mark’s gospel is examined, deictic indicators are catalogued, and selected passages are used to illustrate the ways in which time is indicated. This linguistic study provides a basis for more accurate exegesis of the text of Mark and other similar writings.
- “Verbal Aspect in Recent Debate: Objections to Porter’s Non-Temporal View of the Verb.” Evangelical Theological Society, Eastern Region Annual Meeting, 3/30/01, Philadelphia Biblical University, Langhorne, PA.
 - Summary: This article answers the typical objections raised against Porter’s non-temporal view of the verb, concluding that “Of the objections that have been raised against Porter’s tenseless view of the Greek verb, none is unanswerable. Many of these arguments do not pose major obstacles to the theory.”
- “Syntax of Preposition > *καί* Constructions.” Unpublished preliminary draft, October, 1998.
 - Summary: Contains search data from Accordance (v 3.5) regarding the syntactical pattern noted in the title of this article. How significant is the inclusion or omission of the preposition in the 2d position? Tentative conclusions are provided.
- “The Use of *εὐθύς* (‘immediately’) in Mark.” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 1.1 (1997): 90-121.

- Summary: An excerpt from *Temporal Deixis* in which the various uses of εὐθύς in Mark are explained.
- “The Semantic Range of ὅταν in the Gospels as Related to Temporal Deixis.” *Trinity Journal* 16 ns (1995): 187-217.
 - Summary: A survey of the uses of ὅταν showing that it is a useful deictic indicator in determining temporal implicature in the gospels. “This validates Porter’s point that the tenses may not be assumed to grammaticalize any specific temporal relationship but rather depend on pragmatic factors to indicate temporal implicature” (211).

Semantics, Exegetical Method, Translation

- “Markan Idiolect in the Study of the Greek of the New Testament,” in *The Language of the New Testament: Context, History and Development*, ed. Stanley Porter and Andrew Pitts, 43–66. *Studies in the Language of the New Testament*, Brill Linguistic Biblical Studies. Brill, 2013.
 - Summary: A study of Markan idiolect (the linguistic system of an individual speaker) and its implications for grammar and exegesis, NT textual criticism, the synoptic problem, and literary styles of NT Greek authors.
- “400 Years of the KJV.” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 16.1 (Spring 2012): 5–49.
 - Summary: A study of the history of the KJV, its qualities as a translation, its influence, and ministry considerations involving its use in ministry today.
- “Verbal-Plenary Inspiration and Translation.” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 11 (2006): 25-61.
 - Summary: A study of the terminology used in describing inspiration and translation, showing how this knowledge relates to the bibliological and methodological issues faced in Bible translation.
- “What Does a Translator Have to Offer the Reader?” A Response to Dr. C. John Collins ‘What the Reader Wants and the Translator Can Give: 1 John As a Test Case’.” Evangelical Theological Society, Northeastern Regional Meeting, 4/1/2006, Mid-America Baptist Seminary, Northeast Campus, Schenectady, NY.
 - Summary: Takes exception to Collins’ use of “essentially literal” and “dynamic equivalency” language in describing translation technique.
- “World Ministry: Translation and Training for the Two-Thirds World,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 9.1 (Spring 2005): 72-89.
 - Summary: A discussion of Bible translation as it relates to missionary translation and training. There is a need for contemporary translations and revisions, for trained national leaders and translators, and for greater flexibility in translation models.
- “World Ministry: The ESV as a Window into Translation and Training for the Two-Thirds World,” Bible Faculty Summit, Piedmont Baptist College, Winston-Salem, NC, July 2004.*
 - Summary: (Extrapolating from a footnote in the *JMAT* article) this article discusses translational issues surrounding the ESV as a window to the significant factors involved in providing effective translations in foreign contexts.

- *La Biblia en Nuestro Idioma*. Lima, Peru, SA, Seminario Teologico Bautista, 2004.
 - Summary: An expanded edition of *The English Bible* in Spanish.
- “How Do We Use the Biblical Languages? Some Reflections on Synchronic and Diachronic Methodology in Semantics, Grammar, and Exegesis with an Excursus on Ἑκκλησία.” Unpublished paper, August, 2003.
 - Summary: A study of the proper approach to the study of words in the Greek NT with an emphasis on the use of Ἑκκλησία. This is a shortened version of the BFLS paper given at Maranatha.
- “As the Verb Turns—And Other Grammatical Revolutions Too With an Excursus on Ἑκκλησία.” Bible Faculty Leadership Summit, July 2003, Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.**
 - Summary: A study of two current areas of Koine Greek language study that merit attention: methodology in studying words and verbal aspect .
- *The English Bible*. Kansas City: Calvary Theological Seminary, 1993.
 - Summary: A presentation of the theological and practical need for translation of the Bible, including a survey of the history of the English Bible. The conclusion states, “We dare not bury our head in the sand and pretend that we are communicating the Word of God when the people to whom we minister cannot understand the message” (36).

Book Reviews

- “An Evaluation of the 2011 Edition of the New International Version.” *Themelios* 36.3 (2011): 415–56.
 - Summary: A thorough overview of the NIV11 providing a discussion of the controversy surrounding its publication, the changes that were made from the NIV84 edition, and the gender language used. “It is an improvement of an otherwise fine translation [NIV]” (22).
- “Evaluating the NIV 2011.” *The Baptist Bulletin*, Sept./Oct. 2011, pp. 18–22.
 - Summary: A shortened version of the *Themelios* article.
- “Reflections on the Fantasy Trilogy *His Dark Materials* by Philip Pullman, Better Known from the Film Title, *The Golden Compass*. Faculty Forum, Feb 4, 2008.
 - Summary: This is a 33-page review of the trilogy, using worldview questions to analyze the books. This review provides a very helpful paradigm for how to think critically about books and movies from a Christian perspective.
- “The English Standard Version New Testament: A Review Article,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 8.2 (Fall 2004): 5-56.
 - Summary: This paper provides a detailed overview of the ESV and suggests some improvements for the anticipated revision in 2009. “If the translation team [smooths out some rough spots and inconsistencies], the ESV stands to be a very serviceable translation for many years to come” (31).
- Review of *Mastering New Testament Vocabulary through Semantic Domains* by Mark Wilson with Jason Oden. *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 7.2 [fall 2003]: 127-30.
- Review of Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. & ed. F. W. Danker, 3d ed. (Chicago/London:

University of Chicago Press, 2000). *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 5.1 (spring 2001): 121-23.

- “Review Article: Mari Olsen, *A Semantic and Pragmatic Model of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect*. Outstanding Dissertations in Linguistics. New York: Garland, 1997.” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 2.1 (1998): 110-20.
 - Summary: The work by Olsen provides a “rigorous linguistic description of both aspect and time.” But it does not intersect much with the exegetical work required by students of NT Greek.
- “‘Middleton in Miniature’ A Synopsis of Part 1, Chapters 1–3 of: Middleton, Thomas Fanshaw, *The Doctrine of the Greek Article Applied to the Criticism and Illustration of the New Testament*, ed. H. J. Rose. New edition. London: Rivington, 1833.” Feb 27, 1995.
 - Summary: A review of the work Rod calls one of the greatest discussions of the Greek article ever written
- “The Poor Man’s Porter.” October, 1994.
 - Summary: A 30 page condensation and summarization of *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*, by Stanley E. Porter (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).
- “Review of Raske’s *Grammatical Blueprint Bible*, volumes reviewed: Genesis 1-11; Ruth; Aramaic sections of OT; James; Johannine Epistles.” Website <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2835>
 - Summary: Reviewed with Alan Ingalls and includes this statement: “The following is a joint review that is intended more as a caution than as a recommendation.” And this one: “Raske’s extensive diagramming of OT texts demonstrates finally and conclusively the uselessness of diagramming in Hebrew.”
- “Review of the *Bible Version Debate*, original edition.” Website, <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2837>
- “Review of *Biblical Greek Language and Lexicography: Essays in Honor of Frederick W. Danker*, ed. Taylor, Burton, and Whittaker, Eerdmans, 2004. Website, <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2832>
- “Review of Lars Rydbeck, “On the Question of Linguistic Levels and the Place of the New Testament in the Contemporary Language Milieu.” In *The Language of the New Testament: Classic Essays*. JSNT supp. series #60. Edited by Stanley E. Porter, 191-204. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991. Website, <http://ntresources.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Rydbeck_andNotes.pdf>

Hermeneutics

- “A Response to W. Edward Glenny at the Dispensational Study Group at the ETS annual meeting, Nov. 2006 (Washington DC): “Gentiles and the People of God: A Study of Apostolic Hermeneutics and Theology in Acts 15.”
 - Summary: Provides a summary of agreements and disagreements with Ed Glenny’s paper. Rod concludes that he cannot agree with one of Glenny’s assertions that the church is part of the renewed Israel.

- “Dispensationalism.” In *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains*, ed. David J. Wishart. Lincoln, NE: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2004.
 - Summary: A short description of dispensationalism and the churches and institutions in the Plains which are known for supporting it.
- “Twisted Text? The New Testament’s Uses of the Old.” Faculty Forum, Baptist Bible Seminary, Nov 6, 2002.*
 - Summary: This article discusses the various approaches suggested in regard to how the NT authors use the OT with an extended discussion of typology.
- “Realistic or Historical Narrative?” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 4.1 (spring 2000): 52-81.
 - Summary: A study of the implications and value of literary criticism for those who take a conservative view of the historical truth of the Bible.
- *Contemporary Dispensational Theology*. Kansas City: Calvary Theological Seminary, 1992.
 - Summary: Explains the classic, modified, and progressive forms of contemporary dispensationalism.

NT Biblical Theology and Exegesis

- *Mark: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, 2 vols. Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament series, ed. Martin Culy. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014.
 - Summary (from Amazon): While the Gospel of Mark has a longstanding reputation as having some of the simplest Greek in the New Testament, Rodney J. Decker proves that even this “simple Greek” is challenging and thought provoking. *Mark 1–8* and *Mark 9–16* entice readers to engage fully with the text and its intricacies. Decker provides helpful guidance regarding Mark’s distinctive use of Greek and the role that verbal aspect plays in the structuring of the text. When read alongside commentaries on Mark, this handbook will encourage a further understanding of Mark’s views on who Jesus was and what Jesus expects of his followers.
- “The ‘Bauer Thesis’: An Overview.” Ch. 1 in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Early Christian Contexts*. Edited by Paul Hartog. Eugene, Or.: Pickwick, forthcoming.
- “The Church Has a Direct Relationship to the New Covenant.” In *Dispensational Views of the New Covenant: 3 Views*. Edited by Mike Stallard, 194–222. Schaumburg, Ill.: Regular Baptist Books, 2012.
 - Summary: The title of the article adequately describes the argument of the essay.
- “The Rehabilitation of Heresy: ‘Misquoting’ Earliest Christianity.” *Journal of Ministry & Theology* 13.1 (2009): 30–63; 13.2 (2009): 56–95.
 - Summary: This two-part article summarizes the work of Walter Bauer and a modern follower of Bauer (Bart Ehrman) and shows how Bauer’s theory of early Christian origins is flawed. A defense of the historical accuracy of the New Testament is also provided.
- “The Miracle of Immanuel.” Sermon preached at BBS seminary chapel, Dec 18, 2007.
 - Summary: Provides a helpful interpretation of Isaiah 7 and how this passage is used typologically by Matthew in the virgin birth prophecy.

- “A King’s Ransom: The Cross in Mark’s Gospel, Mark 15:22-39.” Sermon preached at BBS seminary chapel, March 22, 2005.
 - Summary: Christ gave his life to set many free.
- “Studies in Hebrews.” 6-part series, *Journal of Ministry and Theology*. Part 1: “The Original Readers of Hebrews,” 3.2 (fall 1999): 20-49; Part 2: “The Intentional Structure of Hebrews,” 4.2 (fall 2000): 80-105; Part 3: “The Warnings of Hebrews 3-4,” 5.1 (spring 2001): 5-27; Part 4: “The Warning of Hebrews 6,” 5.2 (fall 2001): 26-48; Part 5: “The Exhortations of Hebrews 10:19-25,” 6.1 (spring 2002): 44-62. Part 6: “Trampling the Son of God Under Foot: The Warning of Hebrews 10:26-31,” 6.2 (fall 2002): 30-39.
 - Summary: This series of articles explores introductory issues related to Hebrews as well as a treatment of several of the warning passages in the book.
- *The Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, ed. Mal Couch. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1997. (3 Articles: “new covenant, theology of”; “new covenant, dispensational views of”; and “people of God.”)
 - Summary: “New Covenant, theology of” gives a general overview of the OT and NT teaching on the New Covenant. “New Covenant, dispensational views of” discusses the four major dispensational views and supports the idea that the church has a preliminary part in the New Covenant; “People of God” discusses the OT and NT uses of this phrase and states that the church is included in the people of God on the basis of their participation in the New Covenant.
- “Preaching Jesus to Skeptics.” Faculty Forum, Baptist Bible Seminary, 1997.
 - Summary: An overview of The Jesus Seminar and the response conservative Christians should provide.
- “‘Filled with the Spirit’ Ephesians 5:18-20: Preliminary Notes on a Disputed Passage.” Unpublished paper, December, 1996.
 - Summary (from the paper): It would seem that understanding the Lord’s will (17b) is nicely paralleled by being filled with the Spirit (18b), especially if that is to be understood in terms of the Spirit’s ministry using the Word of Christ—the Scriptures in the believer’s life (Col. 3)—through which the Lord’s will is known. (The parallel would be much less distinct if a subjective, experiential work of the Spirit were in view, i.e., the traditional Keswick view.)
- “Philippians 2:5-11, The Kenosis of Christ.” Unpublished Paper, May 1996.
 - Summary (from the article): The incarnation of Jesus Christ is often described in terms of the “kenosis” (usually translated “to empty”)—a term that comes from the Greek word κενόω in Philippians 2:5-11. This article summarizes the semantics and theology of the text from the perspective of evangelical theology, concluding that Jesus did not “empty” himself of anything. Rather Paul’s statement refers to Jesus—who was and is fully equal with God in nature—veiling his preincarnate glory and voluntarily humbling himself by accepting existence in the form of humanity for the purposes of providing salvation.

- “The New Covenant and the Church.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152 (July-September 1995): 290-305; 152(October-December 1995): 431-56.
 - Summary: Discusses the dispensational views of the understanding of the New Covenant and its relation to the church and argues that the church participates in the blessings of the New Covenant today.
- “Anger and Sin.” Unpublished paper, no date.
 - Summary: A short summary of the interpretive options and issues surrounding Ephesians 4:26.

Systematic Theology

- “Meaning in Suffering.” *The Baptist Bulletin*, July/Aug. 2014, pp. 64-66.
 - Summary: In Rod’s final paper he argues for a theistic view of suffering and reminds us that “Christians rest in the confidence of a loving God Who will one day deliver the world from suffering.”
- “Self-Defense and the Christian.” Read at BBS Seminary Chapel, April 2014.
 - Summary: Provides a biblical theology of self-defense and supports the idea that Christians should defend themselves when attacked.
- “If You Meet the Undertaker Before You Meet the “Uppertaker”: A Christian View of Death, Dying, and Funerals.” Faculty Forum at Baptist Bible Seminary, March 12, 2007.
 - Summary: A theology of death, dying, and funerals which serves as a “prequel” to the essay on cremation.
- “Is it Better to Bury or to Burn? A Biblical Perspective on Cremation and Christianity in Western Culture.” *Journal of Ministry and Theology*, part 1: 11.1 (2007): 24-48; part 2: 11.2 (2007): 38-76.
 - Summary: This study reviews the biblical, theological, and cultural aspects of cremation and concludes, “It would appear that the wisest decision most compatible with Christian theology and the most effective in terms of Christian witness is, at least in the West, inhumation” (71).
- “Revisioning the Nature of Biblical Revelation: A Critique of Stanley Grenz’s Proposals,” *Journal of Ministry and Theology* 8.1 (Spring 2004): 5-36.
 - Summary: This paper stresses the importance of propositional revelation and the danger to Christianity of approaches like Stanley Grenz’ which undermines and dismisses the foundational nature of truth found in the Bible.
- “The Pluralistic Predicament.” Bible Faculty Leadership Summit, Faith Baptist Bible College and Seminary, July 26, 2001, Ankeny, IA.
 - Summary: This study discusses issues related to the modern question of truth and religious pluralism in our postmodern era and draws out the implications of this reality for Christians who embrace the truth of Scripture.

Practical Theology

- “Praying for the Terminally Ill.” Written with Linda. *The Baptist Bulletin*, July/Aug. 2014, pp. 28–29.

- Summary: Provides spiritual insight and practical advice on the power of prayer.
- “The Courage to Live—The Courage to Die.” Written with Mark McGinniss. *The Baptist Bulletin*, March/April 2014, pp. 24-26.
 - Summary: Both men discuss the difficult physical situation God has appointed for them. Both express hope in the promises of God to help them endure to the end.
- “Preaching and the Biblical Languages: Garnish or Entrée? Mellon or Mantra?” Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics, Houston, 2012.
 - Summary: A proper use of biblical languages in preaching.
- “Respecting the Text.” Empire State Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches, November 6, 2003, First Baptist Church, Schenevus, NY.
 - Summary: The proper hermeneutical approach is crucial for accurate and effective preaching ministry.
- “Communicating the Text in the Postmodern Ethos of Cyberspace: Cautions Regarding the Technology and the Text.” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 5 (fall 2000): 45-70.
 - Summary: This article examines the effects of technology on the individual and in regard to worship in the church. And it provides several suggestions regarding the communication of God’s Word in the Information Age.
- “It is Because of Him’: 1 Corinthians 1:17-2:5.” Sermon preached at BBS seminary chapel, fall 1996.
 - Summary: Discusses the importance of a proper approach to ministry in a postmodern world.
- *The Expositor’s Toolbox*. Co-edited with James Raiford. Kansas City: Calvary Theological Seminary, 1992.
 - Summary: A survey of books on commentaries, theology, and preaching deemed essential for expositors of the Word. It also included recommendations.
- “Polity and the Elder Issue.” *Grace Theological Journal* 9 (1988): 257-78.
 - Summary (from the article): Any conclusions regarding the function of elders in local churches must take into consideration church polity. Several lines of reasoning suggest that final ecclesiastical authority is vested in local congregations. First, apostolic authority in church matters did not extend beyond the original apostles. Second, several theological principles indicate the importance of every believer in the decision making process of a local congregation. Also, there are several NT examples of churches making decisions corporately. Finally, NT instruction regarding church polity does not contradict these lines of reasoning.

Class-Related Resources

There are too many resources to list here except I will mention some of the significant bibliographies found on the website.

- Charts
- Bibliographies

- Beginning Greek Students: <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2840>
- NT Biblical Theology: <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2753>
- NT Greek Grammar: <http://ntresources.com/blog/?page_id=2493>
- Study Questions
- Vocabulary Lists

I have marked with an asterisk (*) those papers which are mentioned on the website but cannot be found there. Perhaps they were somehow deleted during Rod's "major site overhaul" when he moved from FrontPage to WordPress. Some books/articles are published but are difficult to find (e.g. *The Expositor's Toolbox*, "Adapting Technology to Teach NT Greek"). Additionally, I have marked with a double asterisk (**) those papers which are not mentioned on the website but which should have been!

Decker's Tools

Rod passed along his knowledge via many different media. He used his website, blogs, conferences, lecture series, journals, sermons, essays in books, and books to spread the insights God gave him into the wonders of the Greek NT and many other subjects (see the previous section). In what follows, I will provide a short description of each of these media and how Rod was enabled to use them.

Website

When Rod established a domain name and began his personal website (ntresources.com) in the late 90s, he was certainly one of the first to do so. He had a vision for what the website could accomplish, and many have profited from his foresight into this particular technological avenue of education. He used the site to provide links to many other helpful websites. He also formed resource pages on a number of significant areas of NT studies. The most important of these were his pages on Biblical language fonts and Unicode (this was a particularly interesting field to him), NT textual criticism, (this is the best resource page on the site), NT/Koine Greek Grammar (his second best resource page), biblical theology and exegesis, semantics and exegetical method, translation issues, theology issues, dispensational studies, and NT biblical theology (with separate sections on the Gospels and Acts, Paul, and General Epistles).

Besides links and resource pages, Rod also used the site to introduce details about his books and significant papers. While these details are mostly found in blogposts and resource pages, they are listed on his very informative (and mostly up-to-date) personal page which provides his educational accomplishments, his ministry history, and a listing of his lectureships, articles in works published by others, published books, journal articles, academic/professional papers presented, and internet/electronic publications.

Finally, his website includes his blogposts which leads to the next section.

Blog

Rod began writing blogposts right from the beginning before the word, "blog," had been coined. Visitors to the site can gain access to his blogposts back to August 2007. A quick tally indicates that he averaged 11 blogposts per month in 2007; that number decreased slightly in the intervening years. But between 2007 and 2014 he still averaged 9

blogposts per month. This represents an immense amount of work, especially considering the quality of the posts which usually included helpful observations about conferences he had attended, short reviews of books, links to important websites and information, and even devotional comments discovered in his personal study of the Word.

Conferences

Rod regularly attended the Bible Faculty Leadership Summit beginning with conference held at Central Seminary in 1999. He presented papers at these conferences nearly every year between 1999 and 2012. He also attended both regional and national Evangelical Theological Society meetings at which he regularly read papers (I counted 8 of these). Though he attended the SBL meetings less frequently, he also read papers at some of these (2). Another locale where Rod read papers probably deserves a heading to itself. This was the campus of Baptist Bible Seminary where he regularly read papers at faculty forums. Many times these papers made their way into the seminary's journal (*Journal of Ministry and Theology*), but they also were used regularly as stepping stones to revised papers he would read at BFLS and ETS conferences.

I also found a few papers Rod had presented at pastors' conferences and the Council on Dispensational Hermeneutics. Undoubtedly, I would have found more if I had the time to read through all of his blogposts where he typically posted these.

Lecture Series

Rod was asked to deliver lecture series at several schools/ministries. The first of these held at Calvary Bible College in Kansas City became a book (*The English Bible: Priceless Treasure*). He also spoke at Central Seminary of Virginia Beach (now Virginia Beach Theological Seminary) in 2002; at Seminario Teologico Bautista - Lima, Peru in 2004; at Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary in 2006; at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in 2010; and at Bibles International in 2012. Most of these lectures were either based upon previously published works or became the basis for articles later published. One can check the website to see the topics discussed at each.

Journals

Not everything Rod wrote was published. However, since he published so many items through the years, his output speaks to the amazing grace of God in his ministry. Rod saw 17 of his articles published in journals such as *Trinity Journal* (1), *Bibliotheca Sacra* (1, 2-part series), *Themelios* (1), *Grace Theological Journal* (1), *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* (2), and the *Journal of Ministry and Theology* (11), several of which were 2-part series; one of which was a 6-part series on Hebrews).

Rod also wrote several book reviews for the *Journal of Ministry and Theology*, and he probably wrote others published elsewhere. Time has prevented a more thorough search, but the reviews listed above come exclusively from his website's personal page.

Sermons

Besides all the sermons Rod preached during his time as a pastor in Pennsylvania and Michigan (none of which can be found on his website), he did post several sermons preached at Baptist Bible Seminary chapels. These particular sermons are exegetically sound, pastorally focused, and exhortationally challenging.

Essays in Books

Oftentimes, papers prepared for academic conferences became journal articles. But another place these essays found a home was in encyclopedias and anthologies. He had 4 short entries in encyclopedias and 5 longer articles in books edited by others.

Books

God graciously provided Rod with the skills and tenacity to complete several books. Three of these were short booklets produced during his years at Calvary Bible College (and one of these, *The English Bible*, was also translated into Spanish). The others were much larger and more substantive projects beginning with the publication of his dissertation in the Studies in Biblical Greek Series, edited by D. A. Carson and published by Peter Lang (2001). This was followed by the publication of *A Koine Greek Reader* in 2007. Not only is the *Reader* a wonderful source of Koine readings from the NT, Septuagint, apostolic fathers, and creeds, but it also includes several helpful appendices, particularly one on how to use *BDAG*.

Rod's diligence and perseverance has been demonstrated particularly in his efforts to complete manuscripts for his final two books that will be published this fall. Considering the debilitating effects of his cancer, we can thank the Lord for His grace enabling Rod to finish these projects. His Greek grammar (*Reading Koine Greek: An Introduction and Integrated Workbook*) will undoubtedly find its way into many classrooms once it is published by Baker. The teacher can be assured that none of the material on the 704 pages will be extraneous or unnecessary.

Rod began work on the Gospel of Mark handbook in 2007 when the Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament series was in its infancy. Rod's 2-volume contribution (totaling 745 pages) will be the tenth and eleventh books of the series which should include 21 volumes when completed (unless other authors need 2 volumes to complete their books). Up to this point, Rod's is the first that requires 2 volumes. Thus, all those interested in receiving detailed exegetical and syntactical notes on the book of Mark ought to be watching for the November, 2014 publication of *Mark 1-8* and *Mark 9-16*. While the goal of the series is to serve as a companion to commentaries on Mark, Rod's books will certainly be of tremendous and indispensable help to anyone preparing sermons or lessons from the book of Mark.

Decker's Impact

Rod would not have desired to be singled out as a particularly brilliant and talented writer. He never sought the spotlight, and he never felt it necessary to use bombastic speech or snobbish satire or intimidating language to make his voice heard. He let his writing do the work, and in this way, he has impacted the scholarly world of NT studies and biblical studies generally. Pastors, colleagues, students, and friends, all of us, think differently and more accurately about the Bible because Rod wrote as he did.

Since Rod is not here, I would like to direct the spotlight onto the ways God used him not to glorify Rod because he would have none of that. Rather, I think it wise to consider these aspects of Rod's life and ministry shown through his writing as a means to help each of us improve in our service for God and as a means to help each of us thank and praise God for His kindness in using Rod to minister as he did.

Rod Decker as Scholar

Though he never acted like it, Rod was always the smartest guy in the room, and this ability showed itself in his academic contributions with regard to NT Greek grammar, Bible translation, and preaching. First, his dissertation, Mark handbooks, Koine reader, and Greek grammar are all significant additions to the field of NT Greek scholarship. In addition the many charts, bibliographies, and explanatory notes provide much help to anyone who wants to learn and appreciate NT Greek. Second, Rod's work with regard to the ESV, NIV, and KJV, have helped to provide light rather than heat in an area often prone to overstatement, historical revisionism, and unnecessary finger-pointing. Additionally, his work in explaining how translation relates to inspiration has provided clear and sane wisdom to all who regularly use English Bibles and who teach others to use them with the respect due to God's authoritative word. Finally, Rod's goal in all his writing was to help preachers be accurate, convinced, and dedicated proclaimers of God's Word. He spoke regularly to preachers about the things that would help them in areas like Greek grammar and biblical theology, and he taught future preachers so that potential errors in the use of Greek and theology could be avoided.

While much more could be said about Rod's academic contributions, we must learn the lessons he exemplified by the way he lived as a scholar. First, Rod was *productive*. While he certainly took concern with good grammar and syntax in his writing, he did not let obsession with details keep him from composing numerous books, articles, and blogs which have been helpful to so many. Second, Rod was *thorough*. Did Rod ever write an essay without a footnote? Did he ever make an assertion without adequate support? Did he ever refer to an older edition of a book when a newer one was available? Never. Rod did his homework, painstakingly and deliberately, line-upon-line, using excurses, and providing appendices; he left no stone unturned in his pursuit of the truth about the subject he was addressing. Third, Rod was *fair*. Even when Rod disagreed with his sources, he made sure that he understood them and that he represented their positions exactly as they would desire. He often sparred with opponents at various venues, but he was never accused of misrepresenting one of them in his writing. Fourth, Rod was *diverse*. Some scholars become so myopic that they are expert in one subject but find it impossible to navigate in any other area. Such was not the case with Rod. Certainly he knew Greek grammar and has provided ample evidence of his expertise in that field. But he also wrote about self-defense, suffering, preaching, fantasy literature, cremation and funerals, postmodernism, the Bauer hypothesis, the kenosis, the New Covenant, dispensationalism, Bible translation, pluralism, church polity, the Jesus Seminar, Unicode font, and Markan idiolect. Rod's productivity, thoroughness, fairness, and diversity are hallmarks of a life well-lived in light of the abilities God gave him.

Rod Decker as a Teacher

Rod's ministry as a teacher began when he took his first church as a pastor. He faithfully preached and taught God's Word in the churches he served, first as a pastor in Pennsylvania and Michigan and then as a Sunday School teacher in every other church he joined subsequent to those pastorates. He was a churchman through and through, never leaving his abilities in the classroom and never being satisfied to read and study without a view to the needs of the local body where he was a member.

Rod was a faithful teacher to his students, first at Calvary Bible College, then as an adjunct teacher at Central Seminary, and finally at Baptist Bible Seminary. After looking at his website, one can see the careful attention he gave to his students. He wanted them not only to survive in Greek language study, but to thrive in it. He desired that his students come to love the Greek language and to use it well in pastoral ministry.

Rod taught pastors the importance of using Greek accurately in sermon preparation, of using proper hermeneutics in preaching, and of using technology wisely in the worship service. Again, he was not satisfied keeping his knowledge in the classroom; he desired to help pastors do better at their primary task.

Finally, Rod used his gifts to teach his colleagues. At Baptist Bible Seminary he did this through the Faculty Forums and his published articles in the *Journal of Ministry and Theology*. He also desired to teach his friends through the annual Bible Faculty Leadership Summits and through his papers at ETS regional and national meetings. A statement from his paper, "The Grammar of Christology,"³ shows his desire toward all who heard his papers: "For those of you who are language profs, this discussion does two things. First, it considers one of the issues in how you ought to use the fruits of my discipline (Greek grammar). Second, it will bring you up to speed on a current debate in Greek grammar." Rod was ever the teacher. And he used his abilities to help his colleagues become better learners, instructors, and followers of Christ.

It is in regard to this last point that I will miss Rod most of all. He was my friend, but he was my teacher as well. He has taught us all through his writing, his words, and his life. I am quite sure he would desire that we use his literary deposit to become better teachers, better churchmen, and most of all, better followers of Christ.

³"The Grammar of Christology," 9.