

# MINISTRY &

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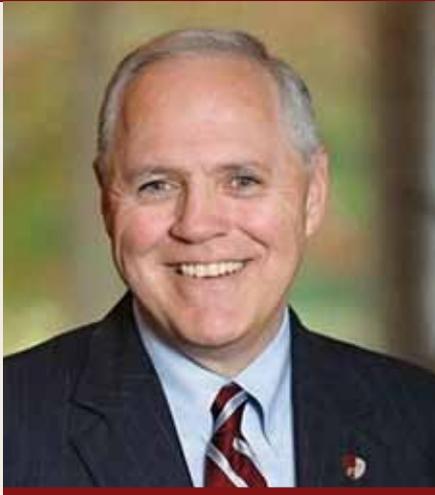
WINTER 2012  
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# LEADERSHIP



## the MANGER AND THE CHRISTMAS PLAY

THE HUMILIATION OF JESUS' BIRTH  
FORESHADOWS THAT OF HIS DEATH.



Chancellor and CEO

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### WHO WE ARE

Reformed Theological Seminary exists to serve the church by preparing its leaders through a globally accessible program of theological education based on the authority of the inerrant Word of God and committed to the Reformed faith. This program promotes biblical fidelity, confessional integrity and academic excellence, and seeks to prepare students marked by “A mind for truth. A heart for God.”

As such, Ministry & Leadership exists to show how God is working through the ministries of its graduates, faculty members and students.

## Lessons for a World in Need

**W**e live in an era that popular British historian Niall Ferguson called *The War of the World*, the title of his 800-plus-page 2007 epic (worth the effort). Ferguson sees a continuation today of the global conflicts that began in 1914 in Europe. Taken with the late Samuel Huntington’s classic *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, where future wars are shaped by cultural and religious divisions, and the recent uprisings against American embassies, the assassination of an American ambassador in Libya, and other attacks on Western embassies, and escalating terrorist attacks around the world, the global landscape seems far removed from any hopes of a global utopia.

Many fear that Huntington’s clash will break out to other hot spots in Asia and Africa, and that Ferguson’s War of the World shows no sign of cease-fire. This I do not know, except there will be “wars and rumors of wars...” I look at the issues, conflicts, questions and problems of the world and of individuals, and inquire into Scripture, through prayer and reflection, “What adversaries are here that seek to destroy the soul and prevent the advance of the kingdom of God?” And trustingly I ask, “Lord, how do I apply Your Word in such days?”

At RTS we are preparing pastors, missionaries, counselors and teachers to look beneath the presenting issues of the day and ask those questions too. But we don’t just teach students to “think critically.” We intend to teach them *to think and to speak biblically*.

In this I am most optimistic. Our optimism for the future is not grounded in political elections, as important as our recent presidential election was. Whether you are encouraged or dismayed by the U.S. presidential elections, I invite you to a hope in a victory that transcends all others.

The gospel of Jesus Christ declares that the ruling motif of the cross is the guarantee of victory through the very weapons forged to come against us. This expression of the Christian faith is summed up by King David in Psalm 27:11: “Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.” In that Soldier’s Psalm, David reflects on the ways of the Lord in his own life, struggling with how sanctification, growth in grace, knowledge of Him and spiritual stability came about. He concludes that teaching and spiritual stability came to him because of his enemies.

This is the ruling motif of the cross. This is where the devil is defeated — Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, causes

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Ministry & Leadership promotes RTS through articles designed to edify its readers through solid biblical instruction, and through reports that focus primarily on the national and global impact of RTS students, faculty and alumni. Our goal is that readers will become partners with RTS through prayer, financial giving, educational experience and student referral, as well as providing placement opportunities.

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## TRAVEL

**Dr. James Anderson** will speak at the men's retreat at Sycamore Presbyterian Church, Midlothian, Va., March 2-4, on "Practical Apologetics."

**Bruce Baugus** will host an RTS-sponsored conference on "China's Reforming Churches" to be held in the Washington, D.C., area, Jan. 2-4.



**Dr. Richard P. Belcher Jr.** will speak on the historicity of Adam at the Northwest Georgia Presbytery meeting at Grace

Presbyterian Church, Douglasville, Ga., Jan. 26, and at the Spring Conference of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, March 13-15, Taylors, S.C.

**Dr. Steve Childers** will be a plenary speaker at the North American Global Church Advancement conference, Orlando, Fla., Jan. 22-25.

**Dr. John Currid** will present a paper at the Evangelical Theological Society meetings in Milwaukee, Nov. 14, titled "Knowing the Will of the Gods: Divine Intervention in Ancient Egypt."

**Dr. Don Fortson** will teach an eight-week Sunday school class on the Protestant Reformation at Christ Covenant Church, Matthews, N.C., Jan. 6–Feb. 24.

**Dr. Mark D. Futato** will lead a weekend conference on the Book of Psalms at Christ the King Presbyterian Church, Vero Beach, Fla., Mar. 1-3.

**Dr. Sam Larsen** (emeritus) will teach a modular course on missions and evangelism at Ligonier Academy, Sanford, Fla., Jan. 21-25.

**Dr. Bruce Lowe** will present on James 2:18 at the Society of Biblical Literature, Chicago, Nov. 17-20, within the program's unit on "Letters of James, Peter and Jude." He will also speak for a missions weekend at Christ Community Church, Helena, Ala., Feb. 23-24.

**Dr. Michael Milton** preached from John 17 at the Annual Bible Conference, Clinton, S.C., Nov. 17-18. He will present a paper titled "Challenges, Restrictions, and Opportunities in Distance Education for Professional Graduate Level Schools" at the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools meeting, Dallas, Dec. 11. Dr. Milton will represent RTS at the annual conference for the Fellowship of Evangelical Seminary Presidents, Scottsdale, Ariz., Jan. 2-5. He will attend the annual Convention of the National Conference of Religious Broadcasters, Nashville, Tenn., March 2-5. While in Nashville, he will preach morning services at Covenant Presbyterian Church on March 3.

**Dr. Andrew Peterson** will also speak along with Dr. Milton at the SACS meeting on Dec. 11 in Dallas. Their talk is titled: "iLearn . . . Challenges, Constraints and Possibilities in Professional Graduate Education."

**Dr. Don Sweeting** preached four services at Wooddale Church, Eden Prairie, Minn., Sept. 29-30 and Oct. 6-7. He will also be the commencement speaker for Belhaven University (Orlando campus) on Dec. 6 at RTS-Orlando.

**Dr. Derek Thomas** spoke at the Scottish Northern Convention, Oct. 1-5; the Reformation Conference, Cheyenne, Wyo., Oct. 12-14; the Reformation Worship Conference, Powder Springs, Ga., Oct. 18-20; the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Conference on Preaching, Princeton, N.J., Nov. 1-3; and Solas, Quakertown, N.J., Nov. 9-10.

**Dr. Guy Waters** will speak at the China's Reforming Churches and Presbyterian Polity conference in the Washington, D.C., area, Jan. 2-4; the winter seminar for Hillcrest Presbyterian Church, Volant, Pa., Feb. 9-10; and the Growing Reformed Churches Conference at First United Reformed Church, Chino, Calif., March 22-23.

## TRAVEL (INTERNATIONAL)

**Dr. Steve Childers** will teach applied theology to Asian pastors at Southeast Asia Bible Seminary, Malang, Indonesia, Feb. 4-8.

## PUBLICATIONS

**Dr. Richard P. Belcher Jr.** has written *Genesis: The Beginning of God's Plan of Salvation* (Christian Focus, Nov.).

**Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III** wrote "Do We Take Eternal Suffering Seriously?" in *The Record* (Aug. 2011), contributed "Baptism and the Lord's Supper" to *The Gospel as Center* (Crossway, 2012), contributed "The Sufficient Word of God" to *Solid Ground* (P&R Publishing, 2012) and contributed "Some Things to Look For and Wrestle With" to *Preaching and Preachers: 40th Anniversary Edition* (Zondervan, 2012).

**Dr. John Frame's** comments on Schaeffer and Van Til will be published in the 25th issue of *Credo*, an online magazine.



**Dr. Chuck Hill** has released a paperback edition of his book *Who Chose the Gospels? Probing the Great Gospel Conspiracy*.

**Dr. Bruce Lowe** contributed "Patronage and Benefaction: A 'Semiotic' Reconsideration"

as the fourth chapter in *Paul and His Social Relations* (Brill, 2012).



**Dr. Michael Milton's** sermon "Am I a Soldier for the Cross?" will be published in *Preaching*. He has also written

*Finding a Vision for Your Church: Assembly Required* (Oct.) and *Silent No More: A Biblical Call for the Church to Speak to State and Culture* (Oct.).

**Dr. Don Sweeting's** blog post "Reflecting on the Protestant Decline in America" was published on thegospelcoalition.org in October. His book *How to Finish the Christian Life* is now in its second printing.

**Dr. Derek Thomas** wrote "A Comparative Study of Baptism in the Westminster Confession, Savoy Declaration and 1689 Baptist Confession" for the fall issue of *Foundations*.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Dr. Michael J. Kruger** has been appointed president at RTS-Charlotte, effective Jan. 1. Dr. Kruger is currently professor of New Testament and academic dean at RTS-Charlotte. Follow his blog at [michaelfkruger.com](http://michaelfkruger.com).

**Dr. Michael Milton** is joining representatives from Gordon-Conwell and Southern Baptist theological seminaries in offering pastoral and writing support for My Hope, a national crusade launching November 2013. It is designed to support small-group evangelism in America as part of an effort by the Billy

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# The MANGER AND THE CHRISTMAS PLAY

## THE HUMILIATION OF JESUS' BIRTH FORESHADOWS THAT OF HIS DEATH.

*“And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed” (Luke 2:1, King James Version).*

**T**hese are the opening words of Luke 2, recounting the birth of Jesus and also providing the opening words of the annual Christmas play at my boyhood church in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Even as an adult, reading these words from the Gospel of Luke almost always bring my mind back to that play. In fact, I still “hear” these words of Scripture in the distinctive voice of Ms. McMannus, whose assignment it was every year to narrate the play, and yes, she read in the majestic King James Version.

Every year we would have the same basic Christmas play, acted out by the Sunday school children. Ms. McMannus would sequentially read small sections of Scripture, and the children would portray with props and in costumes the section that she had just read. I was probably in this play from ages 5 to 15. As a younger child, I was a shepherd, then moved up to a wise man, then became the innkeeper. However, I never made it to the pinnacle, which was Joseph.

Part of the play included placing baby Jesus in a manger: “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7, KJV). I did not realize until I was an adult, though, that I had mis-

understood the significance of the manger as it relates to the Christmas story.

The biblical text itself emphasizes the manger, and it is a shocking emphasis. Before the reader of Luke gets to chapter 2, one realizes that God the Father is orchestrating various events related to John the Baptist and Jesus. In fact, Mary and the reader are told that Jesus will be called the “Son of the Highest” and given the “throne of his father David” and “of his kingdom there will be no end” (1:32-33, KJV). Also, there are hints that Jesus will not have all the pomp and circumstances of an earthly king, as the selection of Joseph and Mary implies.

Luke 2:1-7 begins with the worldwide decree from Caesar Augustus for a tax. This taxation process results in Joseph and pregnant Mary, who are in Nazareth, traveling to their ancestral city, which is Bethlehem. The reader realizes that God’s providence has made even Caesar contribute to having Jesus born in Bethlehem, the city that the Old Testament predicted would be the birthplace of the Messiah (Micah 5:2, John 7:42).

In Luke 2:7, the reader learns that Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in “swaddling clothes.” So far, so good. Nothing unusual here. But then the reader is told that Mary “laid him in a manger.” That is, Jesus was laid in a type of animal feeding trough. Now, for the first time, the reader realizes that this was not a normal birth in a home. In fact, the whole birth event took place in an animal shelter!

Yes, Mary was not an earthly queen, but what an unexpected shock to learn that Jesus was born in a stable. This type of humbling birth is an intentional foreshadowing of



Jesus' humiliating death. Our shock at the birth and even more so at the death of Christ reveals our sense of amazement that God in Christ would do this — for us and for our salvation.

In reading several of the early church fathers' comments on Luke 2:7, I observed that virtually all of them were fixated on the word manger. They would wax eloquently about how God the Son, with infinite glory, could be born in such a lowly situation. This simply increased their amazement of the love of God for sinners. For example, Gregory Thaumaturgus (A.D. 213-270) wrote in his *Four Homilies*:

**“She laid in a manger Him who sits above the cherubim, and is praised by myriads of angels. In a manger set apart for dumb brutes did the Word of God repose, in order that He might impart to men, who are really irrational by free choice, the perceptions of true reason.”**

In the Christmas play, every year the manger was the same wooden, slatted baby crib that came from my house (we lived near the church.) Straw would be put in the bottom of the crib. A doll, usually my sister's, would be wrapped in a white, small blanket, and “Mary” placed the doll in the crib.

Being a city boy and always participating in this play, I thought that a “manger” was just another word for a baby crib. I thought the straw was included because in Jesus' day there were no other types of bedding materials. As a boy I did realize that Jesus was born in a stable with animals, as the play and many songs portrayed that. I assumed that



Mary got a regular baby crib from somewhere and brought it to the stable. I simply did not realize that “manger” in Luke 2 meant an animal feeding trough. Also, I was unaware that the biblical text indicated that Jesus was born in an animal stable simply by the word “manger.” (Interestingly, the English word “crib” can mean both a feeding trough or something a human baby is placed in. The Greek word for “manger,” *phatne*, clearly only refers to animals.)

Even as a young adult I was still confused. Several times while visiting couples who had a newborn and a fancy wooden crib, I would comment, “That is a very nice manger.” Yes, I got odd responses from that remark, but I never

knew why!

All in all, I had the basic story correct; it was the technicalities of “manger” that I was missing. Now, similar to the church fathers, I am fixated on the word “manger” and the implications it brings to the Christmas story.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Glory and Son of God, was born in a manger. This was a foreshadowing of a future humiliation, the cross. All this was intentional by the Triune God to show His love for sinners. The Son who knew no sin was made sin for us. Dur-

ing this Christmas season, may the manger be a reminder to you to put your faith in this Son, as you ponder the depths of humiliation to which Jesus would go for you. **M**

*Dr. Cara is the chief academic officer for RTS as well as Hugh and Sallie Reaves professor of New Testament at RTS-Charlotte. You can contact him at [rcara@rts.edu](mailto:rcara@rts.edu).*

**I THOUGHT  
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BABY CRIB.**

# THE



# OF

# SANCTIFICATION

THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION IS ON THE front burner of discussion in the Bible-believing Christian community. We live in a time of happy renewal of the gospel accent, grace focus and Christ-centeredness of the preaching on this doctrine in our theological neck of the woods. This is a wonderful thing, for which we rejoice.

But this new emphasis has brought its own challenges. What do we do with sanctification (growth in maturity and obedience in the Christian life)? How do we preach the law only as that which convicts of sin and leads us to Christ, but not as a rule of life? How do we handle the prolific “oughts,” “shoulds” and “musts” (commands) of the New Testament? If we say that Christianity proclaims “done,” not “do” (which is a wonderfully true statement about our redemption and justification), how do we relate that to the “do” of our sanctification?

Two passages help us enormously in knowing how to explain and apply the Bible’s copious teaching about sanctification. First, there is Paul’s wonderful benediction in 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”

Paul’s purpose here is to encourage us in the Christian life. In this brief blessing Paul articulates three massive truths:

## 1

### **YOUR SANCTIFICATION, YOUR GROWTH IN GODLINESS, IS THE WORK OF GOD IN YOU.**

Notice that Paul said, “May the God of peace Himself sanctify you.” He did not say, “May God aid you in your

quest for sanctification” or “May God help you sanctify yourself.” No, your God is at work in you for your progress in holiness. And just as your gracious God is more desirous to forgive you than you are to be forgiven, so also God is more interested in your sanctification than you are.

What ought to be our response to this realization? To be committed to and encouraged about progressive sanctification. The logic works this way: If God is so committed to this in my life, then I should be committed to this in my life.

## 2

### **THE GOD WHO IS AT WORK IN YOU IS THE GOD OF TOTAL WELL-BEING AND BLESSING.**

Notice what Paul calls God here: “the God of peace Himself.” He is drawing attention to the significant truth that our God is the God of peace, or *shalom* — that is, total well-being and comprehensive blessing. This is incredibly important, because Satan’s oldest lie is the assertion to Eve and Adam that they could only enjoy blessing and satisfaction and fulfillment in disobeying God. He was essentially denying that God was really the God of all blessedness and the only one in whom that blessedness can be enjoyed. Satan argued that freedom and blessedness would only be found in rebellion, but Adam and Eve soon discovered the bitter truth. Sin did not bring freedom and blessing, but the opposite: bondage and curse.

The only place freedom and blessedness can be enjoyed is in the sphere of obedience to God, who is blessedness and peace in and of Himself. And that is precisely what progres-



sive sanctification is meant to do — increase our present enjoyment of God’s peace and blessedness. Sanctification is for our joy! Your total well-being, your happiness, your satisfaction is inextricably connected to sanctification. That’s why the God of total well-being is irreversibly and indefatigably committed to your sanctification — because he wants your total well-being, happiness and satisfaction.

### 3

**IT IS GOD’S PURPOSE TO MAKE YOU COMPLETELY PERFECT IN THE END AND TO BEGIN THAT WORK NOW.**

When Paul says, “May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely” and “May your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless,” he is praying for the comprehen-

YOU CAN AND WILL  
MAKE PROGRESS  
IN DRIVING SIN FROM  
YOUR LIFE.

sive sanctification of believers, starting now. He looks for believers to be finally, completely perfected (not in this life, of course — see “at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”), but he looks for that work to begin in this life as a fore-

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# PASTOR AND SCHOLAR: AN RTS DISTINCTIVE

Dr. Ligon Duncan and Dr. Derek Thomas

**A DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF RTS IS THE IDEA OF** the professor as both a pastor and a scholar — being firmly planted in both the academic world and the life of the local church. Dr. Ligon Duncan and Dr. Derek Thomas serve as two examples of RTS professors who take both the pastor and scholar role literally, fulfilling their professorships while filling high-profile pastoral positions.

In January, Dr. Duncan was appointed as John E. Richards professor of systematic and historical theology at RTS-Jackson after having been an adjunct faculty member for many years. He has assumed this role while continuing as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Jackson.

“[Dr. Duncan’s] appointment is a tremendous blessing of God to RTS,” says Dr. Michael Milton, RTS chancellor and CEO, “but even more to the larger church. He is a pastor and a scholar who models what we trust and pray the Lord will

produce here at RTS.”

“This appointment is a great answer to our prayers,” adds Guy Richardson, president of RTS-Jackson. “Not only is [Dr. Duncan] greatly respected worldwide for his academic scholarship, he is equally known for his warm and wise pastoral leadership and his friendliness to both students and colleagues alike.”

As Dr. Duncan continues in his new position at RTS-Jackson, Dr. Derek Thomas continues with a transition from the Jackson campus to RTS-Atlanta while holding down a pastorate. In June, Dr. Thomas was appointed as a professor of systematic and historical theology in Atlanta, while continuing his role as the minister of preaching and teaching at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C.

“Dr. Thomas is exactly what a seminary student should seek in a professor,” says John Sowell, RTS-Atlanta president.



Dr. Ligon Duncan (right) has assumed the professor role at RTS-Jackson previously held by Dr. Derek Thomas (left).

## DR. DUNCAN AND DR. THOMAS ARE FIRMLY PLANTED IN THE ACADEMIC WORLD AND THE LOCAL CHURCH.

“Not only is he a careful and widely published scholar, he is every bit as much a practicing pastor as he is an academic.” Dr. Thomas pastored for 17 years in Belfast, Northern Ireland, before returning to the U.S. in 1996 where, besides serving as Dr. Duncan’s predecessor as John E. Richards

professor of systematic and practical theology, he served alongside him at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson as the minister of teaching.

“At RTS we desire our faculty to be both pastors and scholars with a love for Christ’s church and experience in the pulpit and parish, to shape the hearts and minds of the next generation of shepherds,” says Dr. Milton. “[Dr. Thomas] is just such a man. We thank FPC Columbia for sharing his gifts with RTS.” — *Paul Schwarz*

*To read about Dr. Duncan and Dr. Thomas’ participation in the inauguration of Dr. Milton as RTS chancellor, see page 10.*

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taste of its final reality. To paraphrase John Newton, “We are not what we ought to be, might be, wish to be, hope to be, nor what we one day will be, but, by the grace of God, we are not what we once were, and we are what we are.”

In a second great passage, Philippians 2:12-13, Paul emphasizes both God’s sovereignty and our responsibility in sanctification: “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” This is one of the most important passages in the entire Bible about sanctification.

First, Paul highlights our responsibility: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” What in the world does Paul mean? Does he mean that we must somehow save ourselves by our own works? *No!* Look at the context: It is about our following Jesus’ example, not so that we will be converted or justified, but so that we will be more like Jesus! Paul’s argument is that *we are to pursue godliness because God is at work in us for godliness*. He is giving you an encouragement from God that you *can* and *will* make progress in driving sin from your life. Paul’s teaching is not that God accepts you so no change is necessary, but that God accepts you and therefore change is now possible.

Note the flow of Paul’s argument:

**Continue to obey** — “as you have always obeyed . . .” Notice how Paul asserts here that obedience is a vital, normal and essential part of the Christian life.

**Let your salvation show in the way you live,** demonstrate it in your life — “work out your own salvation . . .” Whatever else Paul means here, he clearly expects us to be active, and not merely passive, in living out the Christian life.

**Because God is at work in you** — “for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Paul is stressing the sovereignty of God in our sanctification here! His point is that we are to be encouraged precisely because God is at work in us. According to Paul, God’s work in us should not lead us to laziness and inactivity, but to exertion.

To paraphrase John Piper, Paul’s point is that the sovereignty of God in our salvation and sanctification is not permission for passivity, but a reason to hope. The sovereignty of God makes us hopeful that change is possible, not passive as if no change were necessary.

And that’s why sanctification is good news: There is hope. And where there is hope, there is joy. **M**

*Dr. Duncan is the John E. Richards professor of systematic and historical theology at RTS-Jackson and senior minister at the historic First Presbyterian Church in Jackson.*

Dr. Michael Milton is formally installed as RTS chancellor and CEO.

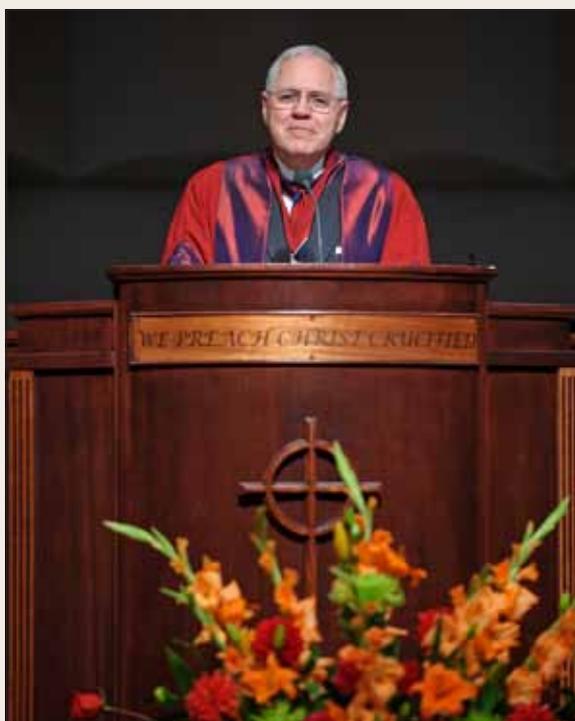
# INAUGURATION DAY

by Paul Schwarz

**O**ON THE SURFACE, Friday, September 14, was just like any typical not-quite-summer-anymore day in Charlotte (Matthews, N.C., to be exact). But though the temperatures in the 80s and the touch of humidity may have been no meteorological surprise, something special was in the air that day, particularly for the RTS family.

Hundreds of RTS faculty members, staff members, students and friends converged on Covenant Presbyterian Church for the inauguration of Dr. Michael Milton as the new chancellor and CEO of the seminary. Fittingly enough, many of the same people had filled the same sanctuary nearly four years ago to the day for Dr. Milton's inauguration as president of RTS-Charlotte. On this day, though, they came to celebrate a new calling in the life of a "wounded orphan, a prodigal son and a young man in search of meaning," as he described himself in his inaugural address.

Dr. Milton also told the assemblage that this was actually his fourth inauguration as RTS chancellor, explaining that the first one took place when Dr. Ric Cannada, his predecessor as chancellor, took him to visit Frank Horton, one of the founding board members of RTS. "As Mr. Horton prayed," Dr. Milton recounted, "he was so caught up in the reality of being before God's throne, and his prayer language so intense, I opened an eye to make



sure I was still in his living room and not in the throne room! When he finished, I told them, "Whatever inauguration happens after this will be the second, for this was the first."

The second inauguration, as Dr. Milton describes it, took place on a retreat in the North Carolina mountains with the RTS campus presidents and chancellor's officers, with the third being when the RTS Board of Trustees laid hands on him and prayed for him the day before the formal inauguration. He told these stories to make a point that the day's festivities were not about one person, but "about God's work through us, through His movement of the Holy Spirit in concert with so many others here."

In acknowledgement of the Spirit's work through his predecessors, the ceremony included recognition of the past presidents/chancellors of the seminary. Dr. Luder Whitlock and Dr. Cannada received honorary medals, and Dr. Milton devoted much attention in his address to the role of the late Rev. Sam Patterson in founding RTS.

The events of the day reached well beyond the immediate RTS family, though. Many leaders in the world of theological education joined in the celebration, not only through attendance but also through the active exchange of insights into the role of the seminary as an institution in the life of the church at large. Dr. Robert Cara, RTS chief academic officer and RTS-Charlotte profes-



## NUGGETS FROM THE SCHOLARS FORUM

Dr. Peter Lillback (above, second from right), president of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, makes a point during the Scholars Forum held prior to the inauguration service.

sor, moderated a Scholars Forum featuring (including Dr. Cannada) 11 other distinguished men:

**Dr. Bryan Chapell,**  
chancellor of Covenant Theological Seminary

**Dr. Ligon Duncan,**  
recently appointed professor at RTS-Jackson  
(see page 6)

**Dr. Robert Godfrey,**  
president of Westminster Theological Seminary  
in California

**Dr. George Grant,**  
senior pastor of Parish Presbyterian Church,  
Franklin, Tenn.

**Dr. Peter Lillback,**  
president of Westminster in Philadelphia

**Dr. Samuel Logan,**  
president of World Reformed Fellowship

**Dr. Albert Mohler,**  
president of the Southern Baptist Theological  
Seminary

**John Muether,**  
professor of church history at RTS-Orlando

**Dr. Michael Ross,** pastor of the host church

**Dr. Derek Thomas,**  
recently appointed professor at RTS-Atlanta  
(see page 8)

*Dr. Derek Thomas, longtime RTS-Jackson professor now at RTS-Atlanta (see page 8), participated on one of the two panels comprising the Scholars Forum at Dr. Michael Milton's inauguration as RTS chancellor. When forum moderator Dr. Robert Cara (RTS chief academic officer and RTS-Charlotte professor) asked Dr. Thomas how the scholarship of the seminary professor should affect students and the church, here was the reply (adapted and edited for publication):*

I'M AN UNASHAMED Calvinist, so I have five points. The first point is that seminary professor scholarship should produce an infectious love for theology. When people ask me what I do, if I say I'm a seminary professor, or if I say I teach systematic theology, there's a mist that descends. So I use the line from William Perkins that "theology is the science of living blessedly forever." I am teaching people how to be truly happy. One of the ways that seminaries ought to test whether they're doing their job properly is: Are we creating in students a love and a zeal for good, sound theology? One of my No. 1 goals is to make people fall in love with theology.

Secondly, scholarship serves godliness. J.I. Packer once wrote that theologies that cannot be sung are wrong at a very deep level. So whatever I'm teaching, I have to say, "If this doesn't put a song in my mouth . . ." We professors need to demonstrate by our own lives how our scholarship actually makes us more godly. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the best scholarship makes me fall down and worship and sing the praises of my God.

Thirdly, we need to demonstrate a form of scholarship

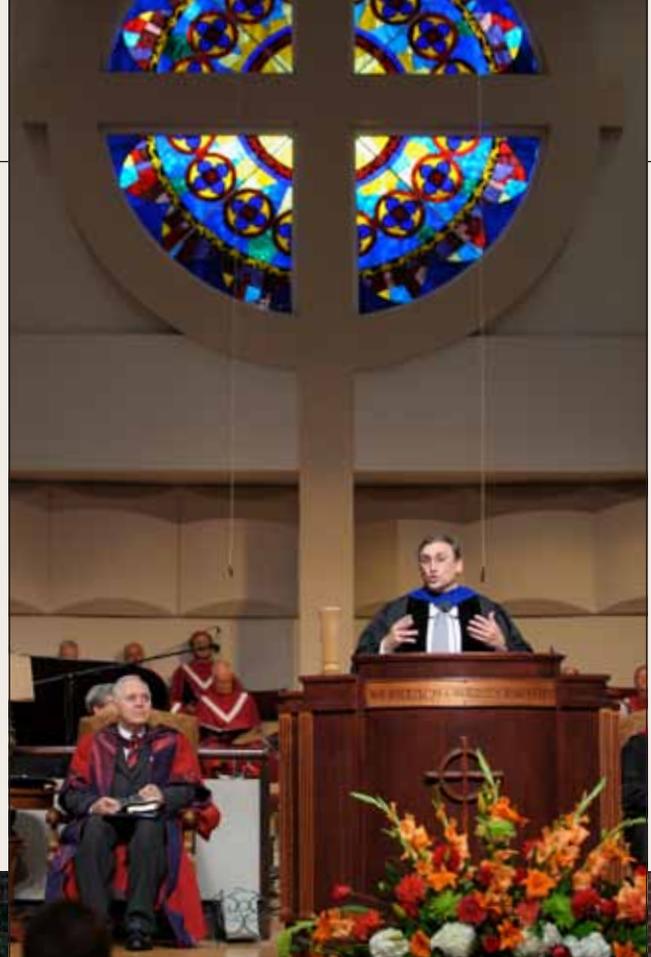


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Dr. Robert Cara (right, speaking at lectern), RTS chief academic officer and RTS-Charlotte professor, moderated the Scholars Forum and participated in the inaugural service.



Continued from Page 11

In two separate panels, the men addressed the theme “Minds and Hearts Aflame: How the Seminary Must Serve the Church Today.” One session addressed the role of the seminary and the church, while the other covered the seminary and the church’s global mission.

The panelists spoke to a host of issues, including how best to make the most of technology. Dr. Mohler created one of the forum’s occasional humorous moments when he gave an analogy from medicine to illustrate the disconnect between excessive hype surrounding online edu-

cation and the necessity of hands-on learning. “I’ll believe it when we see an Internet-trained heart surgeon,” he quipped. (See pages 11 and 13 for an excerpt from the forum, with full audio of the entire inauguration ceremony available on RTS at iTunesU.)

For some inauguration attendees, seeing so many seminary leaders together in one place made a more profound statement than anything the men actually said. “It was wonderful to see the unity, meaningful support and mutual affection between all the presidents of the seminaries represented,” wrote James Midwinter, an RTS-Charlotte student, in a blog post ([savedtobechanged.wordpress.com](http://savedtobechanged.wordpress.com)).



Those in attendance to celebrate with Dr. Milton included his family (above), especially his wife, Mae (third from left).



com) following the ceremony. “They reminded me of fellow soldiers at a reunion. Their specialisms in battle may differ, but they have all given and continue to give everything they have in service of the one and only King of kings, and that unity in heart, mind and purpose was movingly evident.”

In his inaugural sermon, based on 1 Timothy 6:11-16, Dr. Mohler echoed that sentiment: “The faithful church affirms and delights in what’s happening here today.” He went on to charge Dr. Milton to hold to a tension, serving as if he will be the last chancellor of RTS as well as not the last.

Dr. Milton was not the only one to receive a charge

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that provides certainty. It’s too easy for scholarship to serve the interests of doubt, but we need to teach so that our students and the church can pick up their Bible and be absolutely confident that the Bible speaking is God speaking. I just read [RTS-Charlotte professor] Dr. Michael Kruger’s book on canon, which has always been a difficult issue for me. What I got at the end of reading that book is, “I can trust the 66 books of the Bible as the very Word of God.” Now that’s the best kind of scholarship — it gives me certainty.

Fourthly, scholarship should be reverent and obedient. In the very first of John Calvin’s 159 sermons on Job, he says, “It is a great thing to be subject to Almighty God.” At the very beginning he’s telling you what the Book of Job is all about: bowing before the sovereignty of God. There’s profound mystery in scholarship, and you cannot cross that line. You take students up to the line, and then there’s awe. I tell my students, “You can only use the word ‘awesome’ once a year, and you can’t use it for Ben and Jerry’s ice cream, no matter how good that is.” Because if you use it for Ben and Jerry’s, what word do you have left for describing the majesty and greatness of God?

Fifthly, we are to execute a humble scholarship. We need to remember the apostle Paul’s warning and admonition that knowledge puffs up; it has that propensity to bring a sense of arrogance and pride. True knowledge is humble — it’s Jesus-like, bowing in humble acknowledgement that what we know, we only know because God has disclosed it to us. **M**

*To hear the complete audio from Dr. Milton’s inauguration on iTunes, search for Inauguration of the Chancellor.*

at the inaugural. In remarks directed to the entire RTS community, Dr. Shelton Sanford, RTS alumnus and senior pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church in nearby Rock Hill, S.C., reminded everyone of the need to pray for the new chancellor.

In the end, though, amid all the formal expressions of honor, Dr. Milton made a point of making sure everyone remembered that ultimately the day was not about him. “An inauguration is not a coronation,” he reminded everyone. “It’s a consecration.”

Thus marked a day set apart to pay tribute to a man set apart for a distinct task in helping advance the kingdom of God. **M**

## The Seminary and the Church

As president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Dr. Albert Mohler leads one of the largest seminaries in the world. Fittingly, then, his leadership reaches beyond the flagship seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention and into the greater evangelical world. *Time* magazine has called him the “reigning intellectual of the evangelical movement in the U.S.”

Dr. Mohler brought his intellectual rigor to bear in his participation in the Scholars Forum at the inauguration of Dr. Michael Milton as chancellor of RTS, as well as in delivering the inaugural sermon. *M&L* managing editor Paul Schwarz talked with Dr. Mohler about the role of the theological seminary in the contemporary church.



**Q** What is the role of the seminary in the life of the church, and what is not its role?

The goal of the seminary is to come alongside the church and to complement and supplement the local church in the training and preparation of gospel ministers. The seminary has an important role to complement the local church by offering the highest level of academic and scholarly preparation, and supplementing the church by offering expanded educational, scholarly and reflective opportunities for ministers to develop and to prepare for faithfulness.

What the seminary is not is a stand-alone graduate school for professionals. The seminary is also not a hospital for the wounded; we’re not a place for people to come and find themselves.

**Q** What are the implications of this in the life of theological institutions like yours and RTS?

I think the institutional state of theological education is best vocalized in a seminary that is indeed an institution, is certainly a school, and yet sees itself as directly and organically tied to the local church. Thus, without apology we are an academic institution — a school with a campus, buildings, libraries, resident faculty and all the things you would as-

sociate with the highest level of academic and scholarly aspiration. But at the same time we understand that all those things do not themselves make a minister.

**Q** How would you describe the seminary community’s theological responsibility to the church?

The theological responsibility is massive, because in the first place, the assignment of the theological seminary is inescapably and irreducibly theological. That’s not in our name as a matter of convenience, but of mission and identity and assignment. The seminary has a responsibility to be a theological witness, a theological teacher, a theological repository and a theological resource for denominations and churches.

**Q** You’ve been quoted as saying that “the finest theological seminary on earth is absolutely incompetent at replicating the actual life of a gospel congregation.” What do you mean by that?

There’s grave danger in theological seminaries thinking we can replicate the church, providing the ministry formation and experiences that come in the context of the local church. The theological seminary serves the church, but the church

itself is the most important classroom — the most important location of theological education. So the church bears the responsibility to look to theological seminaries to assist in its work, not vice versa.

It's important that seminaries have close ties with the local church and see themselves as a complement and a much-needed resource. For instance, [at Southern] we have teaching pastors out across our constituency and denomination who are raising up pastors, and they send them to us, but they don't send them to us to do the preparation but to build upon what they've already begun and will continue.

*"The moment we begin to look at our confession as an encumbrance or an embarrassment, we set ourselves up for a tremendous fall."* *Dr. Albert Mohler*

**Q** Instead of viewing themselves as competing with each other, how can seminaries work together to help prepare local church pastors for gospel ministry?

Honestly, some of us do not work together because we can only work together with those with whom we share theological and convictional commonality. But within confessional evangelicalism, for example, I think it's important for us to recognize that we are not only scholarly institutions, we are also a community of scholars. So we have a fraternal frame of reference in terms of our faculty, we serve churches that are very similar, and we face similar challenges.

Thus, I'm glad to say that I'm in regular conversation with other seminary presidents and leaders of theological institutions across the board, and I find that not only beneficial, but absolutely necessary. We should encourage each other, support one another, and at times both advise and seek counsel from one another. The spirit of denominational competition has to be a part of the past and not a part of the present and the future. In an increasingly post-Christian age, we desperately need each other, and we can suffer no illusion that we do not.

**Q** Seminaries like to talk about having a mission of training the next generation of leaders for the church. What does that need to entail in order to advance from a mere platitude to an incarnational reality?

I think we have to make sure we actually accomplish our

mission, that we do what the churches have asked us and assigned us to do. That means the proof is always in the pulpit — in the local church. The seminary has to be very careful not to congratulate itself upon its success in turning out graduates, if those graduates are not actually serving as faithful missionaries, ministers and preachers of the gospel.

**Q** You're known to talk about institutional unity and spiritual unity in the body of Christ — what's the difference?

The more liberal model of humanism was an institutional unity created by councils and consortia and any number of organizational relationships. The price for that kind of unity was to sublimate and minimize theology. On the other hand, confessional institutions know both where we agree and where we differ. I'm glad to say we agree on the great, simple doctrines of the Christian faith; in the great gift and achievement of the Reformation; and with the character of confessional theological education. So we share a spiritual unity. We understand that an institutional unity would be at the cost of our own confessional identity. So we see that spiritual unity as a tremendous gift that allows us to be truly faithful.

**Q** As a longtime member of the Southern Baptist Convention, you have extensive firsthand experience in a battle for orthodoxy in the life of a seminary and an entire denomination. What's involved in maintaining that singularity of focus and not drifting into apostasy?

It all comes down to whether confessionalism is understood to be some requirement that's forced upon us, or if we're confessional not only by structure but also by aspiration. We must define ourselves continually in terms of the convictions that frame our existence and our faith, making certain we hire, we teach, we operate, we evaluate, we decide and we function in every way in accordance with that confession.

The moment we begin to look at our confession as an encumbrance or an embarrassment, we set ourselves up for a tremendous fall. The price of orthodoxy is a continual reaffirmation of the commitments that orthodoxy requires, and to that, every seminary must pay heed. **M**

*Dr. Mohler maintains a popular blog at [www.albertmohler.com](http://www.albertmohler.com). For more information about his contributions to Dr. Milton's inauguration, see pages 10-13, or visit iTunes and search for Inauguration of the Chancellor.*

BY PAUL SCHWARZ

# ON A NEW CAMPAIGN

MARTIN SCOTT HAS  
EXCHANGED POLITICS  
FOR CHURCH PLANTING.



## HE DAILY WALKS

began for Martin and Jane Scott several years ago. The recent RTS-Atlanta graduate and his wife began walking for an hour around a local track as an opportunity to better connect with one another, but the walks soon became a life-changing experience.

“When I started seminary in 2008,” Martin explains, “I would come home and we would walk around the track and together we would work out the things [I was learning there] and pray about them.” During this period in their lives, the four-term Georgia state legislator went through a radical change that led him out of the world of politics and into a call to church planting in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Martin’s introduction to the world of political activism began early. “When I finished two years of college, I didn’t have any more money,” Martin recalls. “I loved politics, and in 1992 got an opportunity to work as an independent contractor on a congressional campaign, and my career in politics took off from there.”

Barely into his 20s, the Chattanooga native went from managing one campaign to managing multiple campaigns and becoming a political consultant, which included being a strategist and a fundraiser. Martin continued his business until running for office himself in 2004 at age 32. At that point the Scotts, who had married in 1995, moved from Atlanta to the northwest Georgia suburbs of Chattanooga so Martin could follow through on what he considered a calling from the Lord to

be a state representative.

In the midst of his time in office, though, Martin sensed a change taking place in his heart. From his teenage years to his time in the Georgia legislature, “I went from gospel salvation to irreligious rebellion and then to what I would call religious rebellion,” he observes about his spiritual journey. “I thought that by the passing of laws and by being involved in politics, I was pleasing God with activism. It was a long process where my eyes were opened to see that we were still trying to win the Lord’s favor with our own religious work. He caused us to want to go out and tell people about the love of Jesus, and that’s when I heard the call to preach.”

Martin emphasizes that he’s not making a blanket condemnation of Christian participation in the political realm. “Obviously there’s a role for Christians to be involved in politics,” he clarifies. “I just think the way I approached it was unhealthy. I was probably a bit obsessed

with it. I’ve [also] come to realize that being a church planter, a pastor and a politician — I’m not saying that someone can’t do that, but for me they just did not mix very well.”

As Martin prepares to step completely away from partisan politics by not seeking election to a fifth term, he does see how



his political experience has prepared him for church planting. “Every political campaign is a voluntary association where most of the work gets done purely on a voluntary basis and is cause-driven,” Martin notes. “So my experience in politics and running for office lends itself to being a pastor and a church planter. Obviously a church is not a campaign — I wouldn’t imply that. But that would be a big help.”

Above all, Martin recognizes his need for the Lord’s help in launching a church plant because he’s a self-proclaimed “old geezer” unexpectedly surrounded by a large proportion of college students. River City Church, which began in July 2010, is situated (appropriately enough) near the Tennessee River, four blocks from the Tennessee Aquarium in the city’s tourist district. “At the church I used to go to,” he says, “I was one of the youngest people there, and then all of a sudden I became a church planter and I was the oldest person there! I wasn’t expecting that at all.”

The church began with about 40 people the first Sunday, and as Martin quips, “over the first few months we grew that down to 20 through my incredible preaching,” and then it took about a year to climb back up to 40. Today, River City (part of the Acts 29 church planting network) has an attendance of about 150 during its peak season (attendance dips during the summer, when the students go home).

“Typically a church planter will attract people who are five years younger through about five years older,” Martin explains. “So I was expecting people from about 35 to 45. But that wasn’t the way it happened. I see it as the grace of the Lord that He’s allowed us to plant a church that’s reaching the young population of our city. Obviously we’ve got a long way to go and we’re a relatively small church, but for us, in a two-year period to grow [as we have], we’re excited. And we’re not preaching moralistic therapeutic deism. We just come out and preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ every single Sunday — no lifts and tricks.”

This gospel preaching is beginning to make a difference in the lives of its hearers, as well as those in their sphere of influence. “The gospel message that Martin has shared has taught me that I am just as dirty and in need of a Savior as anyone currently without Him,” says River City member William Stackler. “This changes the way I see people, and it gives me a heartfelt desire to share the good news. We really are dearly loved children who are spotless in our Father’s eyes. This beautiful picture overwhelms me and



PHOTOS BY TEXTURE PHOTO



Martin and his wife, Jane, and their four children (previous page) moved to the Georgia side of the Chattanooga area many years before the planting of River City Church, where he now preaches (above).

produces gratefulness in my life. I am no longer worried about how I am measuring up, because Jesus already paid my debt.”

As Martin and his family walk out their journey from politics to church planting, they — and the people entrusted to their care at River City Church — learn to live in the light of that gospel that has so changed them. **M**

For more information about River City Church, visit [www.rivercity.org](http://www.rivercity.org). More information about the Acts 29 Network can be found at [acts29network.org](http://acts29network.org).

# THE RIGHT CHEMISTRY

A science professor in Idaho pastors a church and studies through the Virtual Campus.

by Paul Schwarz

**IN A GAME OF WORD ASSOCIATION, SAY “IDAHO,”** and the likely response would be “potatoes.” The area surrounding American Falls, Idaho, does little to dispel that image. The town of just under 4,000 people is surrounded by farms that grow their share of the tubers that make the “Gem State” famous.

Potatoes aren’t all that’s growing in and around American Falls, though — so are the spiritual lives of an increasing number of its residents. This work of the Spirit is happening in part through the preaching of Rob Holman, pastor of American Falls Community Church.

— Rob’s pastoral role is just one of various hats he wears. You can also call him Rob Holman, chemistry professor at Idaho State University, as well as Rob Holman, student at the Virtual Campus of RTS. As a bi-vocational pastor, Rob balances his callings to pastoral ministry, his profession and family life.

The “pastor” part of Rob’s identity would have been unthinkable for a good portion of his studies to become a chemistry professor. The native Midwesterner grew up in the Midwest in a home with an atheistic father and went off to college convinced there was no God. But after his first semester he came home for Christmas to observe that his older sister had become a Christian.

“She had grown up in that same atheistic environment and had been every bit as hardened against the gospel as I was,” Rob recalls, “but was now proclaiming Christ. Out of arrogance and pride, I launched myself into proving my sister’s perspective on Christ as being foolishness.”

The 52-year-old embarked on what he calls a “series of quests” to debunk the idea of deity. “When I couldn’t disprove the notion of a personal God,” Rob continues, “I

looked into world religions and then the Word of God. Then I tried to disprove the historicity of the Scriptures. In that whole process, ultimately I had to face who Christ claimed He was, and I had to battle against that. This took me all the way through my undergraduate years and into the middle of my graduate training, so we’re looking at about a six-year process of trying to run from the Lord.”

Provisionally, though, God kept putting more believers in Rob’s life besides his sister. His first college roommate was also a Christian, as was his research director as an undergraduate. By the time Rob had obtained his doctorate in chemistry, he had surrendered in his quest and had confessed his belief in Christ.

Rob has served in the academic world as a chemistry professor for more than 20 years now, and eight years ago he and his wife, Phyllis (who came to faith in Christ shortly after he did), moved to Idaho so he could become the chairman of the chemistry department at Idaho State. What began as an academic career move also became a catalyst in driving Rob toward pastoral ministry.

“My wife and I had been praying about going to seminary [for many years],” he explains, “but [for various reasons] it was clearly not the Lord’s will. When we transitioned here to Idaho, we looked into what I could do about getting seminary training online in preparation for a transition to full-time ministry.” Rob found out about RTS-Virtual and started taking classes that first year in Idaho. He’s currently “two courses and a thesis away” from completing his Master of Arts in Religion degree.

Also once in Idaho, Rob began providing pulpit supply at a church in a community near Pocatello, the city of about 70,000 where Idaho State is located. Through that posi-



tion, he found out three years ago that American Falls Community Church was without a pastor. After much dialogue and prayer, Rob started as a part-time pastor at the church, located about 20 miles from Pocatello.

Rob arrived to find a church in a non-growing state and hindered by various splits over the years. “There were about 20 to 25 people attending,” he observes, “and nobody there had had any sort of Reformed perspective.”

As Rob has set out to preach the gospel, though, he has been excited to watch the Lord work in people’s lives. “I thought there would be some rebelling when I started talking about the sovereign nature of our Lord, but instead, person after person would say things like, ‘I’m seeing for the first time the great glory of God and that I myself did not contribute and that this is all grace.’ To see the Lord open up a curiosity for the Word in the eyes of the people, and as a result their seeing God’s glory in a new and profound way, has been incredible.”

One man influenced by Rob’s ministry is Carl Haney, a longtime American Falls resident. “[My wife and I have had] difficulty over time trying to find a church that had a pastor who preached from the Bible,” says the retired electri-

“We’re looking at about a six-year process of trying to run from the Lord.”

– Rob Holman

cian. “Over the past few years we have finally found a church with a pastor who had been a great blessing to us. Because of [Rob’s] teaching and preaching, our faith has grown more than ever before. We have never been so excited about studying the Bible and have never been closer to Jesus.”

In the coming years, Rob hopes not only to complete his RTS-Virtual degree, but also to make a complete transition out of academia and into full-time pastoral ministry. Though the details of that transition still aren’t completely clear, one thing is clear to him: “None of this would have been possible if there weren’t an excellent, Reformed [online] program that facilitated me.”

Whatever the future holds, Rob remains set on reaping a spiritual harvest from the fields surrounding him. **M**

*Charlie Dunn, vice president for development at RTS-Charlotte, contributed to the reporting on this article.*

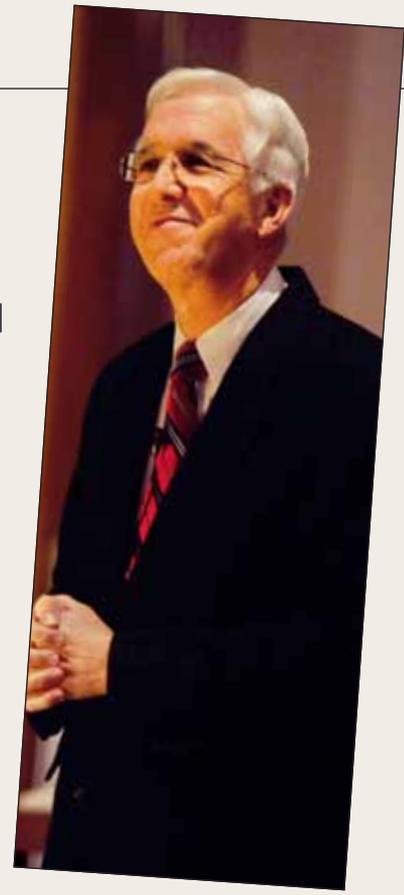
*For more information about American Falls Community Church, visit [afcommunitychurch.com](http://afcommunitychurch.com). More information about the Virtual Campus can be found at [rts.edu/virtual](http://rts.edu/virtual).*



# FAITHFUL *to the* CALL

*Charles and Calvin Todd  
celebrate 40 years of pastoral  
ministry in Tennessee.*

BY PAUL SCHWARZ



Being twin brothers, Charles and Calvin Todd share a distinct bond that goes beyond the mere minutes between their births 65 years ago (Charles came first). They also enjoy a common, deep-seated ecclesiastical background, being at least the seventh generation of their family to be members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. And then there's the two men's status as members of the 1972 graduating class at RTS, just six years after its founding.

Beyond all that, though, Charles and Calvin share a common legacy of 40 years of pastoral faithfulness. This is particularly true of Charles, as he has served all four decades at the same church near Memphis, though Calvin is no slouch on the longevity front, approaching nearly 25 years of ministry at a church in middle Tennessee. The two men remain true to a nearly half-century-long calling.

"In high school I had some thoughts of the ministry," Calvin says, "but it was in college when the Lord called me to serve Him in the ministry." Charles shares a similar testimony: "In late junior high, I pondered what the Lord wanted me to do, but it wasn't until during my junior year of college that I started thinking seriously about the ministry."

Appropriately enough, Charles and Calvin graduated together in 1969 from Erskine College, founded in 1839 by what became the ARP. During the very three years they were in seminary, four ARP churches in the Memphis area were without pastors. Charles and Calvin and two other RTS students would travel to Memphis on weekends for pulpit supply, and sure enough, Charles' church called him to a permanent

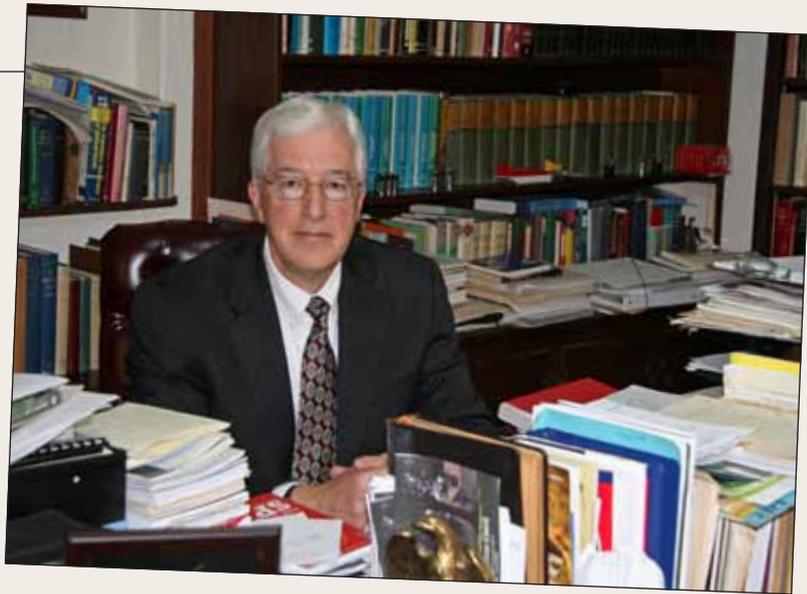
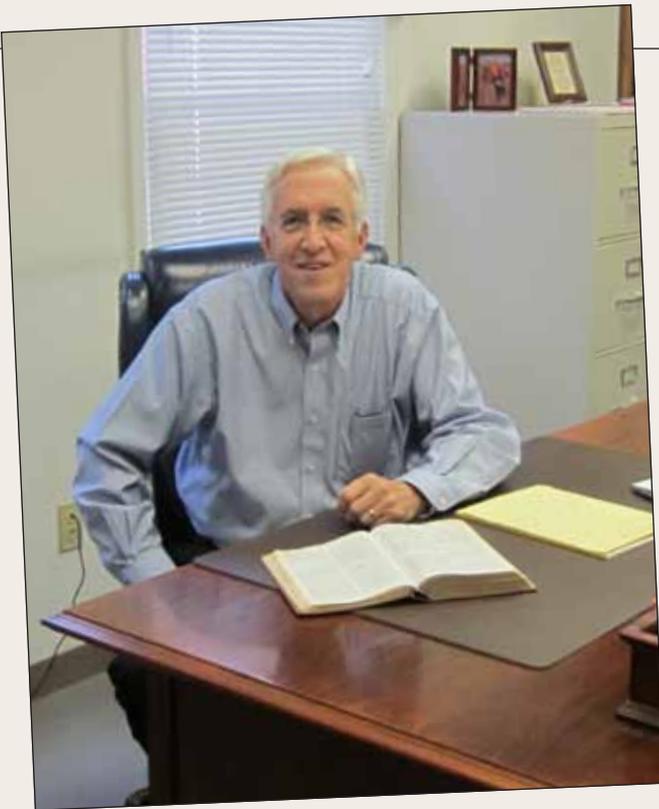
pastorate upon graduation and he has stayed there ever since.

That church, Salem Presbyterian Church in Atoka, Tenn., was founded in 1836, and yet Charles is only the eighth pastor in the history of the congregation. "The man who was here three pastors before I came stayed 43 years," Charles observes, "so I think they were used to a long pastorate with him. The longevity of pastors here is astronomical, and I give God all the credit and glory in the world. These people have truly been very longsuffering, especially to take a guy

**"I still have a burning desire to preach every Sunday."  
— Calvin Todd**

right out of seminary and green behind the ears and nurture me as I try to nurture them."

Calvin started out in ministry as the permanent pastor of the Memphis-area church where he pulpit-supplied. From there he served two churches in South Carolina before arriving in 1988 at Fayetteville Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (Fayetteville is close to the Tennessee-Alabama border, about 20 miles from Huntsville). Calvin oversaw the church's move from a location in town to property on the main highway connecting Fayetteville and Huntsville. Salem, on the other hand, though only about 25 miles north-east of Memphis, is in a more rural setting.



Calvin Todd (left) is mere minutes younger than his twin brother, Charles (right). The two men graduated together from both Erskine College and RTS.

Despite the two men being four hours away from each other, Charles and Calvin talk almost every day and learn from each other. “Especially in the last 10 years,” Charles notes, “we’ve developed a closer relationship. We compare notes, and we have basically the same issues, so it’s good to be able to encourage one another.”

Calvin agrees: “We talk a good bit, and lot of it is ministry talk, and other things as well. We have a common interest in hunting, and for a long time I’d go out [to visit Charles] to hunt ducks in the winter, and he’d come out here to hunt turkeys in the spring, and he still does that.”

As Calvin and Charles mark a combined 80 years in pas-

toral ministry, they’ve both seen many things change in their vocation. “Over the years,” Calvin says, “people have become less loyal to a denomination and perhaps more loyal to the congregation. The change in technology has had some effect as well,” though it should be noted that Fayetteville ARP has operated a television ministry for many years.

Charles concurs about the changes in technology: “We used to have a tape ministry,” continuing with a laugh that “nowadays that’s changed because on the Internet, people can pull off sermons of *really good* preachers!”

For all that’s changed in pastoral ministry in 40 years, though, certain things remain the same. “You still have sermons to write,” Charles observes, “and you still have Sunday school lessons to [prepare]. The same type of visitation must

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## A DENOMINATIONAL JOURNEY

On a promising afternoon in the spring of 1969, five young men unfolded from a car in the parking lot at RTS in Jackson, Miss. The timid group of men was met by a man of broad smile and quick, eager step. George Gulley said, “We received your letter and we’ve been praising the Lord!” Thus began a life-changing and denomination-changing journey in renewal.

Two of those young men were Calvin and Charles Todd from Gastonia, N.C., and Erskine College and students for ministry in the Associate Reformed

### BY JAMES A. HUNT

Presbyterian Church. Perhaps most surprising for these five young students was to find three ARP students already enrolled at RTS. After those few, many more ARPs would come for training at RTS in the succeeding years. Today, more ministers in the ARP Church have been trained at RTS than at any other seminary.

What are the influences that shaped these ministers and, subsequently,

have been a renewing influence in the ARP Church? I would mention these:

RTS held before us a **lofty view of preaching**. As God’s ordained ministry of declaring the gospel and of disciplining sinners, preaching was strongly emphasized. When students preached before the chapel group, Dr. Richard Bodey’s criticism was feared but appreciated. Forty years later, I still study hard in preparing sermons and preaching because God sees me, and my con-

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be done. People's needs never change — if someone's in a crisis, the need for the comfort of a pastor, someone standing by in time of trial or standing with them when they're walking through the mud, that never changes."

Calvin views the similarities between then and now on an even more foundational level. "The main thing for me is that the Word of God doesn't change," he declares, "and I've just tried to be faithful in preaching that Word." Calvin also speaks for the two men concerning the issue of retirement: "My wife and I intend to continue serving the Lord. We see the ministry as a lifelong calling. I still have a burning desire to preach every Sunday, and I know we'll have to make a transition at some point, but I do want to continue to serve Him as long as I have health and strength."

In a similar vein, Charles doesn't see himself going anywhere else anytime soon. "I've had opportunities to go other places," he notes, "but I've felt like there's a lot of value in staying in a place where you get to know the people, you get to marry couples and then baptize their children and marry them when they grow up." Fittingly, he has seen many of the eight to 10 young men he led in a discipleship group many years ago become elders and deacons in the church.

Calvin has a similar forward-looking perspective on preparing the next generation of church leaders, having mentored a young man in his church who is starting seminary this fall in pursuit of a call to pastoral ministry. "I've been bothered by a number of stories in recent years of pastors who haven't lived up to their calling and have gone astray,"



Charles and Calvin share an interest in hunting, getting together to hunt turkeys each spring.

says Calvin. "Of course, we're all sinners, but the Lord calls us to try to be men of integrity and set an example for others to follow."

It remains to be seen how many more years Charles and Calvin Todd have left to set that example, but whatever the number, the two men will likely find a way to walk through those years together. **M**

*For more information about Salem, visit [www.salempres.com](http://www.salempres.com). More information about Fayetteville ARP can be found at [www.fayar.org](http://www.fayar.org).*

Continued from Page 21

gregation expects a message from God.

**Pastoral ministry was valued.** The business model of a CEO has had a pervasive and pernicious influence in the modern church. RTS taught the biblical model of a shepherd. All our professors were able teachers, but they also had been biblical and successful pastors. We were taught to study hard and to visit, teaching from house to house.

**Reformed theology**, the biblical system of truth, and the Westminster Confession of Faith and catechisms were taught with careful and patient reasoning. Many "Arminian nerves" were cut — not always a pleasant experience to witness. But, "the more excel-

lent way" was established. Before enrollment, my theological discernment was very dim. In Dr. Morton Smith's "Introduction to Reformed Theology," my foggy thought and critical discernment quickly cleared. For so many of us, this clarity has served us well.

The foundation for this training was **an unswerving confidence in the Word of God**. Yes, we wrestled with the issues of canon, inspiration, inerrancy, textual criticism and exegesis, but there was never an uncertain sound about the trustworthiness and sufficiency of Scripture for faith, life and ministry. Confidence in "Scripture Alone" brought joy in the study, conviction of sin and holiness in life, and boldness in the pulpit.

Many ministers who now serve in

the ARP Church have been influenced by these same truths. Today, the ARP Church is experiencing a tension because not all the ministers, elders, members and various constituencies have this confident commitment to the Word of God and its message of grace. However, we are encouraged by the assurance that renewal can come to the church where the Bible is taken seriously, preaching is done faithfully and pastoral work is done lovingly. May God continue the bold influence of RTS on the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. **M**

*James A. Hunt has been the pastor of Coddle Creek Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Mooresville, N.C., since 1981.*

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Graham Evangelistic Association.

## MUSIC

**Dr. Michael Milton** recently released his fourth music CD, *When Heaven Came Down* (Music for Missions), with all proceeds benefitting RTS student scholarships.

## CAMPUS EVENTS

### Charlotte

The spring lectures will be held on Feb. 26 from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. Dr. Derek Thomas will speak. The public is invited, with a cost of \$20 per person.

### Orlando



The 2013 Kistemaker Lecture Series (open to the public) welcomes Dr. Michael W. Goheen, professor

of worldview and religious studies at Trinity Western University, Langley, British Columbia, and teaching fellow at Regent College, Vancouver. His four lectures will be delivered in Pamplin Chapel, Feb. 19-20. The lecture series is titled: "To the Ends of the Earth: An Introduction to Mission Studies Today."



The inaugural Spurgeon Lecture will be held April 10 at 7 p.m. in Pamplin

Chapel, with Dr. John Piper as speaker. The lecture is sponsored by The Nicole Institute of Baptist Studies. The Institute offers four core courses as part of RTS' regular master's program. These courses focus on issues of importance for Baptist and independent churches. The public is invited; visit [rts.edu/orlando/nibs](http://rts.edu/orlando/nibs) for more information as it becomes available.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Rev. Elmer M. Dortzbach**, who served from 1977-1984 as professor of pastoral care at RTS in Jackson, went home to the Lord on September 16 at age 90. During his time at RTS, Dortzbach specialized in ministry to the

aging. He pastored at Orthodox Presbyterian congregations in five states. He spent his last years ministering at a Christian retirement center in Florida after beginning to lose his eyesight in his late 60s.



**Dr. Samuel F. Rowen Sr.**, a former professor of missions at RTS-Jackson, went to be with his Lord

and Savior on September 21 in Fort Myers, Fla., at age 80. Dr. Rowen, an ordained Evangelical Presbyterian Church minister, served at an EPC church in Cape Coral, Fla. He spent most of his life in missions, serving primarily in Michigan, China and Argentina. Dr. Rowen will fondly be remembered for never letting the truth stand in the way of a good story!

Casting the Vision continued from Page 2

the cross to become a crown so that the captives go free. The presence of evil or trials does not indict us, but instead *invites* us to see the glory of God at work in our midst. This is counterintuitive, like the story of the old general whose unit is surrounded by the enemy and who responds, John Wayne-like, "Good — they won't get away now!"

I am reminded of an oncological surgeon friend who asked me to join him one day in the chemotherapy ward. Patients were lined up in what looked like recliners, with IVs hooked up to their veins, receiving the hopeful cure for their disease. My friend brought me to each of his patients, and I heard their stories.

As we approached a certain lady, he whispered, "Pastor, she is one of my favorites! You will soon learn why." His comment piqued my interest. I leaned over to this middle-aged lady, and the doctor introduced me as his pastor.

"Oh, pastor!" she exclaimed, with seemingly not the slightest understanding that she should be more morose than jubilant, given her situation. "I am so glad to see you!" Before I could return her greeting, she continued, "Pastor, I thank God for my cancer!"

I smiled at her, joining in her rejoicing, but inside I was

conflicted by her jubilation over her situation. She went on to tell me, though, "You see, pastor, if I had not been given this cancer, I would not know that the church really was the 'grace place.' I would not have known the love of my husband, who has cared for me so well. And I never would have met the best doctor in the whole world!"

My friend looked at me, leaned in and said, "You see why I like this one!" I liked her too! And I love the goodness of God that allows even you, today, to say, "Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies."

This is the ruling motif of the cross being taught at RTS. We are building disciple-makers who build disciples who think and live the gospel, and who can, with pastoral skill, expose the issues of larger culture and life as well as individual trials so as to reveal that the glory of the cross is our only hope. With Christ there is hope indeed.

We need to be servants in ministry more than ever. It is good to know that in the war of the world and the clash of civilizations, there is a Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, being presented as the way to a truly new and never-ending world order called the kingdom of God. That is why RTS exists, and by your prayers and support, and the good grace of God, we shall continue. **M**

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