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# The William Green Lecture Programs

Jerry Rushford, *Pepperdine University*



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At Pepperdine—

# The William Green Lecture Programs

JERRY RUSHFORD

## Jerry Rushford

William McAllen Green (1897-1979) enjoyed two teaching careers that spanned nearly six decades. He was Professor of Classics at the University of California, Berkeley from 1927 to 1962, and he was Professor of Ancient Christian Literature at Pepperdine University from 1962 to 1974.

Dr. Green was born in Southern California and attended high school in Northern California. He was educated at the University of California, Berkeley (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.) where he was awarded his doctorate in 1930 for research on Augustine's *City of God*.

William Green and Ruby Lanier were married in Berkeley by T. B. Larimore on April 20, 1928. Theirs was the first wedding performed in the new church building at Prince and Fulton. Their home in Berkeley, affectionately known as the "Green Hotel," was always a haven for Christian students, ministers, and missionaries-on-leave. The Greens were blessed with three children and nine grandchildren.

One of Dr. Green's major contributions to the church was his support of Christian education. When Pepperdine launched its M.A. program in religion in 1944, Dr. Green assisted the young college by agreeing to teach on its summer school faculty. On other occasions, he was a visiting professor at Harding University in Arkansas, Abilene Christian University in Texas, and Florence Bible School in Italy. He also served for one year as the Dean of Ibaraki Christian College in Japan.

In the midst of his busy career, Dr. Green found the time to fulfill the duties of an elder in the church. He served in this position of responsibility for nearly forty years.

Pepperdine University is firmly persuaded that one of the finest services it can render its students is to bring distinguished Christian scholars to the campus. With this in mind, the University was pleased to announce the inauguration of the William M. Green Lectures in the school year of 1980-81. This program is designed to bring an outstanding scholar from the Church of Christ to the Malibu campus each year. The endowment of the program is made possible by the voluntary contributions of interested Christians.

Modeled after such excellent lecture programs as the W. B. West Lectures at the Harding Graduate School, the Willson-Morris Lectures at Lubbock Christian College, and the Staley Lectures at Abilene Christian University, the William M. Green Lectures will provide a forum for the advancement of Christian scholarship.

Dr. William M. Green was well known as an authority on Augustine, and he was selected to edit and translate Augustine's

*City of God* for the Loeb Classical Library. He also edited a number of Augustine's treatises for the Vienna Corpus of the Latin Fathers. Out of his immense background in Greek and Latin literature, he published a wealth of articles in various scholarly publications.

One of Dr. Green's finest contributions to Christian scholarship was his involvement with the *Restoration Quarterly*. He was one of the founding editors of this journal in 1957, and through the years it carried many of his articles and reviews on ancient church history.

It is highly appropriate that this lecture program will perpetuate the memory of William M. Green. Dr. Green was the personification of the true Christian scholar. His impressive academic achievements were always tempered by his own personal humility. As E. W. McMillan has said: "For about forty years I knew Dr. William Green as a family man, a teacher, a preacher, a scholar. No one made larger tracks than he made. And yet, the most overpowering heritage he left to others was his humility."

The lecture program honoring the memory of Dr. Green was inaugurated on October 21, 1980, the first anniversary of his death. On that evening, Dr. J. P. Sanders, the President of Columbia Christian College in Portland, Oregon gave a special lecture at Pepperdine on "The Challenge of Christian Ethics." Among those who were present on that historic occasion were Ruby Green, the widow of William Green, and Helen Pepperdine, the widow of George Pepperdine.

It was fitting that Dr. Sanders should be honored as the inaugural lecturer in this new series. He and Dr. Green were the closest of friends for many years, and they had been colleagues on the Pepperdine faculty.

Dr. Frank Pack, Distinguished Professor of Religion at Pepperdine University, has been selected as the second annual Green lecturer. On October 27, 1981, he will present a special lecture entitled "One Hundred Years Since Westcott and Hort, 1881-1981." The choice of Frank Pack is both logical and appropriate. He is an outstanding Christian scholar. And, like Dr. Sanders, he was a long-time friend and associate of William Green.

As a footnote to this article, I am now in the process of collecting and editing memoirs of Dr. Green for publication in a booklet. Approximately twenty-five memoirs have already been submitted. All former friends and colleagues of Dr. Green are encouraged to write down their memories of him and send them to me at Pepperdine. Photographs of Dr. Green would also be appreciated.

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