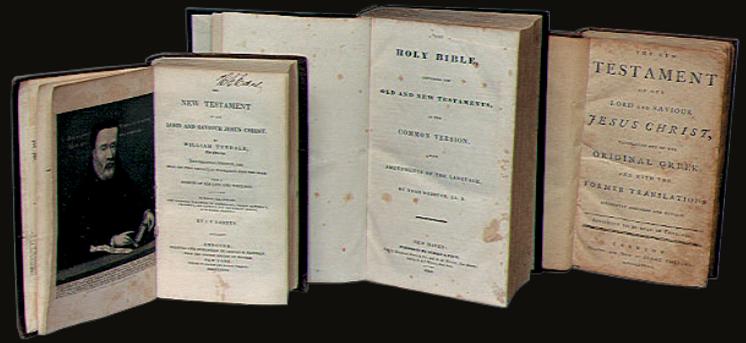


# Dunham Bible Museum NEWS



Houston Baptist University

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## HBU'S BIBLE MUSEUM TURNS 25!

As Houston Baptist University's Dunham Bible Museum turns 25 this year, we are thankful to Dr. Jerry Wiles for recounting the story of how the Museum came to be at HBU.

In 1992, Wiles, then serving as assistant vice president for church relations at HBU, arranged a meeting to introduce HBU president Dr. Doug Hodo to Jonathan Byrd in Indianapolis, Indiana. Byrd owned the largest collection of rare American Bibles in existence in private hands. This was one of four major collections Byrd had put together over a period of more than 30 years. The only larger collection in the country at that time was in the American Bible Society's library and archives in New York City.

Dr. Craig Lampe, scholar, business partner and curator of the Byrd collection, gave Dr. Hodo a presentation of some items in the collection. Dr. Hodo immediately recognized the historical and educational value of the rare Bibles, theological books, and biblical artifacts in the collection.

About 1995, Byrd decided to make the American collection available to an institution or organization that would create a museum of Bibles and biblical artifacts. After Byrd had the collection appraised and placed on the market, a major ministry based in Colorado Springs initiated plans to purchase the collection and establish the museum on its campus. Andy Stimer, a long-time friend and advisor to Jonathan Byrd, was instrumental in casting the vision and designing the plan to establish the Bible Museum. However, as a result of some changes within the Colorado ministry which was planning to purchase and create the Bible museum, plans for the Colorado museum project were discontinued.

In the latter part of 1996, when he was then serving with a global mission organization in Colorado Springs, Jerry Wiles met Andy Stimer. In January of 1997, after Wiles returned to his former position with HBU as assistant vice president for church relations, Stimer made a trip to Houston, visited HBU, and presented Dr. Hodo with the idea of HBU acquiring the American Bible collection and establishing a museum on



*Displays in Bible in America Museum, 2003*

the campus. Hodo, having been aware of the collection since his first meeting with Byrd and Lampe in 1992, immediately got excited about the possibility. He arranged a meeting with Stewart Morris for Stimer to present the idea of the museum project. At Morris' suggestion, the idea was presented to other board members, and later to members of the faculty and staff.

Over a period of several months, HBU learned about and connected with a number of Bible collectors, scholars, antiquarian societies and other organizations who became great resources for research and collaboration.

In the early Spring of 1997, Jonathan Byrd and Craig Lampe came to Houston to make presentations to HBU board members and spend time with some university faculty and staff. After considerable research, vetting, and having the collection appraised again, the board voted to make the purchase. The process of creating what was then known as the Bible in America Museum began. The late Bruce Belin,



*Bible in America Museum in the Moody Library, 2003*

businessman and HBU board member, played a key role in negotiating and facilitating the transaction. During that season, Doug and Sadie Hodo and Jerry Wiles made another trip to Indianapolis to further examine the collection.

Over the next few years a number of trips were made to collaborate with American Bible Society staff and scholars in New York, as well as other Bible collectors, antiquarians and scholars around the country. Dr. Gene Habecker, then president of the American Bible Society (ABS), and some of their staff visited the campus to see the collection and learn more about the university's plans. As a result of those interactions, the leadership of ABS made the decision to create a gallery in New York to display some of their rare books, Bibles and artifacts to be accessible to the public.

Initially, HBU displayed the Bible collection in the Library Lecture room in the Moody Library – what is now Java City. In those early days, many tours and presentations were made, along with continuing research. The interest continued to grow as the vision and mission for the museum was shared on campus as well as in churches and other venues in the region. A good number of out-of-town guests were able to visit the museum. Some of those included gala speakers like General Norman Schwarzkopf and former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Many other prominent scholars and leaders came to tour the museum and learn about the project.

In the Fall of 2002, a major inaugural event, which was open to the public, was hosted at a large conference center in Houston. The program featured Jeanette Cliff George, former State Senator Mike Richards, as well as prominent church and city leaders.

There were many twists and turns and challenges in those early years. Some of those included the invasion and potential mold damage of the collection, learning about and construction of a climate control system, as well as security issues. It was encouraging and amazing to see the hand of God intervening and overseeing all obstacles.

In 2003, Dr. Diana Severance began working as a volunteer with the museum, and became the curator in the

Spring of 2003, when Wiles left the university to assume the presidency of Living Water International.

As plans began to be made for construction of the Cultural Arts Center, Dr. Hodo repeatedly stated that the Bible Museum was to be the “Crown Jewel” of the Cultural Arts Center. Conoco Phillips gave a gift of \$1,000,000 designated for the construction of the Bible Museum's new home. The gift was given by the Board of Directors of ConocoPhillips in recognition of Archie Dunham's leadership as Chairman of the Company. The Museum's name was then changed to The Dunham Family Bible in America Museum.

The Bible Museum would begin a new life with the move to the Cultural Arts Center in 2008. ... This story to be continued!



*Archie and Linda Dunham continue to be major benefactors of the Dunham Bible Museum Library, 2003*

## MUSEUM'S VALUABLE ASSETS

Over the years the Dunham Bible Museum has been blessed with outstanding student assistants, and this year is no exception. HBU students help in cataloguing, maintaining exhibits, and providing tours for groups visiting the Museums.

Rebeca Heredia has been with the Bible Museum three years. Fluent in Spanish, she capably gives tours in both Spanish and English. Her tours always receive glowing praise from visitors as she passionately explains the Bible's history and influence. Rebeca graduated



from HBU in December 2021, with a BA in philosophy and is currently working on her Master's degree in philosophy.



Andrew Fowlkes, a Biblical languages major, has been with the Bible Museum since 2020. He is very interested in pursuing museum work and delights in familiarizing himself with artifacts and explaining them to visitors. Andrew is most proficient in operating the Gutenberg press.

Abigail Jones, a sophomore in the Honors College, is an English major. Those touring the Bible Museum with Abigail always overflow with praise for her knowledge and enthusiasm.



Eliana Wilhelm, the most recent addition to our student team, is working on an MLA degree. She enjoys teaching people about the history of the written word.

We are very thankful for these students' work and their assistance at the Dunham Bible Museum.

## PIECE OF THE PAST, 2022

The winners of the 22nd annual Piece of the Past Essay Contest were announced at a special awards dinner April 28th. In the Dunham Bible Museum category, Catie Wuensche won 1st place and \$500 for her essay "Hezekiah's Tunnel: Examining the Siloam Inscription;" Cameron Morvant won second place and \$250 for his essay, "Medieval and Modern: Illuminating Creation in the St. John's Bible." Lauryl Corrine Brogan won first place and \$500 in the Freshmen category for her essay "William Holman Hunt's Light of the World: Midnight Visitor." Congratulations to these winners and thank you to all who participated. The essay contest, which encourages students to examine and research artifacts from HBU's museums, is sponsored by the Joella and Stewart Morris Foundation. The winning essays can be read at <https://hbu.edu/museums/a-piece-of-the-past-contest/>.

## A FILM CREW COMES TO HBU

In January a film crew from D. James Kennedy Ministries visited HBU to film portions of the newly released video *Who Is This Jesus? Is He The Only Way?*

The film crew interviewed Drs. Craig Evans, Mike Licona, Nancy Pearcey, and Diana Severance while also filming extensively from the Bible Museum's collection.

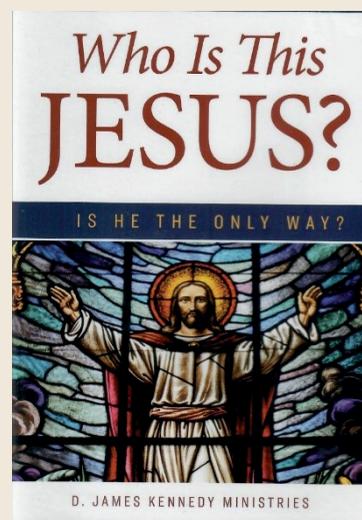
The documentary answers the question Jesus asked the disciples in Matthew 16:15, "Who do you say that I am?" In answering this question, the video considers numerous subsidiary questions: Are the Bible's accounts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ reliable? Does the Bible record history or myth? Did Jesus really rise from the dead as his followers claimed, or is this a story Jesus' followers fabricated? Is the Jesus of the Bible the Jesus of history?

Answering these questions and more, the documentary aims to have viewers "discover the true Jesus who lived in history, died on the cross, rose from the dead, bodily walked out of the tomb, and calls out to all people everywhere, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

While at HBU, filming was also done for another documentary to be released before Christmas entitled *What if Jesus Had Never Been Born?* This

video will examine not only Jesus's atoning death for sin, but how he has shaped many areas of life, including law, medicine, the arts, economics, education, and morality.

Copies of the video may be purchased from the Dunham Bible Museum's gift shop or from D. James Kennedy Ministries.





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[HBU.edu/BibleMuseum](http://HBU.edu/BibleMuseum)

*“Why may not the Bible, and especially the New Testament, without note or comment, be read and taught as a divine revelation in the [school] – its general precepts expounded, its evidences explained and its glorious principles of morality inculcated?... Where can the purest principles of morality be learned so clearly or so perfectly as from the New Testament?”*

**Vidal v. Girard’s Executors**  
U.S. Supreme Court, 1844

## ***International Society of Bible Collectors 2022 Convention***

Held at Dunham Bible Museum, October 13-15.  
Key note Speaker: Dr Craig Evans  
<http://biblecollectors.org/ISBC2022Conventionflyer.htm>

## ***Current Special Exhibits***

- “CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JESUS, THE CHRIST: THREE CENTURIES OF BIBLE ART”
- “THE TREASURED WORD”

The Dunham Bible Museum’s regular exhibits include:

- Bible Manuscripts
- Early printed Bibles
- English bibles
- American Bibles
- *The St. John’s Bible*
- Foreign Bible translations

...all designed to show the Bible’s history, influence and impact.

**The Dunham Bible Museum is OPEN  
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday – Saturdays,  
except University holidays.**

To make an appointment for group tours, or  
for further information, contact

Dr. Diana Severance at  
281-649-3287 or [dseverance@HBU.edu](mailto:dseverance@HBU.edu)

Visit our website at  
[www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum](http://www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum)

There you will find virtual tours of the Museum’s exhibits, past and present, as well as videos of past lectures and much more.



On your next Dunham Bible Museum visit, try out our new audio tour using your cell phone!