

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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Biblical research and trust in the Scriptures are two sides of the same coin

Welcoming address by Thomas Schirmmacher on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the STH Basel

(Bonn, 22.12.2020) Thomas Schirmmacher, in a very personally worded welcoming address on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the State Independent Theological University of Basel [Staatsunabhängige Theologische Hochschule Basel] (STH), reminiscing about his time as a student and later as a professor, emphasised that the STH Basel had focused on exegetical research and the significance of the Old Testament, of Judaism and of Israel.

He also emphasised that the STH Basel distinguishes herself not only through her exegetical work, but also through the interconnection with the results of non-theological sciences. This is an expression of the fact that scientific, historical research on the biblical text and trust in the Bible are two sides of the same coin. “The STH thus proves that intensive, often laborious scientific research on the one hand and an almost childlike trust in God’s revelation in Jesus Christ and his Holy Scriptures on the other are two sides of the same coin,” Schirmmacher literally said.



The 50th anniversary event of the STH Basel during the welcoming speech by Thomas Schirmmacher © BQ/Martin Warnecke

The German professor of systematic theology, Prof. Dr. Rolf Hille, retired pastor and longterm head of the Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance, highlighted four ways of God’s speaking in his keynote address on “The Word of God, the Ground of All Being and All Knowledge”: the powerful Word that created heaven and

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earth, the effective Word in God's dealings with his people, the Word becoming flesh in Jesus of Nazareth and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Addressing the graduates in particular, Prof. Dr. Hille reminded them that the Word of God always creates new faith in us when we study it and pass it on. The Bible is and remains the living Word of God! Hille explained in detail in his lecture that the Bible as a whole is God's Word because the Holy Spirit inspired this and only this Word. If we have one special characteristic, it is that we take in the Scriptures in such a way that they can shape our innermost being and change us into His likeness.



Prof. Dr. Rolf Hille during his keynote speech 50 years STH Basel © BQ/ Martin Warnecke

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Maier, former Bishop of the Protestant Church of Württemberg from 2001 to 2005, has been associated with the STH Basel for 50 years. As the then director of the Albrecht Bengel Haus in Tübingen, his concern, like Samuel Külling's, was to strive for a fundamental renewal of theology out of trust in God's inspired Word, and not merely to apply new patches to an old garment. He added provocatively: "The question of the Word of God and the trust it deserves will probably drive us further and further apart. Moreover, large parts of the evangelical mainstream are apparently about to change sides."

Appendix: humorous features from the STH Basel newsletter report

"In a humorous quiz covering the 50-year history of the STH Basel, alumnus Prof. Dr. Schirmmacher, Prof. Dr. Harald Seubert, Professor of Philosophy, Religious Studies and Missiology at the STH Basel, and student Simona Lempen – representing the student body – competed in a thrilling duel over three rounds. In the end, Thomas Schirmmacher won by a nose but well-deservedly, also due to the help of 'his' audience joker. Schirmmacher pledged to record his victory on his Wikipedia profile for posterity."

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Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** The 50th anniversary event of the STH Basel during the welcoming speech by Thomas Schirmmacher © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 2:** Thomas Schirmmacher in conversation with Bishop Prof. Dr. Gerhard Maier © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 3:** Prof. Dr. Rolf Hille during his keynote speech 50 years STH Basel © BQ/ Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 4:** The 50th anniversary event of STH Basel during the welcoming speech by Thomas Schirmmacher with the photo of the founder of STH Basel, Samuel Külling © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 5:** The historic photo: Thomas and Christine Schirmmacher in conversation with the founder of the STH Basel, Samuel Külling © Thomas Schirmmacher
- **Photo 6:** Thomas Schirmmacher: Welcoming address 50 years STH © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 7 and photo 8:** Thomas Schirmmacher, as alumni, wins the prize of a humorous quiz among faculty, students and alumni and pledges to list it in Wikipedia © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- Opening speech Schirmmacher on Youtube (in German): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MteDk78pp8o>
- Power Point picture gallery for the opening address ([pdf](#))
- The opening address (in German) ([pdf](#))
- Welcoming address Bischof Prof. Dr. Gerhard Maier (in German): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euXJnWXIBB8>
- Celebratory speech Prof. Dr. Rolf Hille (in German): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBaHR6dsP08>
- Press release on the anniversary (in German): <https://sthbasel.ch/medien-50-jahre-sth-basel/>
- Pictures and videos of the anniversary: <https://sthbasel.ch/bilder-videos-der-jubilaeumsfeier-und-dem-dies-academicus-2020/>
- Newsletter report of the STH Basel (in German): <https://sthbasel.ch/50-jahre-sth-basel-weise-haeupter-und-motivierte-studenten/>

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