

# COLLOQUY

A CONVERSATION WITH GUTENBERG COLLEGE



Celebrating 30 Years!



Winter 2025

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**Gutenberg College** offers an outstanding four-year liberal arts education in the Great Books tradition in an environment respectful of biblical Christianity.

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## Skilled Reading and the Art of Interpretation

By Charley Dewberry

Learning the skill of close reading in order to interpret texts has always been at the heart of the Gutenberg College curriculum. Prior to Gutenberg opening in 1994, the teachers who became some of Gutenberg's first tutors ran a graduate-level biblical exegesis program, and the experience they gained from operating the exegesis program helped them design the Gutenberg College curriculum. They had observed that few of the students who came to the exegesis program were prepared to do it. I know because I was one of the students. When I began the Biblical Exegesis Program, I had finished all but my dissertation for a Ph.D. in science, but I could only read scientific papers and textbooks. Eventually, though, I helped found Gutenberg College.

When we started to think about the college, we asked ourselves this question: What would an undergraduate-level program that prepared its students to do the exegesis program look like? In the final design of Gutenberg's curriculum, the driving question became this: What are the major elements that prepare a student to live a good life? Part of the answer to both questions was building skills that would not only prepare the students for their choice of a career but also prepare them to live a good life.

We then began developing our curriculum by asking, "What is necessary for developing the skill of reading?" (As Christians, we were particularly interested in becoming better readers of the Bible.) We landed on a "Great Books" curriculum—a curriculum well suited to learning to read difficult texts by investigating the major works that created and comprise our culture.

In this article, I discuss learning the skill of reading well as it relates to learning to interpret well. I cannot just tell you how to read so that you simply understand and instantly become proficient because, like all skills, reading well can only be learned by doing. (Think of the skills involved in music, sports, or any pursuit—they can only be learned by doing, not by lecture.) The best I can do is to point toward the process of acquiring the skill. In the last part of this article, I will give an example of interpreting a biblical text to illustrate the importance of close reading to the art of interpretation.

### Learning to Read Well

At Gutenberg, our objective for learning the skill of reading has always been to understand the intent of the authors we are reading. During the first two years of the Gutenberg curriculum, therefore, we focus on developing the skills necessary to understanding an author's meaning (intent) in complex texts. Students take two years of Microexegesis (interpretation), in which they read together, line-by-line, selections from primary texts, including Aristotle, the New Testament, and poetry; they learn Classical Greek, which gives them experience with an ancient language and grammatical categories; and in Western Civilization, they practice reading and discussing excerpts from many primary texts while also gaining an understanding of the flow of history from ancient time to the modern world. (Classes on science, math, writing, and the arts round out the curriculum.)

During their last two years, students continue Microexegesis by reading Kierkegaard and studying biblical hermeneutics; they continue their language study with German, a modern language; and they read longer, complex texts and make critical judgments about them. They enter what we call “the Great Conversation”—that is, the long dialog concerning the major questions in life: Is there a God? Who is man? What does it mean to live a good life? The goal of the project is to take all the “parts” they have understood from the authors they have read and then construct a coherent worldview. (At Gutenberg, we believe that both knowledge and understanding one’s worldview are prerequisites for wisdom.) The curriculum takes advantage of the fact that students’ minds are now at a point in their education where they can begin to make critical judgments about complex issues, which is the last stage of mental development and a necessity for the end goal of learning to read well: interpreting meaning.

## The Art of Interpretation

Interpreting written texts is a complex art. The “meaning” of a text consists of a number of parts woven into a whole. The meaning of a word or phrase is determined by its relationship to the whole. For example, suppose I say, “That is a strike, and it is good.” Is this sentence true or false? The sentence has no meaning without the context (the whole). I might be speaking about bowling, baseball, or a labor strike. In the case of baseball, I might be talking from the perspective of the pitcher or the batter. The context is necessary for the sentence to have any meaning. The process is made more complex by the fact that we start by reading the words (parts), but we must perceive the meaning of the whole before we can determine the meaning of the part. When we interpret, we move back and forth between the parts (words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, sections or chapters) to what we think is the whole (ultimately, the author’s intended meaning in the completed text) until all the parts fit together coherently. It is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle.

The process is even more complicated than a jigsaw puzzle, however, because we do not interpret in a vacuum. We start with our current worldview—that is, all our beliefs that we think are true. Our worldview functions as a lens, and through it we “see” what we expect to see. One of my favorite examples of the role of our worldview relates to perception. Imagine that you are in Yellowstone National Park on a bright, warm summer day. Suddenly you see one of those massive thunderstorms that only the Rockies can produce coming over the ridge on the horizon. The lightning is continuous. You mention to the people with you that lightning can go from the ground to the air as well as from the air to the ground. For the first time, some people will see the lightning going from the ground to the air. They had never seen it because they had not considered that possibility. They could only “see” what they expected to see. It is the same with interpreting texts.

Because our worldview is powerful, sentences in a text or verses in the Bible “mean” what we expect them to mean. Often when I am talking with someone about the meaning of a verse or a passage, they will respond that my interpretation is not the “natural” reading of the passage. What they mean is that my interpretation does not conform to their worldview.

It is not wrong that we use our worldview to help us understand a text; it is an important element of how we know. It is conservative and a good thing. We do not suddenly reject everything we know just because we see we were wrong about something. If we did that, we would learn little over time. On the other hand, if we become dogmatic and are not open to the possibility that we are wrong, our worldview becomes static, and we will not gain knowledge and understanding.

If we are to become skilled interpreters, then, we need to hone our skill in recognizing when our worldview is not the same as the author’s. This skill is one of the most important to learn. We do this by recognizing clues that resist our worldview-grounded interpretation. We acknowledge when some part of a text does not fit coherently into our understanding of the whole—when, perhaps, the whole (the author’s intent) is not what we were expecting it to be. Learning this skill takes a great deal of discipline and humility.

Once we recognize that some part we are reading or hearing is resisting our interpretation, we need to explore what else the part could mean. We need to understand

*(Continued on page 4)*



## Preview Days April 11-12

Gutenberg College is a place for students who want to think deeply, learn in community, and grow in faith and character. At Preview Days, Gutenberg opens its doors to high school students and transfer students who are considering Gutenberg’s bachelor’s degree program in liberal arts.

At Preview Days, you will meet tutors who have devoted their lives to learning and helping others learn, discuss works by great thinkers, fellowship with a community of caring people who work together in pursuit of goodness, and learn how you can become a Gutenberg student.

Join us at Preview Days to discover if Gutenberg is the college for you!



## Thank You!

We surpassed our Year-End Fundraising Goal! We are grateful to the friends and community of Gutenberg for supporting us again this year. We received \$310,250—249% of our goal! Thank you. The gifts go towards financial aid for needy students and support our efforts to reach out to a wider community.

These donations have a lasting impact on many lives. They give students an opportunity to become independent truth seekers and to grapple with important ideas at a critical juncture in their lives. Thank you for your many prayers that God might show His lovingkindness to the students and wider community of Gutenberg College.

# Alumni Reflections

What is a book you have read since Gutenberg that you would recommend to others?

*Till We Have Faces* by C. S. Lewis  
—Damian, 1998

*Lit* by Mary Karr —Brian, 2003

*An Episode of Sparrows* by Rumer Golden  
—Melanie, 2003

*Midnight in Chernobyl* by Adam Higginbotham: A gripping account of the Chernobyl disaster and the cost of institutional lies —Colin, 2004

*Kingdom through Covenant* by P. Gentry and S. Wellum: This tour de force in biblical-theological understanding of the progress of the covenants provides an excellent and thoughtful alternative to both covenant and dispensational systems of understanding God's purposes in using covenants to bring his kingdom to earth. —John, 2005

*A Timeless Way of Building* by Christopher Alexander; *Hannah Coulter* by Wendel Barry; and many more! Gutenberg fed my love of reading and seeking for truth! —Melody, 2006

*Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives: The Life and Teachings of Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica* by Ana Smiljanic  
—Victoria, 2008

*The Book of Apocalyptic Revelation* by the Apostle John: No matter how much despair gets in our current world and existence, God is going to hold true to his promises to his holy ones.  
—Michael, 2011

*Everyday Utopia* by Kristen R. Ghodsee  
—Larissa, 2015

*A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles  
—Emily, 2019

*How to Be a Conservative* by Roger Scruton: It helped me reconcile my conservative instincts with what I'd learned about philosophy. —Trisha, 2020

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald  
—Connor, 2023

*The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak  
—Ryanna, 2023

*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen  
—Emily, 2024

## Skilled Reading and the Art of Interpretation Continued from page 3

one or more parts in a new way and create a new whole. We begin a process called *abductive reasoning*—that is, we try to explain the set of facts (parts) by the most reasonable narrative that brings all the parts together into a whole. A good example of this process occurs in a court of law. Each side in a court case tries to explain the facts of the case in a narrative. The jury is asked to judge which narrative explains the facts the best. But while a court case ends there, the interpretive process does not.

The final stage in the interpretive process is to fit *all* the smaller parts together—from words to sentences; sentences to paragraphs; paragraphs to chapters, and so forth—into a coherent whole: the meaning the author intended in the complete text. This is the ultimate goal of interpretation. While the goal may not be perfectly achievable, the closer we can get to an author's intended meaning, the better we will have “read” the text.

### An Example of the Interpretive Process

The interpretive process may seem daunting in the abstract, but let me illustrate it in “real life” with an example from my own study of the Bible that emphasizes resistance to my original interpretation and the abductive reasoning I used to consider an alternative interpretation. The example is from the first seven verses of Hebrews, a small part of the book. In this article, I cannot complete the final interpretive step of showing how all the parts fit into the whole meaning of the book, but I hope to show enough to illustrate how the process of interpretation works.

First let me note, though, that the existence of many denominations and different interpretations illustrates that the Bible is a difficult text to understand. The problem is two-fold. First, the authors are separated from us by culture (including language) and time. And, second, we start with the belief that our current understanding of the text is right—that is, we believe our worldview (and thus our doctrine) is true. We find it difficult to consider that our worldview might be wrong. Gutenberg College does not teach doctrine. Following in the steps of the Biblical Exegesis Program, we believe that interpreting a text should come before deriving doctrine because if we start with our doctrine (worldview) and impose it on the text, we may miss the author's meaning. Assuming our doctrine is true makes it very difficult to notice when a text is resisting our worldview.

Now let us look at my example from studying the book of Hebrews. Hebrews is written to Jews, and I presume that the author is the Apostle Paul, who is trying to exhort the Jews not to lose faith that Jesus is the promised Messiah even though Jesus died. It begins:

*<sup>1</sup>Long ago, in many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his son, whom he appointed the authority over all things, the one [appointed] throughout all time, as God created the ages (history). <sup>3</sup>Who being the radiance of the glory of God and the imprint of his nature, and upholding all of his [Jesus'] authoritative words, and having made the purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become much superior to **angels** as the name he has inherited is greater than theirs. <sup>5</sup>For to which **angels** did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you? And again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? <sup>6</sup>And again, when he brings the firstborn into the Roman world, it says, “Let all God's **angels** fall down to worship him.” <sup>7</sup>And indeed to the **angels** it says, “He makes winds his **angels** and flames of fire his ministers.” [Translation mine from the Greek New Testament (Tischendorf). Bold mine]*

In the first seven verses, Paul is stating that God spoke through prophets in ancient times, but in the last days he spoke through the Son—that is, the Messiah. In the rest of the passage, Paul is contrasting the Son with angels and arguing that the Son is greater than angels. Verses 5-7 are quotes from the Psalms and II Samuel.

The Greek word translated as “angel” is *angelos*, and it is usually translated as “messenger” or “angel.” Given my understanding of what “angels” are, however, questions immediately come to mind—that is, the passage resists my initial interpretation. Why does Paul begin by claiming that the Son is greater than the angels? What would Jews

who believe that Jesus is the Messiah be thinking? Since the major point of Hebrews is to encourage these Jews to continue believing that Jesus is the Messiah and not to lose heart, the Jews must somehow be thinking that angels are “higher” than the Son. But why would they be thinking that? What turns on that point?

And something else seems odd. Hebrews 1:7 is a quote from Psalms 103:4 in the Septuagint (104:4 in the Hebrew Bible) where David is claiming that God makes winds “his messengers” and flaming fire his ministers. The verse is not describing angels as we commonly think about them. Several other passages might shed light on the subject, but I think the most relevant one is Exodus 3:1-6:

*<sup>1</sup>And Moses was shepherding Jethro's sheep. (Jethro was his father-in-law and the priest of Midian). And he brought the sheep from the wilderness, and he came to the mountain of Horeb. <sup>2</sup>And an **angel** of the Lord was being seen by him in a flame of fire from the thorn bush, and he (Moses) was seeing that the bush was burning by fire but the bush was not being consumed. <sup>3</sup>And Moses said, “Passing by, I shall look at this great thing—because why the bush is the bush not being consumed.” <sup>4</sup>As the Lord saw that it was bringing (him) to see, the Lord called him from the bush saying, “Moses, Moses.” And he (Moses) said, “Who is it?” <sup>5</sup>And he (God) said, “Do not come near here. Remove the sandals from your feet. For the place on which you have been standing is holy ground.” <sup>6</sup>And he (God) said to him, “I am the God of your fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob.” And Moses turned his face away. For he was acting reverently, looking down, before God.” [Translation mine from the Septuagint]*

This passage is very illuminating. Moses saw an “angel” of the Lord. This is our Greek word *angelos*. In this case, the *angelos* is a burning bush that is not consumed. The voice calling from the burning bush identifies himself as the God of Moses’ fathers. This is a special case of a “messenger,” who is the transcendent God himself represented in the created order in a particular form—a form that only lasts during the period of the interaction and then is gone. This special case is called a “theophany.” Throughout the Bible, God Himself shows up in a variety of forms: for example, the pillars of clouds and fire, one of three men with whom Abraham meets, and Jacob’s wrestling partner. A theophany, then, is an option for *angelos*.

However, are theophanies a viable option for the “angels” in Hebrews? Will this understanding resolve the “resistance” in the Hebrews passage? It has the potential to do so. At first, I could not see why Jews would be thinking that angels or messengers were more important than the Messiah. However, the idea that a theophany might be more important than the Son seems more viable than an angel being more important. If the Jews were enduring hardships because they believed that Jesus was the Messiah and yet he died, perhaps they began to think that it made more sense that the Messiah would be a theophany. The coming of the Messiah would be the coming of God himself to rule over them. That seemed more in line with their expectations for the Messiah. The possibility that Paul, in the first couple of chapters of Hebrews, is arguing that the Son is more important than a “theophany” makes more sense than the Son being more important than “angels.” While a theophany is an embodiment of God Himself, its role is to last only as long as it is needed for its special purpose. The Son, on the other hand, is the imprint of God’s nature (Hebrews 1:3), and He has authority throughout the ages—unlike theophanies that are ephemeral. So, understanding that “theophanies” is the intended meaning of “angels” in Hebrews seems like a more plausible option for what Paul means when he says that Jesus is more important than angels.

This illustration provides an example of identifying resistance to an interpretation and proposing a new interpretation for a part (the word *angelos*) that might make more sense of the whole. These are critical skills to develop in order for an interpretation to capture the meaning of the text—that is, the author’s intent. Modeling these skills—beginning with the skill of close reading—has been a cornerstone of Gutenberg’s curriculum for over thirty years because we know that these skills will serve our students well in all aspects of their lives.



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## More Alumni Reflections

What is a skill you developed at Gutenberg that you have made use of in your life afterwards?

Critical thinking. —Damian, 1998

Part of my job is reading commercial real estate leases, which are often very long and detailed, and then recording those details in a summary form. I have found skills that I developed at Gutenberg—the skill of following long, complicated sentences; allowing the document to define its words; and distilling a long passage down to its essence—to be very helpful in reading these leases so that I can make accurate notes on them. —Melanie, 2003

The knowledge that if I work enough at something, I can learn it.

—Colin, 2004

Improved writing and spelling skills (mostly!!). —John, 2005

Discernment about the nature of belief and how belief is rarely based in logic. A skepticism of “facts” and statistics and how information can be twisted easily to support whatever we want to believe.

—Melody, 2006

Being able to have a meaningful conversation with someone who disagrees with you. —Victoria, 2008

Being able to listen to differing views, understand difficult works, and reach independent conclusions. —Michael, 2011

Communicating clearly —Larissa, 2015

Asking questions with a curious demeanor that does not convey judgment.

—Emily, 2019

Being able to have a conversation instead of needing to prove that my position is the right one, and being able to invite others into that conversation.

—Trisha, 2020

Learning to listen to another person and truly understand their perspective.

—Connor, 2023

Deep analysis and the ability to quickly comprehend complex data.

—Ryanna, 2023

Doing house dinners/EdCon/Jr. Tea has made the duties of artist liaison seem like a breeze. (Logistical skills!) —Emily, 2024

# A Day in the Life of a Gutenberg Sophomore

## By the Sophomore Class of Gutenberg College

We are no longer new at this. The days start to blend together, but truth is becoming clearer through experience. A day, just one, may seem inconsequential, but it represents the struggles and triumphs that come from groping and wrestling and finally coming to five precious, hard-earned treasures: sacrifice brings revelation; struggle brings peace; insignificance brings significance; experience brings perspective; and difference brings connection. We have worked hard for this. We are not done with our journey, but we have seen enough to behold the first fruits of our labor.

### Early Morning: Emmanuelle Miller

6:56. One hour and thirty-four minutes before class begins. Dawn peeks through the crack where my curtains haven't fully covered the window. My mind slowly ticks through all I need to accomplish before class. I smile, enjoying the lifting darkness of my room and the cozy embrace of my blankets while I give myself five more minutes.



7:39. I sit up, dress haphazardly, shove in my contacts, offer a hurried "How'd you sleep?" to the other women wandering in the bathroom, hurry back to my room, pack my bag, and run down to a back office. It is cold. Spartan. I sit on the floor, struggling to still my racing pulse and wild thoughts. I have 10 minutes. My eyes skim through Psalm 5. I'm struggling to focus.

8:18. Conversations from yesterday, unprocessed emotions, and random teasing thoughts keep distracting me. David's plea to God resonates deeply with me:

*At each and every sunrise you will hear my voice as I prepare my sacrifice of prayer to you. Every morning I lay out the pieces of my life on the altar and wait for your fire to fall upon my heart. [Psalm.5:3, (TPT)]*

God is faithful to meet David time and time again. This subtle, resonating truth thaws my heart.

8:21. Time is up. I hurry to the kitchen, microwave my coffee, add honey, and pour in a swirl of half-and-half while downing a couple of baby carrots, and then rush to the classroom. It's 8:30.

The questioning and mystery of John's Gospel frustrates my desire for certainty. And yet, Scripture pulls my attention. We're reading through John 3 in Micro. John the Baptist tells his disciples, who are worried that Jesus is stealing his thunder, that his joy is complete when he hears the bridegroom's voice approaching to take the bride. John has completed his mission; it is time for his ministry to decrease as Jesus' ministry increases. It is as if John is saying, "I know my purpose, and this is its completion." His trust in his calling encourages me, a student pursuing trust in the Lord and clarity in my own calling. Even in the midst of the rush and pressure to balance life—to be grounded in the presence of the Lord while also accomplishing seventeen things in an hour and thirty-four minutes—my sacrifice, like David's, is rewarded.

### Late morning: Grace Redelsperger

The clock ticks to 9:25, and we all shuffle over to the library for Greek. We begin with translations. I found the meanings of the words and their endings last night, but I hadn't written the translation. Naomi chose someone to read, and we took turns reading our translations aloud. She began with Molly and proceeded counterclockwise around the table, which put me last. I counted each sentence to find out which one I would read and sketched out a loose translation. It would have been better to do this last night. Naomi wouldn't be able to tell how much work I had truly put in if my translation wasn't good. I sighed, wishing other languages came naturally to me.

Math is next. I can't focus during math. It is the last class of the morning, and I'm always anxious to get to my lunch break, during which I will supposedly be productive. I try to focus



on class. Our current discussion topic is Descartes. I have become suspicious of Descartes lately. He claims the only way to be certain about something is if it comes from the natural light of reason. I am suspicious of this natural light of reason. It's immaterial; therefore, I have a hard time trusting it. But don't I believe in God? My entire worldview rests on an invisible God and a book that He inspired. Why can I believe in God but not in the natural light of reason?

This thought process makes me chuckle. Just two years ago I would not have thought of questioning a well-known philosopher. And the idea of questioning my faith would have sent me into a tailspin. But now, because of the Gutenberg tutors and their hands-off guidance, I have reached a place where I can analyze my core beliefs and know I will come out stronger on the other side.

I think back to Greek earlier and how much I struggled with the translations in class. The homework the night before had been time-consuming but not difficult. I realized I understood the process of translation, even if I hadn't yet mastered it. Looking back, I see the many ways in which the intensely difficult work of Gutenberg has caused me to grow as a person. And if just one year at Gutenberg has gotten me to where I am now, then I am excited to see where three more will get me. Oh no, I've zoned out again.

### Lunch: Sarah Tardibono

Math class, like tea, has been drunk to the dregs. We have finished talking about how Descartes' clear and certain method is neither clear nor certain. The conversation has devolved, but Chris Swanson obliges our rabbit trails. Today's side tangent was on piercings: who, where, and why. We decided it was much cooler to get pierced at a tattoo studio rather than a purple store in a mall that introduces pre-teen girls to consumerism. In this way, we often go pleasantly overtime, indulging in trivial conversation. When the conversation wanes and our stomachs beckon, we head upstairs for lunch.

I choose a ham, cheese, and spinach wrap accompanied by the apple that



took me all morning to finish. I carry my plate to the crowded table that echoes with laughter. Lunch with tutors and classmates provides an opportunity for non-serious conversation. Some conversations are forgettable while others, like the infamous Pumpkin Trebuchet discussion, I will fondly remember. The conversations seem insignificant. Surely this is not what the skilled and intelligent teachers of philosophy that are the Gutenberg tutors should be talking about. But I find these insignificant conversations to be a significant part of Gutenberg life. The light topics serve as a break from the heady philosophy. Simply sharing life together is a testament to the tutors' humanity and compassion. Chris Swanson delights in his granddaughter. Eliot Grasso and Brian Julian search for fun activities to do with their children. We laugh at a comedic story from Naomi Rinehold's church retreat. And if we are lucky, Charley Dewberry may share a story from his legendary life. Philosophy is not just about knowing the difference between Nihilism and Utilitarianism but also about learning to live rightly in this world, which involves the significant insignificance of sharing a meal together.

### Afternoon: Molly Pickens

"I wonder how many existential crises it takes to get a degree at this place." I chuckle dryly at my own joke. I'm sitting in Western Civilization discussion, swirling my mug, trying to eke out the last drops of hot cocoa and profound thoughts. I'm not sure what kind of college experience I was expecting, but having a seven-minute panic attack about whether absolute truth is communicable was not on my bingo card. Some of my classes last year passed in a triumphant rush, but Postmodernism was a rather depressing roller coaster—like Splash Mountain, but the animatronics are singing about the death of truth. The ride was sprinkled with epiphanies about modern philosophy and aha moments and real understanding of today's culture, but the end of the year had left me anxious.

My foot-tapping increases tempo. I'm trying to focus on the discussion at hand, but the ancient Greek wars we're discussing seem so remote. It's difficult to give



them the same kind of weight as the discussions of modern history last year.

The class laughs at the inane antics of a Greek general avoiding punishment because his abs are too gorgeous to beat, and I shift uncomfortably. What does all this ancient nonsense have to do with the now? The future? With the state of events and ads and movies and campaigns blaring that the world has never been worse, I find myself worrying if I have a future at all.

"It kind of reminds you of celebrity culture today, doesn't it?" I stop. Wait. I've seen people like this before. General Alcibiades may have existed two thousand years ago, but people today definitely get away with betrayals and revenge and infidelity because they have a winning smile and lots of money. I've seen wars like this before, too. The Greek ones may have been fought butt-naked with spears, but technology and terrain have always been pivotal to the outcome of war. The strategies are the same. The politics are the same. The people are the same.

I lean back in my chair, the puff of air I release invisible in the air but visible in my shoulders. Truly, nothing is new under the sun. For all of history, humans have failed and triumphed, sinned and repaired, destroyed and rebuilt. The smell of after-class tea beckons me to the living room as I relax and join the laughter at ancient things I recognize. The world has been the same for this long. I guess I have a future after all.

### Evening: Noah Roemen

"Okay, and it seems that we are just about out of time. Have a nice weekend, and I'll see y'all on Monday."

Charley Dewberry taps his fingers on the table as he dismisses us from an excellent Friday discussion reviewing the arrogance of Alcibiades and the poise of Socrates.

I make a beeline for the rhubarb crumble and Yorkshire tea. The acidity of the rhubarb perfectly balances the crunch of the toasted oats. After a nice conversation, I head home down the alley to the Onyx House, a college-age home run by Faith Center, a church in



the Eugene area. I go on a run or play some table tennis to refresh my mind, and then, with my mind rejuvenated, I dial in to next week's reading or the Greek vocabulary for the Monday quiz.

Unavoidably, I hit a point in my studies where I am not making progress, and I go down to the living room where almost always someone is willing to chat. After some small talk, and if I feel that they are interested, I ask questions that poke at their worldview.

For example, last year my roommate was from Russia. After my class read *Propaganda*, I asked him what he thought about Russian propaganda. He made sure that I heard that the United States does not possess the moral high ground and uses propaganda as much as the Russians do. To this day, I think about our conversations when I consume media.

This year my roommate is a Composition Major at the U of O. After music class with Eliot Grasso, I will bring my roommate something that I found fascinating, and we will spend a couple of moments talking about the music that emerged from someone like Wagner and his influence on the Western world.

I have had many mini-conversations with those who are interested in topics covered at Gutenberg. Most of the time, what they see of my studies are the books I leave on the study table and the time I spend working on the readings. Sometimes I cannot help but share a quote to those who might be interested. Because I live in a Christian house, a lot of the discussion topics center around faith. What I have learned at Gutenberg has given me the tools and insights to articulate my faith and how it interacts with the many worldviews that surround me.

Each day at Gutenberg is an opportunity, each moment is another stroke, penciling in the mature character. Four years at Gutenberg is a pocket in time, in a life, precious to the student. If one chooses to accept the mission, each day is a catalyst for a shift and for growth—to become the person one is called to be. A Gutenberg sophomore is starting to see the old lines fall away and the true lines emerging. The Class of 2027 is deeply grateful for the opportunity of these days at Gutenberg.



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## 2025 Education Conference: Teacher as Mentor August 8-9

Modern education often presents teachers as specialists tasked with imparting expert knowledge to students. Yet the focus of a specialist in pursuit of imparting facts and information too often becomes overly narrow and overlooks the development of the whole student. This kind of oversight can leave a graduate with major blind spots in his or her understanding and outlook. By contrast, the teacher as mentor embraces the project of delivering more than subject-specific content and works to cultivate the moral, spiritual, and intellectual health of the whole student. In this education conference, we will explore the nature and practices of mentorship in pursuit of equipping students with tools, skills, and wisdom to live faithfully before God.

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