

James D.G. Dunn, 'Man of Grace,' Dies at 82

James Douglas Grant Dunn passed away June 26, 2020. The cause of death was cancer.

Also known as "Jimmy," Dr. Dunn was born October 21, 1939, in Birmingham, England. In 1964, he became a licensed minister in the Church of Scotland. One of the initial marks he made on the academic world was his first book, *The Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (SCM Press, London), published in 1970, the year he transitioned from being a chaplain at Edinburgh University to overseas students (1968-70) to the position of lecturer in divinity at the University of Nottingham. In 1979, he was promoted to reader (senior lecturer), at which time he also served as a Methodist minister. In 1982, Dr. Dunn transitioned again to the position of professor of divinity at Durham University, and there, in 1990, he was promoted to the position of Lightfoot Professor of Divinity. He retired in 2003.

Dr. Dunn's alma maters were University of Glasgow and Clare College, Cambridge. His doctoral advisor was . Moule, and in his thesis, *The Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, he espoused the classical Pentecostal position of the baptism with the Holy Spirit as confirmed by speaking in tongues. This book became one of the standard bearers of the classical Pentecostal position. Though he diverged from this position while at the University of Nottingham, the year he retired from Durham University he wrote a stunning comment for *The Baptism With the Holy Spirit* by Verna M. Linzey.

Linzey's work was published in 2005, and in 2006, on the 100th Anniversary of the commencement of the Azusa Street Revival, she received the 'Best Non-Fiction of the Year' Award from the Christian Writers Guild. Dr. Linzey's work was reviewed by the

Hollenweger Center, and, with Dr. Dunn's name on her book, it became a standard textbook for 100 Bible colleges and schools around the world.

Dr. Dunn's discipline was biblical studies, and his sub-discipline was New Testament studies. His doctoral students were Helen Bond, Simon J. Gathercole, James F. McGrath, Scot McKnight, Ken Schenck and Graham Twelftree. He influenced Scot McKnight, Verna M. Linzey and N.T. Wright. His most notable work was *The New Perspective on Paul* (2007).

I had the good fortune of becoming personally acquainted with Dr. Dunn in 2003, during which he invited me to call him "Jimmy." During our acquaintance, I was struck by the quality of grace which exuded from his innermost being, and I have coined for Dr. Dunn the appellation "Man of Grace."

Monday, April 13, 2020, was a life-altering day for me. At 8:47 a.m., Dr. Dunn sent an email to me wherein he stated that he had recently been given the "death sentence" by his doctor due to cancer. I wept. But I am indeed blessed to have been influenced by this "Man of Grace," both spiritually and theologically, and I know that I will see him again.