

Engage360 Episode 4: The Life and Legacy of Vernon Grounds with Gordon MacDonald

Introduction: Welcome to Engage360, Denver Seminary's Podcast. Join us as we explore the redemptive power of the gospel and the life-changing truth of Scripture at work in our culture today.

Dr. Don Payne: On this week's episode of Engage360 we want to introduce you to a key figure in the life of Denver Seminary, Dr. Vernon Grounds. In order to understand and appreciate anything about Denver Seminary, you really have to know something about Dr. Grounds and how pivotal, how influential he was to the history and the ethos of this institution. A few months ago I had the opportunity in a slightly different venue to sit down with Dr. Gordon MacDonald, who has recently retired as our Chancellor. Gordon was one of Dr. Ground's closest friends, mentees, protégés, so we had an opportunity to kind of revisit the life and legacy of Vernon Grounds through the eyes, through the experience of Gordon MacDonald. So glad you're with us and hope you'll enjoy listening to this interview we did awhile back with Gordon MacDonald about the life and legacy of Vernon Grounds. Our theme this Fall is get to know Denver Seminary. And so taking a look at Vernon Ground's life and legacy is a vital way to do that. Vernon was the Chancellor here from 1993 until his home going in 2010, at the age of 96. And prior to that he served as President here at Denver Seminary from 1955 until 1979. Now our guest this week is Dr. Gordon MacDonald, who probably knew Dr. Grounds as well or better than anyone else. So we want to take a look at Dr. Grounds legacy through Gordon's eyes. And Gordon served the Denver Seminary community as Chancellor for about the last nine or 10 years or so alongside his wife, Gail. And then prior to that as Interim President for about a year or a year and a half, Gordon recently retired from that position, much to the dismay of the Denver Seminary community. And he can talk a little bit about that if he wants to. Actually Gordon's history with Denver Seminary goes way back upstream from those most recent posts. And I'm excited to have him on the Podcast, both to help us appreciate Vernon Ground's legacy and to let all of you get to know Gordon a little bit better. So we're going to start there. So Gordon, just a deep thanks to both you and Gail for the rich and many years of service to this community and to many of us individually here. We are deeply indebted to you. Maybe to get started, you could just say a little bit about what a Chancellor is or does, and then use that as a way to give a brief description of your history with Denver Seminary, including Dr. Grounds.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Well, the word Chancellor's very elastic, it's a title one might get somebody when they're saying we want you around, but we don't know why. And so when people ask me what a Chancellor is I usually start by saying, well, they run Germany or Notre Dame. And that gets a little bit of a point. But no, I think Dr. Mark Young, when he came in and assumed the Presidency, I was hoping that there would be one or two or three people who would kind of be a bridge from the past into the present and that he could inquire of or gain from them, some

kind of intelligence or information. And he and I hit it off immediately. And so one day I get this phone call from him, the board have asked me to serve and the title they'd like is Chancellor, but nobody really knew what a Chancellor did. And so I simply picked up the copy of what I knew most about Vernon, that he was a Playmaker. He walked around the campus and touched people's lives, whether it was faculty or staff or student, donor, stranger to the campus. He had this way of just being on the spot and saying the right introductory thing that put everybody to ease. And I immediately said, well, that's probably what I should be doing. And it's been that way for all these many years.

Dr. Don Payne: Served us well. And as I said, we're deeply indebted and so, so grateful for the imprint. So many ways that you and Gail have left on our lives individually, and on this community. So tell us a bit about your longer history of Denver Seminary and how that intersects with Vernon Grounds.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Well, my father was in a generation of Baptists, which were going through all of the historic debates about theology and the place of the church in the 1940s and 50s. And the Presbyterians were the first to go through this. And then that was followed by the Baptist community. And the old Northern and the Southern Baptist conventions of the 1920s, thirties, forties started going through some terrible divisiveness. And out of it came some smaller Baptist groups, including one called the Conservative Baptist Association of America. And that, that organization kind of formed during World War II and after it. And a lot of the formation happened in the East coast and the home that my father and mother and I lived in, my brother also, was very central. So a lot of the formative meetings happened in our home. And I can remember with fascination at the age of four or five, six and seven, sitting on the staircase of our home listening, eavesdropping on these guys as they were trying to figure out where they were going and what was important. And the real point of division in those days was the so-called modernist movement that was drinking heavily at the fountain of Freud and Marx and Einstein's contribution to science and to Darwin. Where was the church going in the direction of this new science? Or was the church trying to retrench and become much more eschatologically as I understood. And that's, that's where the Conservative Baptist were in those days, arguing about, you know, the song was this world is not my home. I'm just a passing through. So I grew up in the middle of all of that. I am not sure I understood much of it, but the dynamics of it just fascinated me. And out of that comes this Vernon Grounds, who plays a very moderate, moderate role of, he understands the world of the arts, the sciences, the humanities. He's sympathetic to the new discoveries that are happening, but he's also a very loyal to what would become an evangelical gospel. And when he came to Denver, he didn't come to be President. He came to the Dean, and the President died suddenly a couple of years later, and the school was on the verge of bankruptcy. It probably should not have lasted.

Dr. Don Payne: This was in the early fifties?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: This was the early fifties. And Vernon himself, as he tells the story, came within hours literally of turning his car around and going back East and forgetting this because his first reaction was that this is impossible. It's not going to work. But God seemed to have whispered in the hearts of him and a few others. And well, let's give it another shot. And in the next few years, the Seminary gained ground, became stabilized. But financially it was always just a day from disaster. And as I've told many times, and you've heard me say this, I can remember the churches in this area taking up food offerings for the faculty. If you'd been a faculty member in that first generation, you probably would have been three months behind in your paycheck right now, so all the churches were gathering food so that you and your family could eat. And I was a part of that as a young teenager. So Vernon was in our home all the time, quite frequently on Sunday nights after church and I can't explain it, but even as a young teenager, I realized this is a special human being. Learn everything you can from him. So I would sit literally on the floor of our living room at his feet and I just loved to hear him talk. I didn't know what he was saying, but, I can remember saying to myself one day, someday I want to be a man just like him. And he became my model of Christian manhood, of leadership, of the larger engagement we all have with people. There was just something about his way that I had never ever seen before.

Dr. Don Payne: So what do you think contributed to making him the person he was? He was this for those who never met Vernon, he was a really small man from the East coast, from New Jersey I believe. But what, what was it about him and his background that helps shape them into that kind of person?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: On the positive side, I think he grew up in a Dutch reform community of people where there was much respect for education. It was not the typical fundamentalist mindset that colleges are suspect and our professors are atheist. He didn't grow up believing that, he grew up believing there was great value in a sound education, and keeping your eyes and ears open to the larger world, and then allowing your gospel to project out of that. So he had a very positive view of a larger world that many of us were denied, and that's a reason why I would have loved him so much because he, he was the first person I met that brought what I thought was dignity to my face. I could, I could be the kind of Christian he was describing and where I've found myself rebellious against old time fundamentalist. There's another answer to your question though. What made Vernon the way he was, and in one word it was suffering. He grew up in a difficult home. I'm not, I'm sure he was loved by his father and mother, but his father was, a locomotive engineer for a railroad in the Northeast. And his father was, you know, all with the hands, making things, fixing things, inventing things. And Vernon's older brother John was just like the father. And Vernon has told me, he said, my father would take us down to the basement and he would want us to hammer nails into wood. And John's nail would always go straight into the wood, one or two whacks with a hammer and it was perfectly placed. But when I hit the nail with the hammer, the nail always bent in two or three directions, he said, I could do nothing right. And my father would get disgusted with me and would say, Oh Vernon, go upstairs and be with your mother. So Vernon felt

that rejection that any boy would feel when you feel like you cannot live up to your father's expectations. And then he went off to college and, not many people know this story and I think it's time has gone, nothing can be told about that. He was falsely accused of a small crime on the campus and for the better part of a year, he was under the shadow of suspicion and it must've been a terribly difficult and very lonely situation. And he was called to the police station several times to be interrogated. And nobody could come to conclusions about this. But toward the end of that year, finally the culprit stepped forward and confessed that this is what had happened. And of course, you know, then the suspicion was taken off Vernon after. I would say to him sometimes Vernon, why are you always on the side of people who have done wrong things? Why do you want to redeem people? Why do you want to restore them? And he would say, because I know what it's like when you've been accused of something and no one stands by your side and sticks up for you. So this, this kind of empathy was written into his soul from the very, very beginning. And if he would have walked into a room, his nose would be first be for the people he sensed who were suffering, the people who felt lonely, the people who felt that they were put apart, he felt very defensive from the very beginning on the oppressed people. And there were not many people like that. And by the way, to conclude this comment, I was one of those people who suffered, my family, my mother and father's marriage collapsed after 25 years, in effect, I was without a family. I was 17, 18, 19 years of age and Vernon knew our family well, and on a regular basis he would take me out to breakfast and for an hour he would just prod me over, he wanted to know my heart, what I was feeling and what I should be doing. And in many ways I survived those days because Vernon cared for me and I was, I was just one of many, like that. But it was that kind of dynamic that drew the two of us together.

Dr. Don Payne: One of the comments that was made at his memorial service that I recall, is that something to the effect that he had probably more people who considered him their best friend. Whether that was, the equivalent or a reciprocal, I don't know, but he somehow had the capacity to make all kinds of people feel like they were his best friend.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: This is in one sense, the center of his gospel, here you have a brilliant man. One of the first evangelicals to go out to a secular university didn't get a PhD. And to have a mind that just was like a mouse trap. It just snapped shut on conclusions and stuff. He was brilliant. Most people doing what he did in education would have probably gone for a life of intense scholarship. But one day I said to him, I said, you know, you haven't written the books. You really haven't over published yourself. It seems to me that your scholarship is really people that you decided to write your scholarship on the hearts of people that came along and for good and bad, I'm not sure it's, it's all a good result, but his way of engaging people was so personal. So empathetic, that everybody, it seems that came across his past, said he's my best friend. He understands me like nobody else does. And he may have sometimes conveyed wrong expectations by how close he moved in on you. And I've said, there are thousands of people around this world who, if you asked them would tell you, Vernon Grounds was my

father, and the statue out in the Vernon Grounds reading room says a father to us. That was something I insisted on that one when it was commissioned because everybody who came across this pastor said the same thing. He's like a father to me and I would laugh and joke, well you would think that, but he's really my father. And for me, he was my father. My father never really was able to strike an intimate relationship with me. So all the way through these years, up until the day he died, he was fine father for years. And we had powerful conversations over the years. And I remember thinking many, many times, and I'm sure other people felt this way when they talked to him, this is the way a father and a son ought to talk. Because my father, my real father couldn't do that. But Vernon knew how to ask you the right questions and not allow you to be threatened. And person after person after person had the same experience. And the closure is this, if you didn't see him for three months, the first thing you do when you sat down, because he'd ask a questions about the last conversation and you realize he hadn't forgotten. He has kept those things in some vault in his soul. And so the conversation just picked up immediately some days.

Dr. Don Payne: Speaking about his academic work and then how he brought some of that together with those personal features you've just been describing. He, as I recall, he wrote his doctoral dissertation on Sigmund Freud's philosophy of love or, something like that.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Something like that. None of us ever really understood it.

Dr. Don Payne: I remember saying the title of it once. And then he, I believe was very instrumental in launching the emphasis on counseling here at Denver Seminary, which for its time was, as I understand it, a rather unusual or radical move for an evangelical Seminary, can you talk about that?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Well, I think it's things like that that caused Vernon suffering even in the early years of Presidency of Denver Seminary because the Baptist movement here in the Rocky Mountain empire was fraught with a very, very hot devoted, fundamentalists who really thought that the issue of the day was eschatology. Was Jesus coming and will the church be raptured at the beginning of the seven years of tribulation or after? There was even a sign one day at school because the faculty shared all three tribulational questions. And the sign said, in the case of a rapture, Dr. Burdick's classes will be dismissed. And Dr. Lewis' classes will go on as usual, and Dr. Grounds classes, we'll wait for further instruction. But there was tremendous controversy here and people really picked upon Vernon. I'll tell you, personally, I think they would jealous of his intellect, his broad spread of thought. I mean, Sigmund Freud really? And I mean, these guys wouldn't even know how to spell his name. And they, I, I was in a room one day, one man looked at him in the eye, called him an erudite jackass and it was terms like that. And what I learned from Vernon, and I'm drifting from your question, but you know, he never fought back. I never heard him say any kind of negative word about any of his theological or institutional enemies. He couldn't bring himself to do it. It was always grace, grace, grace. The worst thing I ever heard him say

was one day he said to two or three of us, of a such a person. I love that man so much. I wish his church would take up an offering and send him to the Holy land on a one way tour. And you know, we all just went hysterically laughing because Vern could not bring himself to say anything defensively beyond some kind of humor at that time. But where are we going with this? He took a lot of criticism and he just quietly held it to him. One by one those people dropped out of sight. The Seminary got stronger because of his perseverance. And people just felt the affection, the love that he was able to give. I don't know. That's about as far as I could go on that.

Dr. Don Payne: Well, that leads, pretty, pretty easily into what I wanted to ask you about is his famous quote that also is inscribed on the bust in the Vernon Grounds' Reading Room. So many people are captivated by his well known statement here lies no unanchored liberalism, freedom to think without commitment. Here lies no encrusted dogmatism commitment without freedom to think. Here lies a vibrant evangelicalism, freedom to think within the limits laid down in scripture. So, so what did that statement mean in the context of the time when he said that?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Well, you can, you know, I forget the year that that was first said, probably at a banquet or something, I forget. But we're in the turbulence of the birth of evangelicalism in those days, as opposed to the old fundamentalism of the 1920s and 30s. Now we're in the day of Carl Henry, who was probably one of the greatest theologians of the mid 20th century. Billy Graham is coming to the surface with his powerful evangelism. And Billy is encouraging the founding of Christianity today, in a few years, Gordon Conwell seminary will come out of this fuller Seminary on the West coast, as it gathered traction is becoming one of the major spokes person. And so the question is, where is evangelicalism going? Is it going to be a repeat of that old 1920s Fundamentalism? Or is it going to be thoroughly loyal to the Bible as the word from God? But not the afraid to dabble in the larger world of what Freud and Darwin and these others were saying as they were researching and discovering the world. So Vernon was trying to say here we are not going to abandon the traditional orthodoxy, the faith in Christ, but we're not going to limit ourselves to that, that system without looking beyond it into the world of beauty and the world of art and the world of science and politics, if you please. And social activities. We're going to subject this to our understanding of the Bible and we're going to create a larger, more useful faith that's coming into the mid 20th century. Anybody who didn't live in those times would find it hard to understand how much the world was changing at the end of World War II, a new order is coming in, the British empire has sunk. The American empire is beginning to rise and the whole world is realigning itself, and even as Billy Graham and people like him bring this evangelical movement with Christianity today in the Seminaries. Here's Vernon playing a role and saying, what are the most powerful statement that says we're going to freshen our voice to take into account what we're learning. When I went off to the university, this is just a sideline, and this is typical of what was going on those days. I was given an athletic scholarship to the University of Colorado, didn't go far with it, but I got it. And I can remember at the age of 18 getting ready to go off to college and all the people in our church coming at me one by one, you're

going to that God forsaken university. Don't you understand? Those professors are going to take away your faith. You'll be an atheist in a year. That's the way I went off to college. And, and yet these were people who believed in what we called eternal security in those days. You know, on the one hand you can't lose your faith, but if you go to Colorado University, you will. The fact of the matter is, I went there to the university and because of people like Vernon, I found Jesus in a whole new, powerful way, in that larger world that Vernon and people like him were championing. And in this paragraph, he's trying to speak to this new order of where faith is going to engage the world in a lot more dynamic basis. It's, it's a very bold statement and it's time, it was very controversial.

Dr. Don Payne: Interestingly, that seems to be, that statement seems to be part of the ethos that for quite a number of years now has attracted students to Denver Seminary.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. You look at the presidents and each one how they left their legacy. There's been a continuity of all of this, but I'll be bold to say, in my opinion, if Vernon hadn't been right there at the front of the parade, it never would have happened.

Dr. Don Payne: So pulling all of this together a bit, what are a few of the ways Vernon's legacy has sort of shaped the ethos of Denver Seminary as it is today?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: I hope I say this correctly. I think there's a lot of seminaries in this country that you go to and you pretty quickly get the impression that this is a seminary that deals in ideas and goes to the chopping block defending them. But Vernon brought to Denver Seminary, the people values to come along with the ideology. I used the word before "grace," that was Vernon Grounds. He had grace in his heart for everybody. And I think the Seminary, as the years went on, picked up extra theme in it's makeup of redemption, of restoration, of grace, of helping young men and women to become what God's program was for them. And the faculty always expressed that. That first faculty may not have had the finest scholars in the world, but we students all knew we were loved. And we, I could fill from the hours with stories of certain of those faculty members under Vernon's inspiration who would sit with you and talk about character, about your walk with God, the possibilities out in the future if you've heard God's call. And I think that all is the legacy of Vernon Grounds, and that people element, the value of people has always been here. And I've taught enough in other schools to know that's not a given in a lot of other schools. So anyway, that that would be Vernon. And I think I was thinking in preparation for our conversation today, my first remembrance of Vernon is typical for lifelong experience. He was preaching at my father's church for a weekend and like a good preacher's kid. I would have been about nine years of age. I was sitting on the front row and I could, as I tell you this, I couldn't visualize it happening. He came down the aisle and here's this empty Pew, with just me in it, and he comes over and he sits down closely, introduces himself. My name is Vernon Grounds. What's your name? I'm Gordon. Gordon, tell me about yourself. And for 15 minutes he paid me at nine year old ultimate dignity. When most adults talk to you, with baby

talk. He talked to me like a peer, and I loved him for it. And then he got up and he preached and we're talking about something that happened 70 years ago. I can tell you what he preached about. It was the first time I heard a sermon and understood it and I remember sitting there as he was preaching to the Colossians 1. All things are yours. And listening as he talked about, the world's music is yours. The world's beauty on the canvas, it's yours, the scientific laboratory, it's yours. These are gifts from God. Go into those places and bring Jesus with you, that's what he was preaching that night. And I'm hearing this for the first time as a nine year old and I never, never lost my love for him, for the memory of that encounter. And I think that's what he brought to the campus. He had a way of dignifying everybody, no matter where you were on that or where you were in life, you were important to him. And the Seminary picked that ethos up over the years.

Dr. Don Payne: Right. I can see that. That leads me to ask you, maybe on a somewhat lighter note about the, some of the quirkiness of his personality, those of us who, who had the privilege of knowing him, even if not nearly as well as you did. Everybody seems to have a sort of collection of Vernon isms, these quirky things he would say that were at one in the same time, so deeply personal and humanizing, and really funny, and sometimes odd. But what I want to, I want to get a few of your favorite anecdotes.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: I knew you were going to ask me that, and I've been searching my mind for the last 24 hours to remember some of them, and I'm not doing very, very well, but they were there and they were the bushel loads. You rarely ever left his presence without two or three good laughs because he was a master of the English language. To this day, I am the hard pressed to think of any but maybe a few English linguistic scholars and stuff. He had a way of turning the English language in a beautiful way. But these humorous statements would come up. And like, for example, if my wife Gail and I were meeting him on the sidewalk, he would come up and he might grab both of your arms like this, pull you in. And then he would say to Gail, is this man of yours treating you well? He's being good to you like you deserve, isn't he? And if he isn't, here's my phone number. I want you to call me. And it would be crazy comments like that, or engaging the stranger as he walked into the restaurant. He had ways of saying things that just knock people off their guard, in class, he had a way, some people would call it a put down humor, but it really wasn't, it didn't deny the dignity class, you probably saw a little of it, he would somehow just pick on somebody and say, well, now the rest of this class will understand this, but, but you Don probably will struggle with this a little bit. And he would say it in a way that made you laugh and you knew the spirit with which he was speaking. But you're right, everybody does have a Vernon ism of one type.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: He on the old campus, as I've told you before, he, he had the custom of just walking around. When he was Chancellor, he would wander around and harass people and love on them as people enjoy saying, and he would, if your door, if your office door was a bit ajar, he would not walk. He would not knock. He would simply walk in. And he did that to me several times. And I remember one

occasion where I said to, I forget what I was thinking about, but I said to him that I would like to get together with him at some point and pick his brain about a few things. And he said, well all right, the file cabinets full, but sometimes I'm having trouble getting the drawers open. So, so spontaneous and, and yet witty. Okay. So what's the deal with the cane? So for now, for listeners who've been on our campus and been back to the back of the library to the Vernon Grounds reading room. They probably noticed a lot of canes mounted on the exterior wall to the reading room, which is I believe only about a third of the canes he owned.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: I have one of them at home, he gave me one when he.

Dr. Don Payne: Tell us about the canes.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: As I remember the canes really started without any design or strategy. Somebody gave him a cane one day and it was in the office and somebody else came to visit and noticed the cane and said, I have one like this. And the next time they came around there were two canes and people saw the two canes and the next moment, you knew they were three. And Vernon said to me one day about the canes, he said I guess everybody's trying to be nice to me, but I can't figure out what I'm going to do with it. I mean, so it was something that just, it happened spontaneously. And that's my understanding of the story.

Dr. Don Payne: How many of you think he owned?

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Oh, there had to be several hundred. I would think so.

Dr. Don Payne: From around the world. There were some very exotic.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Missionaries would send them from various countries they were working in, or somebody went off on some round the world trip and they'd brought a cane home for Vernon. So I don't know how many have been, you know, he gave away a number of them. And I have a beautifully carved, hand carved cane, I believe it's from Africa. And in fact, I almost brought it with me this week because of my leg being a little bit, an undependable. And Gail said, why don't you take Vernon's cane? Well, I decided not to but it was there for the taking if I wanted to. You know, I'd like to add, you didn't ask me in such a way that I, I would've offered this, but I, I can't close a conversation on Vernon without saying it. He really was the master of the human touch. He couldn't talk to you a very long without touching you.

Dr. Don Payne: I remember that.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: If I was Vernon and you were Gordon and we were sitting like this talking, this, this would, you know, to make a point, he'd do this or that. And the touch, was never inappropriate to male or female, it was the kind of touch that you realized was a touch of affection, a touch of commitment to you. And everybody

experiences, if you walked across the campus with you, he most likely would link his arm. As like a father might be taking a bride down the aisle and you'd walk together in that intimacy.

Dr. Don Payne: And he would pull you in close.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: He would pull you in close. And, I watched that for years and it became a part of a lot of the way I engaged with people. And, it's interesting and I'm sure, he and I never talked about it, but you feel some people stiffen, when you touch them, you put a hand on the shoulder. Sometimes with an older person, I, I watched him, he'd go like this to a cheek, just take three or four fingers and just graze the cheek in an affectionate way. He, he had these touches and I saw them, and it became a part of my pastoral connection with people. But you feel sorry for people who for some reason or another in life, have experienced something negative and they don't want anybody to touch them. And I don't think God made us that way. I think God made for us to be able to connect in a physical way. And Vernon was the master of it. He knew just how to do it and add to that he was the master of the questions. He was a surgeon who knew how to take you deeper and deeper and deeper into yourself and you found yourself discovering things through his questions, which were invaluable. And I'm not sure that was just a psychologist at work. You asked about the psychological theme here. Yeah. That comes out of Vernon and a few of his devotees who teamed up with them and made that happen. But he saw life as bigger than just some spiritual problems. He saw life through the eyes of the physician, and his questions were designed to help you to see things about yourself you were not seeing. And I was the target of many of those questions and probably made me a different man. Every once in awhile, it doesn't happen as much now because we're all in our upper years. But I've been someplace in the country or even in Europe to speak and somebody will come up afterwards and say, I knew Vernon and today I saw him in you. And I'd say, well, what do you mean by that? Well, when you said that sentence, you said it the way he would've said it, or when you made that gesture, I saw Vernon in that and I would go away over and over again thinking to myself, what better compliment could I resign? And someone would see this father in me, father of mine in me.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Well, I know you, you said many times, either to me or in my presence, and you alluded to it today, that he became an aspiration of yours, to be as much like Vernon as you possibly could. And on behalf of the Seminary community, I want to tell you, because I don't know if other people tell you this, but you succeeded. You really have.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: You're good, that's an ultimate compliment.

Dr. Don Payne: You really, you truly have. Now you're not quite as quirky as he was, but in every significant way you have succeeded. So this, this like always has been a great treat. Thanks for it.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Thank you, Don.

Dr. Don Payne: On behalf of the whole Seminarian and all of our listeners, wherever they are, thanks for helping us get to know something of who we are as a Denver Seminary community by seeing this whole community through Vernon's eyes, through seeing Vernon through your eyes. I do want to recommend for our listeners if you are not aware of this and have not come across this, the biography of Vernon Grounds called, Transformed By Love. This was written a few years back by our longtime church history professor Bruce Shelley. And it's a wonderful read. I assume it's still in print, Discovery House Publishers. If not in print, I'm sure lots of used copies are available. So I really want to commend this to readers to get in touch with even some more of the details in the industry. Gordon, thank you.

Dr. Gordon MacDonald: Thank you.

Dr. Don Payne: And we look forward to talking to you next week.