"Rob's work making published material freely available over the web has been incredibly useful to many people including scholars at Tyndale House, Cambridge." Peter Williams, Warden, Tyndale House

Theology on the Web

Making biblical scholarship accessible

Rob Bradshaw

Executive Summary

- The Need: Ministers, students and lay Christians across the globe need access to high quality theological material in order to perform their ministries successfully. Such material is often difficult or impossible to obtain due to government restrictions or the cost of accessing it through national universities. In such locations access via the Internet provides a way of delivering the material at no charge to the end user.
- The Vision: Since 2001, millions of visitors have accessed and downloaded resources from the Theology on the Web sites. These sites exist, and are continually developed, so that millions more can use the resources to further their personal studies, and so nourish the church and reach the lost, all completely free of charge to them.
- The Strategy: Scanning and converting books and articles to the ubiquitous Adobe Acrobat format (PDF) allows them to be viewed by anyone with a computer / handheld device with internet access. As the reputation of the sites has grown it has become much easier to obtain permission to place entire journals on-line. The point has now been reached when the amount of material being offered for digitisation and hosting greatly exceeds the time available to complete it within a reasonable period.
- The Goal: Working full-time on the sites would not only increase the quantity of theological material being made available, but also its breadth, as new sites in development would host articles on other aspects of Christian theology and history. Journals specialising in such subject areas would then be added to those already on-line.

The Vision

Theology on the Web states its purpose as follows:

To make high quality theological material freely available throughout the world, thus providing Bible teachers and pastors with the resources they need to spread the Gospel in their countries. This is achieved by:

- Reprinting on-line, in co-operation with authors and publishers, theological journals, books and articles many of which are rare and out-of-print.
- ➤ Providing detailed bibliographies for seminary-level students and ministers.
- ➤ Providing a single cross-linked resource made up of the websites listed below.

BiblicalStudies.org.uk hosts over 22,000 full-text theological articles linked into bibliographies on each book of the Bible, plus a wide range of other related subjects such as hermeneutics, biblical languages, criticism, language, etc. In short, almost everything connected with the Bible and its study.

BiblicalArchaeology.org.uk provides material relating to the archaeology of the lands of the Bible.

TheologicalStudies.org.uk throws its net slightly wider, providing material on a range of theologies and theologians, as well as specific doctrines such as the Trinity. The section on practical theology seeks to provide material on how theology is applied in daily life, in such areas as politics and ethics.

EarlyChurch.org.uk covers church history from the close of the New Testament to the rise of the medieval Papacy (c.100 - c.600 AD).

MedievalChurch.org.uk takes over where earlychurch.org.uk leaves off, covering church history from the rise of the Papacy to the time of the Reformation.

ReformationChurch.org.uk provides material on the Reformation in Europe from the 16th to 18th Centuries. The site was launched in 2012 and there is still much material to be added.

Missiology.org.uk provides resources for students of Christian missions from the first Century onwards.

The cross-linking of subjects means that a student studying baptism (for example) would be able to move from the baptism of Jesus, to baptism in the early church, the medieval church, by the reformers and then to how it is understood by a range of modern theologians.

Usage

biblicalstudies.org.uk (the largest and most popular website) currently receives over 80,000 per month visitors from all around the globe who download between 200-300 GB of data each month. Increasingly, visitors are coming from Asia and the Far East – often from countries where access to theological material is often severely restricted. Sample statistics for this site for April 2013 are included in the Appendix. The other sites receive a combined total of around 160,000 visitors each month - about 1.9 million visitors each year. This is double the visitor numbers for 2013.

History and Current Developments

biblicalstudies.org.uk was launched in 2001 and initially provided only bibliographies and a few of my own articles. Such was the demand for this material that I began to think about the vast amount of good quality theological books that were out of print. Having a copy of Donald Wiseman's *Studies in the Book of Daniel* to hand I wrote to the contributors and received their permission to place the entire work on-line. The idea developed as the site began to become more widely known and articles from *Trinity Journal*, *Journal of the Evangelical Theology Society*, *Westminster Theological Journal* and *Bibliotheca Sacra* were soon added with the editors' permissions. Over time the digitisation of selected individual articles gave way to that of entire runs of journals, such as the *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Religion in Communist Lands*, *Vox Evangelica*, *Reformation and Revival*, *Churchman* and *Anvil*.

Theology on the Web works in partnership with Tyndale House's *Scripture Tools for Every Platform (STEP)* Project, providing access to digitised resources which will be linked into the database included within STEP's Bible Study software. **Theology on the Web** also works closely with the Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries (ABTAPL).

Since 2001 more sites have been added that deal with other areas of doctrine and church history in order to make the coverage of Christian theology more comprehensive. The archaeology section of biblicalstudies.org.uk became so large that its content was moved to the domain biblicalarchaeology.org.uk where more material can now be added without making access to the pages difficult.

Currently I am being actively sought out by organisations who would like their journals digitised and hosted. Examples of this are *Religion, State and Society, The Baptist Quarterly, Transactions of the Wesley Historical Society* and the *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology*. In 2012 I assisted *Affinity* (formerly the *British Evangelical Council*) in digitising their journal *Foundations* and later the same year digitised *Churchman* for the Church Society. In 2013 I placed online the majority of the articles from the journal *Anvil*.

New website

Missiology.org.uk. With the help and encouragement from All Nations Christian College and Redcliffe College and have uploaded a basic site on Christian Missions. Dr Scott Moreau has provided me with the structure he used whilst editing the *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Missions* which has been of great help. A considerable investment of time is still needed need to develop the site in order to ensure that all pages have some information on them. A number of journals have already been identified for possible digitisation and hosting on this site. The site is intended to provide information on the "who, the where and the why" of mission – in other words the people, the countries where they served and the theology that inspired them. It is hoped that by

gathering together the stories of former missionaries on this site a new generation of Christians will be inspired to follow in their footsteps.

Other Domains Registered for Future Use

GospelStudies.org.uk & **Hermeneutics.org.uk**. These domains have been registered in the expectation that, as in the case of biblical archaeology, the increasing complexity of the subject materials would necessitate moving them to separate domains so that they could be developed more fully.

Current Level of Support

Income from Google Adsense (adverts) and Amazon Affiliate commission no longer brings in enough income to cover basic web-hosting costs. Funding from individuals has proved difficult to find, with only three couple supporting the sites on a regular basis. Commission from Amazon continues to fall month on month and Google Ads are unsuitable for sites such as Missiology.org.uk (because of the subject-matter of the ads that Google would inevitably seek to place on the pages). I do not see Google ads as a long-term source of income for the sites. Nor is pay-per-view an option, as it would automatically exclude the primary target audience – ministers and Bible students in the Majority World with very little income. In addition material is licenced by the copyright holders to appear on my websites on the explicit condition that it is made available free of charge.

I have an excellent relationship with a number of publishers who are often willing to grant me permission to place some of their out-of-print titles on-line free of charge. Authors generally respond very positively to requests to have their articles digitised and placed on-line. Several Bible College libraries are now willing to loan me their journals for scanning, they will send these to me by post even though these are usually "reference only".

In October 2014 London School of Theology took out paid advertising across the sites. It is hoped that other Colleges/Seminaries will follow suit, replacing the Google ads on the majority of pages. In addition to this a small number of individuals support the site by making regular monthly donations.

The Way Forward

The sites are currently developed in my spare time: before work, during lunch breaks and in the evenings, when my three boys are in bed. I am employed full-time at a Christian charity. Usage to the websites has doubled since late 2013 and is expected to rise even more in 2015. At times usage is now exceeding the capacity of the current hosting service and a move to a dedicated server is the obvious next step. Failure to upgrade will mean that many visitors will find the sites unreachable during peak times. Such an upgrade will dramatically increase hosting costs from around £500 per year to £2,400 per year. In addition there are expenses for photocopying and postage of journals, books, software and hardware upgrades of around £1,000 a year. This makes an annual total of around £3,400 out-of-pocket expenses. My current work-life balance is not ideal for family life, but my wife is fully supportive of my work. However, this cannot be sustained for much longer.

The websites have now reached the point when they need to be worked on full-time in order to achieve their potential. I hold a large number of journals ready for scanning, which will require a considerable amount of time to do properly. Increasingly, I am being asked to take on the

digitisation of complete journals on a *pro bono* basis or in exchange for a small donation. By way of comparison commercial companies in the UK charge an average of 10p-15p per page for scanning.

During 2013-14, I completed the digitisation of:

- Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology
- Anvil
- Calvary Baptist College Journal
- Christian Brethren Review
- Ecclesia Reformata
- Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry
- Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute [Public Domain articles only]
- Journal of Theological Studies [old series Public Domain articles only]
- Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archaeology [Public Domain issues only]
- Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology (SBET)

The following projects are stilling on-going:

- *★ The Expositor* [1875-1914 all 8 series]
- ▲ The Evangelical Quarterly [issues from the 30s, 40s & 50s]
- ▲ Irish Biblical Studies
- △ Palestine Exploration Quarterly [Public Domain material only]

It is obviously, therefore, that working full-time would mean that this work could be done much more quickly and efficiently. Realistically the development of major new sites such as **ReformationChurch.org.uk** and **Missiology.org.uk** cannot be achieved in my spare time due to the very large amount of material that would need to be gathered and systematised in order for the sites to be useful. Once that is done it will be much easier to obtain permission to host new material on them.

To work full-time on the websites would require around £35,000 per year to cover both work and living expenses, assuming that I would be working from a home office. Ideally I would like to partner with another organisations that have similar aims, as raising support for websites is extremely difficult. Such a partnership might also allow much of the routine scanning to be done by others, leaving me free to concentrate on more specialist work, such as seeking copyright permissions from authors and publishers.

Given the increase in visitors to the sites over the last year it is now urgent that a basic level of regular funding for the websites of around £3,400 each year be found to upgrade to a dedicated server. If such funding cannot be found then at peak times the sites will become unreachable as the shared server resources are exceeded.

Please feel free to pass this document on to organisations and individuals who you think might be interested in supporting this work.

APPENDICES

Current Sites Content

Examples of Feedback Received

Sample Statistics

Current Site Content

Material mostly or exclusively hosted on Theology on the Web (to the best of my knowledge):

Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology

Anvil

Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology

Baptist Quarterly

BACUP Papers

Bulletin of the John Rylands Library

Calvary Baptist Theological Journal

The Campbell Morgan Memorial Bible Lectures

Canadian Journal of Theology

Caribbean Journal of Evangelical Theology

Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Journal

Christian Brethren Review

East Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology

The Ethel M. Wood Lectures

European Journal of Theology

Evangel - the British Evangelical Review

The Evangelical Quarterly

Evangelical Review of Theology

The Expositor (1875-)

Gospel Perspectives series

Indian Journal of Theology

Inter-Varsity Magazine

Journal of Early Christian History

Mainstream - Baptists for Life & Growth

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society

Scripture (Catholic Biblical Association [UK]

Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology

Schweich Lectures on Biblical Archaeology [Public Domain issues only]

Theological Students Fellowship (TSF) Bulletin

Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society

Themelios (old series – originally published by IFES)

Tyndale Press Monographs

Vox Evangelica

Material that can also be found on other websites (some may be pay-per-view):

Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies

Ashland Theological Journal

Australian Biblical Review

Bibliotheca Sacra

Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society

Canadian Journal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity

Churchman

Eternity - the Magazine of Christian Truth

Faith and Thought

Grace Journal

Grace Theological Journal

Haddington House Journal

Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry

Journal of Biblical Literature

Journal of Korean American Ministries & Theology

Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute

Journal of Theological Studies [old series]

Melanesian Journal of Theology

Palestine Exploration Quarterly

The Pentecostal Educator

Reformation & Revival

The Reformed Baptist Theological Review

Religion in Communist Lands

Religion, State and Society

Religious & Theological Students Fellowship (RTSF) Monographs & Booklets

Review & Expositor

Themelios

Trinity Journal

Westminster Theological Journal

Journals for which Theology on the Web provides an enhanced table of contents. On-line articles (if any) are hosted on other sites:

Acta Patristica et Byzantina

Bible Translator

Bulletin for Biblical Research

Catholic Biblical Quarterly

Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal

Downside Review

Foundations

Irish Biblical Studies

Journal of Early Christian History

Journal of Early Christian Studies

Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society

Journal for Biblical Manhood & Womanhood

Journal for the Evangelical Study of the Old Testament

McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry

Maranatha Baptist Theological Journal

Refleks

Reformed Theological Review

Second Century: A Journal of Early Christian Studies

Southern Baptist Journal of Theology

Theological Review

Tyndale Bulletin

Vigilae Christianae

Some Examples of Positive Feedback Received

Thank you for giving me and others access to scholarship once only available in seminary libraries.

Many thanks for this and for all your faithful and tireless service in providing these resources. I can confirm that many of the Springdale College students find your work a big help in their studies and in their own theological development.

I've got to tell you that I regard your work as pure gold. You alone have made research so very much easier--from any place in the world. God bless you for your ministry to Him! [A theology Professor from Canada]

I am in Sao Paulo (Brazil) right now, giving guest lectures at a Presbyterian university. Their library was temporarily closed because of reorganization, so I asked the students to prepare themselves by searching for materials on www.biblicalstudies.org.uk!

Just a thank you for the web site and the very good information. Much appreciated. Currently doing a Postgrad course at a bible college and having to argue defend against Maccabean authorship and its implications. [Perth, Australia]

I have found Biblical Studies.org.uk an extremely useful site over some years, especially when I was living in Poland without a decent library available. [Poland]

Would like to appreciate your labor in putting good resources on your site. Thank you. [India]

Thanks for your website which is a good resource for theology students and even pastors like myself. [Canada]

It has been quite insightful to read theological works from this wonderful academic and spiritual fulfilling website. [Tanzania]

I have really enjoyed your site. I would certainly recommend this site to all my students in the seminary where I teach. May God bless your great effort of edification through the net. [India]

I am a Master degree student in Theology Athens University. Your site is very helpful and informative. You have solved a lot of my problems. Keep up the good work. Thank you very much. [Greece]

Thank you so much for the work you do in making biblical studies resources available online. That's a wonderful help, especially for the distance education students that I have. [Virginia, USA]

I have recently been given a CD copy of the Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society (1908 - 1921) and thought I'd send a quick email to thank you for the work you have done on this project. I have given a copy to our archivist who looks after the Baptist Archives of New South Wales and will keep a copy in the library with a web link as well in our catalogue. I will make sure our lecturer in Church History and Baptist Distinctives knows of this resource as well. [Australia]

Thank you for this great service to Baptist Church historians. Making the Transactions volumes accessible online solves a real problem that the German Baptist Theological Seminary (Elstal/Berlin) has had since its original library was destroyed by fire in 1943. We had never had the opportunity to replace the series. Thank you!! [Germany]

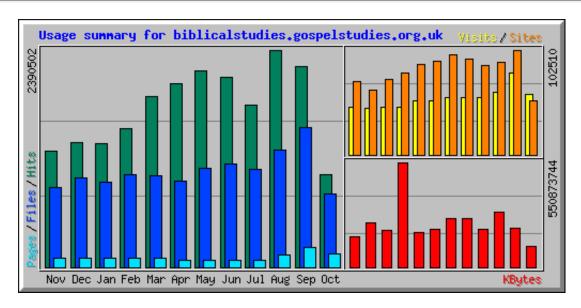
Thanks so much for running such a wonderful, useful site. This site has been a great help in my study of pursuing my master degree in theology since I found the site. [England]

I tumbled onto your web page in a search for biographical and bibliographical materials on C.H. Dodd. I have added it to my Favorites list for future reference. I am president/professor at College of the Scriptures. [Kentucky, USA]

Sample stat	istics from biblic	alstudies.org.	uk, Septembo	er 2014

Usage Statistics for biblical studies.gospelstudies.org.uk

Summary by Month Generated 21-Oct-2014 13:51 BST



Summary by Month											
Month	Daily Avg			Monthly Totals							
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits	
Oct 2014	48421	38659	6845	2821	52759	108492541	59251	143756	811841	1016842	
Sep 2014	73595	51385	7154	2657	102510	205313116	79739	214631	1541567	2207878	
Aug 2014	77112	41644	4253	1983	90127	290616229	61474	131866	1290985	2390502	
<u>Jul 2014</u>	57657	34780	2595	1813	86823	198850259	56227	80452	1078208	1787382	
Jun 2014	69766	37882	2678	1859	93598	256005739	55777	80355	1136478	2093000	
May 2014	69678	35157	2582	1802	97632	256543081	55882	80052	1089886	2160027	
<u>Apr 2014</u>	67243	31624	2424	1761	91236	201597211	52836	72721	948723	2017300	
Mar 2014	60615	32591	3108	1703	88366	182891158	52808	96367	1010338	1879093	
Feb 2014	54427	36510	3390	1660	80135	550873744	46482	94932	1022307	1523980	
Jan 2014	44004	30184	3103	1501	73311	191684914	46556	96204	935724	1364135	
Dec 2013	44188	31650	3115	1466	63650	232752000	45473	96572	981166	1369831	
Nov 2013	42427	29121	3180	1564	72103	159324018	46932	95416	873641	1272835	
Totals	Totals					2834944010	659437	1283324	12720864	21082805	

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