

R. Kelvin Moore
Pew Research Proposal
September 2022

Title of Project: Two novels in a series entitled *For the Love of Friends*
Two novels in a series entitled *A Painful Past*

Primary Discipline: Old Testament
Secondary Discipline(s): New Testament; Christian Ministry

Has this proposal been submitted to another agency, publication, or program? No

Location of proposed research: Union University Campus and Huntsville, Alabama

Desired start date: In progress

Recommending Scholars and their disciplines:

External: Manning Garrett, Associate Professor of Teaching
Philosophy Department
The University of Memphis, Lambuth Campus

Union University: Randall Bush, University Professor of Philosophy
School of Theology and Missions

In consultation together, we recommend the approval of the proposal as an acceptable project and affirm that the applicant has the professional wherewithal to accomplish the project satisfactorily.

Dean, School of Theology and Missions: _____ Date: _____

Associate Dean, School of Theology and Missions: _____ Date: _____

PEW RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1. Title of the project.

Two novels in a series entitled *For the Love of Friends*

Two novels in a series entitled *A Painful Past*

2. Statement of the end product(s).

I am under contract (attached) with Elk Lake Publishers, Plymouth, Massachusetts, to publish four novels.

Elk Lake Publishers webpage: <https://elklakepublishinginc.com/>

Current word count for all four novels: 257,328

3. Explanation of the scholarly activity.

I. Statement of the scholarly activity.

My novels help senior adult readers cope with loneliness and pain, ubiquitous to many seniors. *For the Love of Friends* illustrates the value of friendships and will encourage and empower senior adults to recognize the contribution friends can make, thus enhancing and enriching their later years. *A Painful Past* explores the power of memories and will encourage and empower senior adults to cope with distressing past experiences that can cripple their ability to enjoy the present and see hope for the future.

Never in the history of civilizations, have so many people lived in such close proximity with so little in common and so little contact. Senior Americans feel the impact of this crowded isolation. Many factors have created this environment. COVID 19 has isolated many Americans, leaving them alone and lonely even after the removal of COVID restrictions. Many senior Americans are still secluded due to health reasons, while others lack the financial resources to be as active as they wish. Technology has also generated feelings of isolation in that TVs, laptops, iPads, and smart phones cannot replace human interaction. Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook can be valuable tools, but they remain a poor substitute for physical contact in human friendship.

In the biblical account of creation (Gen 1-2), the first thing God said was not good was loneliness. God's solution for loneliness was the creation of another person, a friend. Additionally, created in the Imago Dei, the image of God, means human beings are not created to be alone. As the first man learned, a friend can add great value to life.

All twenty-first century American adults have painful memories on a grand scale. Many remember the potential of the use of atomic weapons, the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, the onslaught of AIDS, the Persian Gulf wars, 9-11, COVID 19, the Soviet invasion of Ukraine, and the disintegration of family and community life. Additionally, adults have painful, *personal*, memories. As individuals enter senior-adulthood, the processing of painful memories is mandatory to live happy, healthy, and meaningful lives. The effective processing of a painful past is important to avoid being mired in bitterness and indifference, allowing seniors the opportunity to emerge as spiritually strong and wise, ready to make a positive contribution to Kingdom building.

For the Love of Friends can help senior adults reappraise the value of friends and encourage new friendships. *A Painful Past* can encourage senior adults to process painful memories, realizing their past does not have to nor should it, control their present nor limit their future.

II. Description of the activity and its goals.

When I began thinking about the issues of (Christian) friendship and painful memories and researched the topics I began to understand the need for my novels. I desired to write, publish, and help individuals see the value of friends. I also desired to write, publish, and help individuals “process” painful memories.

Research indicates, as individuals enter the senior-adult time of life, isolation can become the norm. I also experienced this personally as my mother struggled while living in a senior-adult home during COVID. I believe her isolation to have been a significant factor in her quality of life as well as in her death (on October 3, 2020).

For the Love of Friends demonstrates how friends help friends with loneliness. These novels also address the topics of:

- Dying/Death
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Financial stress
- Crime
- Racism

Research also indicates how devastating unprocessed painful memories can be. *A Painful Past* demonstrates how the main character encountered and “processed”:

- War
- Dying/Death
- Rape
- Racism
- Suicide
- Loss of friends
- Loss of family
- Crime

My novels reveal Jesus to be our ultimate friend and demonstrate Jesus as the source of strength to overcome painful memories. In my research, very little exists in the form of a novel, intentionally targeting senior adults struggling with loneliness and hurtful memories. The fact that Elk Lake is willing to publish my novels provides additional support for the need to address such topics.

III. Theoretical framework.

The first thing God pronounced as “not good” was a person’s loneliness: “It is not good that man should be alone” (Gen 2:18). The Apostle Paul clearly demonstrated the importance of processing painful memories: “This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind . . .” (Phil 3:13). I bring 31+ years of experiences in researching, writings, teaching, and preaching the Bible upon these works. Additionally, I have over 30 years of pastoral ministry experience (20 years overlap as I pastored a small, rural church in my area for 20 years—1996-2016). I have seen loneliness in private homes, nursing homes, retirement homes, and hospitals. I have witnessed, personally, the devastating effects of unprocessed painful memories (example: a lady in our church always began our conversation with: “Twenty years ago . . .” While not doubting the severity of the events she experienced, the fact that she had failed to “process” the experience was obvious).

As a believer, the Bible provides the foundational point when discussing the topics of friendship and the past. Jesus modeled friendship and the presence of the Holy Spirit aids and encourages Christians not to live in or dwell upon the past.

Realizing the depth of loneliness, I began considering a novel(s) to address the topic. Realizing many people are shackled by painful memories, I began considering a novel(s) to address this topic.

C.S. Lewis’ *The Four Loves* was significant in the development of my understanding of the importance of friends and friendships. Lewis wrote that friendship isn’t a necessity in life but friendship gives “value to survival” (life).

The Apostle Paul helped me understand the importance of processing our past, painful memories. To believers at Corinth, Paul wrote: “I have . . . been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches” (2 Cor 11:24-28).

Paul also wrote: “Brothers and sisters . . . one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead” (Phil 3:13). The fact that Paul did not allow his painful memories to distort his present or destroy his future provides evidence that he successfully “processed” those memories. We can correctly assume the presence of Jesus in Paul’s life, as well as the power of the Holy Spirit, helped Paul. The salvation experience every believer had in Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit, is the starting point to understand the value of friendships and the necessity of not allowing painful memories to control and destroy.

While my novels don’t include workroom experiments, one cannot deny the empirical evident authenticating the devastating effects of both loneliness and painful memories. My “research” is more biblical revelation and 63+ years of living (I, as practically everyone, have experienced loneliness and painful memories). While scripture does not provide all the answers we desire (consider: Job), the Bible does provide us with numerous examples of meaningful friendship as well demonstrating the importance of not living in the past.

IV. Brief examination of scholarly literature or context of the activity within your discipline.

For the Love of Friends:

All the Things We Share, Tami Rashal, Independently Published, 2021, is a story of friendship between two women, dealing with the hardships of life, who will do anything to remain optimistic and maintain hope of a happy ending.

For the Love of Friends focuses on senior adults and has friendships between both men and women (mainly focusing on men) and crosses racial lines.

When We Believed in Mermaids, Barbara O'Neal, Lake Union Publishing, 2019, is a story about the relationship between two sisters and the difficulty of facing the truth head-on.

For the Love of Friends focuses on senior adults and has friendships between both men and women (mainly focusing on men), husband, and wife as well as friendship between non-family. The novel also crosses racial lines.

Where the Forest Meets the Stars, Glendy Vanderah, Lake Union Publishing, 2019, is a story about love, loss, and finding family where you least expect it. The book discusses the way in which hearts are mended by love, compassion, and everyday miracles.

For the Love of Friends focuses on both family and non-family friendship (mainly focusing on men), demonstrating the power of both.

The Masterpiece, Francine Rivers, Tyndale House, 2019, weaves together the story of characters struggling with traumatic pasts with biblical truths and redemptive themes.

For the Love of Friends, rather than a romance novel of friendship and love, focuses on senior adults and has friendships between both men and women (mainly focusing on men) and crosses racial lines.

Trust, Daines L. Reed, DLR Publications, 2019, is the story of Ruthena Gentry who is unsure of what the future holds but done with fighting the demons of her past. She presses forward in faith armed with little more than her Bible, her hammer, and her friends. She clings to the hope that it's never too late to rewrite her own story.

For the Love of Friends focuses on senior adults and has friendships between both men and women (mainly focusing on men) and crosses racial lines.

The Book Club: Mary Alice Monroe, MIRA, Reissue edition, 2017. On the surface, *The Book Club* is about a monthly book club, but for five women, the club is so much more. They are five women from different walks of life, embracing the challenge of change. And as they share their hopes, fears, and triumphs, they will hold fast to the true magic of the book club—friendship.”

For the Love of Friends focuses on senior adult men and women. The novel celebrates unexpected and unanticipated friendship (mainly focusing on men) and crosses racial lines.

A Painful Past:

It's Not Supposed to Be This Way: Finding Unexpected Strength When Disappointments

Leave You Shattered, Lysa TerKeurst, Thomas Nelson, 2018, is a study that helps readers understand “Life often looks very different than we hoped or expected. Some events may simply catch us off guard for a moment, but others shatter us completely. At times like these, it's easy to feel disappointed and disillusioned and to wonder about the reality of God's goodness.”

A Painful Past is a Christian novel where the main character works through his painful past to emerge healthy, wholesome, and live meaningfully. While the book has insight on how someone can work through their past, the main emphasis of the work stresses the importance of working through painful memories.

How Did I Get Here?: Finding Your Way Back to God When Everything is Pulling You Away

Christine Caine, Thomas Nelson, 2021, helps readers develop 9 habits to keep them stay anchored in a rapidly changing world.

The descriptions of ***How Did I Get Here?*** read like a self-help approach to finding one's way back to God. ***A Painful Past*** is a Christian novel rather than a self-help approach, encouraging readers to realize God isn't finished with them. The novel inspires readers to work through painful memories with the end-goal of living fully and wholesomely.

Find Your People: Building Deep Community in a Lonely World, Jennie Allen, WaterBrook, 2022. In this work, the author draws on insights from science and history, timeless biblical truth, and vulnerable stories from her own life to help readers overcome the barriers to making new friends and learn to initiate with easy-to-follow steps.

While ***Find Your People*** contains easy-to-follow steps, ***A Painful Past*** is a novel, encouraging Christians to work through painful memories. The novel demonstrates that the main character did not allow painful memories to distort his present not destroy his future.

Unclutter Your Soul, Trina McNeilly, Thomas Nelson, 2022, is for all whose lives are cluttered and overwhelmed with loss, fear, chronic stress, unhealthy coping mechanisms, crippling depression, or anxiety. With the Holy Spirit as our guide, the author says we can learn to: observe; acknowledge the clutter; own: make space for a healthy internal environment, and: overcome: take action with tools for living clutter-free from the inside out. Each chapter in these three sections is written as an essay and concludes practical and soulful tips.

Unclutter Your Soul reads like another self-help book. ***A Painful Past*** is in a novel format, easily demonstrating how the main character, a believer, works through painful memories to live complete and healthy.

A Letter to a Friend: The Story of Abuse in America, Patty Wain Smith, New Words Publishing, 2017, explores a relationship where nothing makes sense and nothing works. The book attempts to aide readers in understanding why life is so hard. The book converges psychology, counseling, domestic violence, child development, and Christian principles.

A Painful Past is a Christian novel not limited to abuse in America. The work examines numerous painful memories, from war, racism, rape and the deaths of family members and friends. The novel demonstrates the importance of a believer not allowing the past to destroy the present or control the future.

I Guess I Haven't Learned That Yet: Discovering New Ways of Living When the Old Ways Stop Working, Shauna Niequist, Zondervan, 2022, is a journey of unlearning what is no longer helpful, embracing curiosity, and accepting the unknowns of midlife, heartbreak, and chronic pain.

A Painful Past is a Christian novel written for senior adults and is written to assist readers work through painful memories in order to live healthy, normal lives, making valuable contributions to the Kingdom of God.

For the Love of Friends and ***A Painful Past*** is written for adults, age 50 and above (although younger audiences can find the works insightful and useful). There are more than 117 million Americans aged 50 and older—35 percent of the total population—and the age bracket is projected to grow to 132 million people over the next 10+ years. Research suggests this age group to be 157 million by 2050. By 2060, 1 in 5 Americans will be senior citizens (website: *Senior Citizen Facts, Figures, and Statistics for 2021 - Suddenly Senior*). This age group makes up many of the people who are buying (and reading) books. According to the American Association of Retired People (*AARP Study: Americans 50 and Older are Growing Economic Powerhouse*): “Americans age 50 and up contribute so much to the U.S. economy that they’d constitute the world’s third-largest economy if they were counted as their own country.” The same report reveals, “The economic contributions of 50-plus Americans totaled \$8.3 trillion last year, which puts them just behind the U.S. and China when measured by gross domestic product. And that economic impact will grow significantly in decades to come, tripling to more than \$28 trillion by 2050 as millennials and Generation Z begin to turn 50 in 2031 and 2047, respectively.”

How healthy are older Americans? Consider:

- 28% of seniors live alone, totaling more than 14.7 million people (5 million men and 9.7 million women).
- Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of dementia by 50%.

Other health risks related to loneliness include:

- Stroke: Risk increases by 32%
- Heart disease: Risk increases by 29%
- Mental health disorders: Risk increases by 26%
- Premature mortality: Risk increases by 26%

The health effects of loneliness are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes each day (*Elderly Loneliness Statistics (2021): Social Isolation Effects* (consumeraffairs.com)). According to *Loneliness and Social Isolation Linked to Serious Health Conditions* (cdc.gov), loneliness and social isolation in older adults are serious public health risks affecting a significant number of people in the United States and putting them at risk for dementia and other medical conditions. From the same resource above: There is strong evidence that many adults aged 50 and older are socially isolated or lonely in ways that put their health at risk. Recent studies found:

- Social isolation significantly increased a person’s risk of premature death from all causes, a risk that may rival those of smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.
- Social isolation was associated with about a 50% percent increased risk of dementia.
- Poor social relationships (characterized by social isolation or loneliness) were associated with a 29% increased risk of heart disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke.

- Loneliness was associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide.

- Loneliness among heart failure patients was associated with a nearly 4 times increased risk of death, 68% increased risk of hospitalization, and 57% increased risk of emergency department visits.

Many Americans, ages 50+, feel isolated and alone. *For The Love of Friends* will encourage them to age graciously, realizing God isn't finished with them. The novels will help seniors cherish current friendships, seek opportunities to make new friends in order to live a rich and fulfilling present.

Again, how healthy are older Americans? Depression, and the distress and suffering associated with it, is the most prevalent reported mental health condition among older adults. This condition can lead to impairments in physical, mental, and social functioning, including isolating oneself from social gatherings (*Senior's Guide to Mental Health During COVID-19* (medicareadvantage.com)). Exacerbating the issue is the prevalence that depression increases with age. Painful memories can also initiate and exacerbate depression.

Everybody has painful memories, from the loss of spouse to the loss of health, from the loss of independence to the loss of income. Painful memories are universal and unavoidable. The difference in people is how individuals process painful memories. As Americans age, grow more depressed and reflect on painful memories, *A Painful Past* can encourage seniors to age graciously, realizing God still has plans for their lives. The novels can help seniors process their past to live a rich and fulfilling present.

"The bad news is that attitudes and stereotypes about aging have not changed enough," studies reveals. And many products and services available to us as we age are woefully out of date. As all generations navigate making the most of a longer life, new products and services are required. Market innovation is essential" (AARP website). *For the Love of Friends* and *A Painful Past* are "new products."

V. Connection to Ernest Boyer's Model of Scholarship.

For the Love of Friends and *A Painful Past* clearly falls within Ernest Boyer's definition of scholarship (i.e.: an academic model advocating *expansion* [my emphasis] of the traditional definition of scholarship) and clearly falls in Boyer's scholarship of application (as opposed to his scholarship of discovery, integration, and teaching/learning).

Boyer's scholarship of application connects scholars to those outside the "walls" of the university. While the "Documentary Hypothesis of the Authorship of the Pentateuch" connects scholars within the academy, it creates little interest outside. Helping individuals cope with loneliness and painful memories resonates with individuals outside collegiate circles. The scholarship of application utilizes expertise to produce results that can be shared and evaluated by others. Clearly my novels can be shared and evaluated. With experience in the classroom, in writing and ministry, my novels fit well into Boyer's application model of scholarship.

4. An essay (500 - 1000 words) describing how the Christian faith relates to your understanding of your discipline and how it relates to this scholarly endeavor.

Being in the School of Theology and Missions, with a PhD in Hebrew and Old Testament (with a minor in Greek and New Testament), the Christian faith, specifically, *is* my discipline. For thirty-one and one-half years, I have offered one prayer at the beginning of each class, each semester: “Jesus, remind us that when we open the Bible, we open your written revelation. May we do so reverently and respectfully, with a desire to know you better and a desire to communicate your Word with a needy world. Forgive us, should this class become solely an academic endeavor.” I have never perceived my work at Union in any manner other than ministry and the classroom in any manner other than a calling.

The Christian faith relates to my discipline in that I accept God’s written revelation, the Bible, which is my primary textbook, as truth, without any possibility of it leading readers down a path of destruction. My Christian faith is the lens through which I view my world and universe. I find truth within my Christian faith (Augustine’s “all truth is God’s truth”). Faith provides the foundation for the totality of who I am. By faith, I am Christian. I am not a Buddhist, Hindu, or Muslim. While I respect these worldviews I do not embrace these worldviews as ultimate truth and compass in my life. I am Christian in that I am neither atheist nor agnostic. My Christian faith saves, sustains, encourages, guides, and disciplines me.

My Christian faith relates to this scholarly endeavor in that Jesus taught: “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). Jesus desires believers live abundantly and provides believers with the means to do so.

Jesus experienced loneliness personally (one author called Jesus the loneliest human in history) at Gethsemane and Calvary. Jesus understood loneliness. The author of Hebrews, describing Jesus, reminds us: “. . . we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses . . .” (4:15).

Jesus not only experienced loneliness and understood loneliness he also ministered to lonely people. Known as the “woman at the well” (John 4), being a Samaritan would have isolated the woman from Jewish circles, doubtless, and potentially Gentile circles too. The fact the woman came to the well at noon, a time when many would have avoided the heat of the day, suggests the possibility she did so to avoid others. Jesus initiated the conversation with this lonely woman. Recorded as the final words of Mathew’s gospel, Jesus promised: “I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age” (28:20). Jesus is the ultimate friend of all believers. He desires to be the ultimate friend to everyone.

Not only do the scriptures promise believers freedom from loneliness, but the scriptures also promise Christians freedom from the past. Jesus forgives all sin. Forgiveness from past, painful memories is a part of the great redemptive work of Jesus.

Any person living in loneliness (*For the Loves of Friends*) and crippled by the past (*A Painful Past*) is not experiencing the abundant life Jesus promises. Hopefully avoiding hubris, *perhaps* my novels can help readers live the abundant life Jesus intends us to live.

5. A time frame for the completion and a plan for the dissemination of the project.

I am under contract with Elk Lake for four novels (I have two more novels, one complete, one nearing completion. I am hopeful Elk Lake will publish these too).

I am currently reworking the initial novel, from suggestions made by my publisher. My first manuscript is due August 9, 2023.

While specifics have not been finalized with Elk Lake Publishing, my working goal is to finalize book #2 by August, 2024, book #3 by August, 2025, and book #4, August 2026.

6. A brief budget.

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Initial editing (Elk Lake will finalize): | Estimated cost \$500 for each novel: | \$2000 |
| Initial formatting (Elk Lake will finalize): | Estimated cost \$250 for each novel: | \$1000 |
| My editor/formatter lives in Huntsville, AL: | Estimated cost for travel: | \$1000 |
| Expenses of writing (printer, paper, ink): | Estimated cost: | <u>\$500</u> |
| Total estimated expenses: | | \$4,500 |

7. A current *curriculum vitae*.

R. Kelvin Moore
University Professor of Biblical Studies
School of Theology and Missions

EDUCATION:

Doctor of Philosophy, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, May 1988. Major in Hebrew and Old Testament, minor in Greek and New Testament. Dissertation entitled, "An Investigation of the Motif of Suffering in the Psalms of Lamentation."

Master of Divinity, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, May 1985.

Bachelor of Arts, Samford University, 1982

Lamar County High School, Vernon, Alabama, 1977

Additional Study:

Jerusalem University College, Jerusalem, January 5-23, 2000

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Scholar-In-Residence, Louisville, Kentucky, studied *Jeremiah* with Professor Joel Drinkard, Spring Semester, 1999

Jerusalem University College, Jerusalem, December 28, 1997-January 19, 1998

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Interim Pastor, First Baptist Church, Bradford, June 2022-present
 Taught Hebrew Poetry and Wisdom Literature, Southwestern Training Center for Global Leaders, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, June-August, 2022
 Taught Old Testament Survey, Southwestern Training Center for Global Leaders, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines, June-August, 2021
 Research Leave, Fall Semester, 2018; researched and finalized a New Testament manuscript while teaching Old Testament Theology for Baptist Theological Seminary, Singapore
 Taught in the Bible Fellowship Center, Hmawbi, Yangon, Myanmar, November 6-10, 2018
 University Professor of Biblical Studies, 2016-present
 Professor of Christian Studies, 2003-2016
 Director of Union University's Doctor of Ministry Program, Singapore, 2011-2019
 Participant, Union University's Scholar of Excellence Weekend, 2007-2020
 Presented a paper at "Christianity in the Academy," March 2015 (on my first novel)
 Alpha Chi, Union University Faculty Sponsor, 2004-2013
 Member, Bradford Special School Board of Education, 2002-2020
 Vice-Chairman of the Board 2010-2018; Chairman of the Board, 2018-present
 Northwest District Director of the Tennessee School Boards of Education, 2016-18
 Board of Directors, Tennessee School Boards of Education, 2016-2018
 Associate Professor of Christian Studies, 1997-2003
 Assistant Professor of Christian Studies, 1991-1997
 Taught Hebrew Grammar in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's extension program on the Union campus, Fall 2005-Spring 2006
 Acting Director of Union University's Church and Ministry Scholarship, 2001-2003
 Pastor, Idlewild Baptist Church, Idlewild, Tennessee, 1996-2016
 Facilitator in Union University's BIOME group, "Biologist in Observation of the Master's Earth," Fall 2002
Member, Union University's Institutional Review Board, Fall 2001-2007; 2010-present
 Taught Hebrew Grammar in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's extension program on the Union campus, Fall 2001-Spring 2002
 Taught "Syllabus Development" workshop to Union University's R. G. Lee Center instructors, May 2000
 Taught Hebrew Grammar in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's extension program on the Union campus, Fall 1997-Spring 1998
 Taught Old Testament Survey in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's extension program on the Union campus, Fall 1994-Spring 1995
 Registered as a "Scholar-In-Residence" at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, studied "Jeremiah" with Dr. Joel Drinkard, Spring 1995
 President, Union University's Faculty Forum, 1997-1998
 Taught Senior Adult Conferences on Union University campus, March, 1997
 SPOTS (Special Projects Other Than Summer) Team leader, Louisville, Kentucky, March 1996
 SPOTS (Special Projects Other Than Summer) Team Leader, Evansville, Indiana. March 1995
 Joined Faculty of Union University, August 1991

Moderator, Pioneer Baptist Association, West Virginia, July 1989-July 1991
 Treasurer, West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptist Pastor's Conference, 1990
 President, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Alumni of West Virginia, 1991
 Pastor; Good Shepherd Southern Baptist Church, Scott Depot, West Virginia, February 1989-July 1991
 Pastor, First Baptist Church, Welsh, Louisiana, November 1987-February 1989
 Pastor, First Baptist Church Detroit, Alabama, August 1978-July 1982

HONORS AND AWARDS:

Promoted to University Professor, Union University, Spring 2016
 Union University Faculty Member of the Year, 2004
 Promoted to Professor, Union University, Spring 2003
 Chosen to chair the Lilly Grant proposal (\$2,000,000) from Lilly Endowments, December 2001
 One of two initial recipients of Union University Study Grant (\$3000.00), January 2000
 Tenured at Union University, March, 2000

PUBLICATIONS:

The Psalms of Lamentations and the Enigma of Suffering, Mellen Biblical Press, Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter, 1996
 "Amos, An Introduction," in *The Theological Educator*, published by the Faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Fall, 1996
 "The Gospel According to Survivors," published in fall issue of *Preaching*, 2001
 "What Would Jesus Do?," *Proclaim*, 2002
 "Making 'What Would Jesus Do?,'" *Proclaim*, 2003
 "Adonijah: Expropriating the Throne," *Biblical Illustrator*, 2003
 Four Sunday School lessons for *LifeWay*, December, 2003
 "Chariots," *Biblical Illustrator*, 2004
 Four Sunday School lessons for *Colligate*, November, 2004
 Four sermons for *Worship*, 2005
 "Judah's Political Alliances" for *Biblical Illustrator*, 2005
 Four Sunday School lessons for *Colligate*, 2005
 "Levirate Marriage and the Book of Ruth," for *Biblical Illustrator*, 2006
 Four Sunday School lessons for *Family Bible Study*, July, 2006
 "Persia," for *Biblical Illustrator*, 2007
 "Melchizedek" for *Biblical Illustrator*, Winter 2007-2008
 "The Political Climate for Isaiah and Micah" for *Biblical Illustrator*, 2008
 "The Philistines" for *Biblical Illustrator*, 2009
 "Who is Yahweh?" for *Biblical Illustrator*, Spring 2010
 Thirteen Bible Study Lessons in Jeremiah and Lamentations for LifeWay's *Explore the Bible*, June-August, 2011
 "Stained Glass" in *Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, 2012
 "The Tradition of the Elders" for *Biblical Illustrator*, Spring 2013
 "The Fear of the Lord: The Meaning," for *Biblical Illustrator*, Spring, 2014
 Fourteen Bible Study Lessons in Ezekiel and Daniel for LifeWay's *Explore the Bible*, June-

August, 2014

“Waterfall and Wadis” for *Biblical Illustrator*, Winter 2014-15

Seven Bible Study Lessons in Nahum, Zephaniah, Zechariah, and Luke for LifeWay’s *Explore the Bible*,” March-May, 2015

Fourteen Bible Study Lessons in Joshua, Judges, and Ruth for Lifeway’s *Explore the Bible*, December-February, 2016

The Old Testament for the Twenty-First Century: A Concise Guide, Insight Press, 2016

“Slavery” for *Biblical Illustrator*, Fall, 2016

“Moses’ Final Appeal: Honor the Covenant” for *Biblical Illustrator*, Winter, 2019-20

The New Testament for the Twenty-First Century: A Concise Guide, Insight Press, 2019

Under contract for a 7,000-word article on Amos for the *New English Study Bible Project*, (the *NET Study Bible Project* is a major translation Study Bible in the range of 750,000 words), 2024 anticipated publication.