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## Bethany College News Release

Written by Gil Dueck, Academic Dean

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## Academics at Bethany College

In Mark 12, a teacher of the law asks Jesus a very famous question: “What is the most important commandment?” Jesus’ answer is simple and profound: 1) We are called to love God; and 2) We are called to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. The teacher of the law agrees, saying, “To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” And Mark notes that Jesus is impressed with this answer.

I want to suggest that Bethany’s academic program is part of our obedience to this “most important” commandment. Because our love of God includes our “minds.” The teacher of the law recognizes that love can be expressed through “understanding.” So our study of the Bible or theology or the arts, or mission or history or ethics, is never merely “academic.” If we approach it properly, our growth in understanding, our pursuit of knowledge, can be an act of devotion, an act of worship, even an act of love.

But we are also called to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. And this also relates significantly to our work in the classroom because part of *loving* our neighbour means seeking to *understand* our neighbour. To love our neighbour means that we must listen and discern well as we enter the world of our neighbour and encounter the issues that they see as significant. To love our neighbour *as ourselves* means that we are connected to each other and must seek answers to our common questions, solutions to our common problems and ways of nurturing our common hopes.

So the love of God and the love of our neighbour is what the academic component of a college like Bethany should be about. We are not motivated by the desire to appear smart or the desire to master content; we are not motivated by competition for the best cumulative grade point average nor are we even motivated by the prospect of a well-paying job and a secure future. No, at our very best, we are motivated by love.

For more information regarding academics at Bethany College, check our website at [www.bethany.sk.ca](http://www.bethany.sk.ca).



Gil Dueck, Academic Dean



Gil Dueck in the classroom

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Box 160 Hepburn SK S0K 1Z0 [www.bethany.sk.ca](http://www.bethany.sk.ca)

Phone: 1-866-772-2175 Fax: (306) 947-4229 Email: [info@bethany.sk.ca](mailto:info@bethany.sk.ca)