We live in uncertain times; this is always certain. For example, Christians in ancient Rome lived with the uncertainty of whether they would become torches to help light Nero’s gardens. In more contemporary times, men the world over wondered if they would come home safely from the Great War — or, like my own father, the one that followed it barely 20 years later in the 1940s.

Recounting circumstances like these helps us keep our perspective over things like $4 for a gallon of gasoline and falling stock indicators. No matter the challenges, our faith is in a holy, righteous, sovereign God who is good and will sustain us through every uncertainty. As Hebrews 13:8 reminds us, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” While the sands of circumstance shift all around us, the character and faithfulness of our Savior stand firm.

I wrote the article “A 2008 Election Guarantee” (page 4) for this issue of Ministry & Leadership because for many American evangelicals, political uncertainty is a constant temptation to worry. We are tempted to fear that if “our man” (or woman) is not elected, somehow God’s purposes on earth will be thwarted. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth.

In fact, more surely than any projected electoral victory in November in either direction, the Lord of the universe, our Creator, reigns supreme, and will do so in the end. Our recognition of this should not only drive away fear and inspire worship, but it should also inform our approach to other matters such as our study of the Book of Revelation, as Dr. Bruce Lowe teaches us (page 6).

Americans also face a lingering sense of fear and uncertainty concerning real and perceived enemies, especially those inspired to perform terrorist acts. The ongoing warfare in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere reminds us of mankind’s constant struggle for security. Scripture teaches us, though, that an even greater battle is taking place in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6 et al.) for the souls of human beings. Billions of Americans, Iraqis and people of all nations face the greater terror of an eternity without Christ if they do not know the redeeming power of the gospel.

One of the largest unreached and unredeemed people groups today is the Muslim world. “A Window of Opportunity” (page 8) analyzes who Muslims are, where they live, what is being done to reach them with the gospel and how we can prepare to influence them for Christ as well. Sasan Tavassoli and Bassam Chedid, two RTS graduates, are among those helping equip the church to embrace this challenging yet important and fruitful ministry.

May we in the RTS family endeavor, in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to cast off fear and embrace the stability and peace found in knowing “the Father of Lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change” (James 1:17).
PUBLICATIONS

- Dr. Richard Belcher wrote the articles “Suffering” and “Psalms of Thanksgiving” for Dictionary of the Old Testament Wisdom, Poetry & Writings (InterVarsity Press).
- Dr. John Currid will publish The Exponent Prophet: Commentary on Habakkuk (Evangelical Press), the ESV Study Bible Atlas (Crossway Books), and Commentary on Numbers (Evangelical Press) in February 2009.
- Dr. John Frame published his articles “Thanks for Dick Gaffin’s Ministry,” “A Primer on Perspectivism,” “Becoming a Theology Professor” and “Does the Bible Affirm Open Theism?” on the web site he shares with Vern Poythress (www.frame-psychness.org).
- Dr. Howard Griffith wrote the chapter “The Hope Fulfilled: Essays in Honor of O. Palmer Robertson.”

TRAVELS

- Dr. Richard Belcher will speak on typology at the ARP Spiritual Life Conference in Gastonia, N.C., on Sept. 7. Dr. Michael J. Kruger will also speak there.
- Dr. Steve Brown will help ACT 3 celebrate its 17th anniversary on Sept. 5 at Wheaton College’s Billy Graham Center. From Oct. 8-12 he will be in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to speak at the Living Free Conference. He will also speak at Union Theological College, Belfast, Oct. 10.
- Dr. Ric Camarda preached at First Korean Presbyterian Church in the Atlanta area on Aug. 3.
- Dr. Steve Childers was the plenary speaker at the annual international exegetical conference in South Africa Church Planting Institute, Accra, Ghana, in June. In September he will be in Brazil teaching an estimated 2,000-plus indigenous church leaders representing 200 Amazon jungle tribes from up to nine South American countries.
- Dr. Rod Culbertson Jr. gave the commencement address, “A Compass for Life,” to the fifth-grade graduating class of Brookstone School, Charlotte, June 10.
- Dr. John Currid will give the opening lecture at the John Owen Centre Creation Conference, London, in September, titled “An Evangelical Analysis of Genesis 1: A Question of Genre.”
- Dr. S. Donald Fortson will teach two courses at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary - Charlotte, in the fall: “Church to the Reformation” and “American Christianity.” He will also teach a Sunday school class, “Protestant Reformers of the 16th Century,” this winter at Christ Covenant Church, Matthews, N.C., and a class on “The Church Before the Reformation” at Christ Lutheran Church, Charlotte, Aug. 27–Sept. 3.
- Dr. Mark Futato taught the courses “Old Testament Survey” and “Psalms” for Campus Crusade for Christ’s annual staff training at Rollins College, Winter Park, Fl., June 23–July 4.
- Rev. Mike Globo will be a Bible conference speaker at Collias Presbyterian Church in Mississippi in October.
- Dr. Howard Griffith was a supply preacher at Gainesville Presbyterian Church, Virginia, in June and July. In January 2009 he will speak on “The Importance of John Calvin at 500” at a conference for Study Grove Presbyterian Church, Gaithersburg, Md. In February he will speak on “The Glory of Union with Christ” at a conference at Hillcrest Presbyterian Church, Valpar, Pa. In the summer of 2009, he will teach a course at Nagoya Theological Seminary in Japan titled “Theology, Revelation and God.”
- Dr. Simon Kistemaker taught in Mexico from June 6-12. He preached in Progress and at San Pablo Theological Seminary in Merida.
- Dr. Mike Milton sent greetings and gave a report to the EPC as a delegate of the PCA and RTS at the EPC General Assembly, Bethesda, Md., in June. He also spoke at RTS alumni breakfasts at the PCA (Dallas), EPC and ARP (Bandonaka, N.C.) general assemblies in June. On July 20 he preached the Sunday sermon at Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Ala. He will preach at the full Bible conference at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Johnson City, Tenn., Sept. 7-8; speak on “Reforming Vision Through Rediscovering Burden” at a leadership retreat at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Va., Oct. 10-12; preach at the full mission conference at First Presbyterian Church, Hattiesburg, Miss., Oct. 26-27; preach the Sunday sermon at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Rock Hill, S.C., Nov. 2; and teach at the full officers retreat and preach the Sunday services at Grace Covenant, Hickory, N.C., Nov. 9.
- Dr. Andy J. Peterson, president of RTS-Virtual, will speak at the Handshaw E-Learning Conference: Time for Change on “Innovation and Business of E-Learning,” Sept. 17-18, Holiday Inn Center City, Charlotte.
- Geoff Sackett, director of student services at RTS-Washington D.C., will present a paper at the Herman Boekhoff International Conference at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 18-20, titled “Herman Boekhoff’s Religious Epistemology.”
- Dr. Derek W.H. Thomas was the commencement speaker at Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in May and gave three lectures on John Bunyan. He gave a seminar at the PCA General Assembly on “A Biblical View of Suffering.” He and his wife, Rosemary, took a mission trip to Peru with EPC Jackson in June; he lectured on justification and she helped with vacation Bible school.
- Dr. Bruce Waltke taught “Wisdom in Shoe Leather” and the Psalms at Regent College, June 30–July 11, and taught the Psalms at Trinity Western University, Aug. 18-22. He will be a panelist for a wisdom seminar and present a paper at the conference of the Evangelical Theological Society, Nov. 19-21, Providence, R.I. Nov. 21-25 he will be a panelist on “Response to Bruce K. Waltke with Charles Yu, An Old Testament Theology: An Evangelical, Thematic and Canonical Approach.”

APPOINTMENTS/ AWARDS

- RTS board member David Lucas (left) was awarded the highest honor at RTS, the Sam Patterson Award, in February at the Bonita Bay “Special Weekend” event in Bonita Springs, Fla.
- An Old Testament Theology by Bruce Waltke received the 2008 Christian Book Award in the category of Bible Reference & Study from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association.
- The Association of Theological Schools Commission on Accrediting has appointed Dr. Andy Peterson, president of RTS-Virtual, to the ATS Task Force. He will oversee the review and revision of the Commission of Accrediting standards and procedures.

Continued on Page 19
No matter who wins at the ballot box, Jesus remains the Lord of the universe.

Who will win the presidential election on November 4? I do not know. But I do know who will still be in charge ultimately. Before the election, the Lord Jesus Christ was the King of kings and Lord of lords reigning on His throne. After the election, Jesus Christ still reigns.

Indeed, our presidential elections are important. We Christian citizens of the United States should seek to be salt and light in this world. As such, an important part of our responsibility is to participate in elections — not only to vote, but also to support and promote those whom we believe will govern our nation in a righteous and just manner.

As we consider candidates during a campaign, we are naturally concerned and nervous about some whom we believe would be bad leaders. We think they would be a bad influence by their decision making and/or their personal character. Sometimes we are even fearful of the future for us and for our children and grandchildren if certain candidates are elected.

Should we be fearful about the outcome of the elections? Though we should be as wise, thoughtful and prepared as we can be as we look into the future, we should not be fearful. Consider that even the candidates we believe would serve best often disappoint us, and those candidates we fear the most may not turn out as bad as we feared.

The one constant for us as Christians that should give us peace in the midst of any election, and any circumstance for that matter, is the fact that Jesus reigns. We didn’t elect Him; God the Father did. And He will rule until He ultimately puts all things right, and puts all His enemies beneath His feet (Ephesians 1:19-23; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

The Bible is full of examples of the reign of God over government leaders — sometimes in obvious and public ways, and often in ways behind the scenes. Every government official’s position is ultimately given to him by God, and he will be removed from that position in the Lord’s timing.

God establishes leaders. We see this in Romans 13:1-3: "For there is no authority except from God, and those who exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed."

He also removes leaders. As Psalm 75:6,7 states, “For not from the east or from the west and not from the wilderness comes lifting up, but it is God who executes judgment, putting down one and lifting up another.” This was true of the great King Nebuchadnezzar in ancient Babylon, who was perhaps the most powerful person in the world in his day. He was de-throned and then "re-throned” by God (Daniel: 4:28-37).
Sometimes the Lord uses obvious means to put down one leader and lift up another, such as through the exact flight of an arrow finding its way into a crack in King Ahab’s body armor when he was in disguise in battle (1 Kings 21:17-19; 22:29-38, esp. v. 34). Or the Lord may use an illness, as when King Herod was struck down by God for his arrogance (Acts 12:20-23; cf. also 2 Kings 19:35 and Chronicles 32:20-23).

At other times the Lord keeps someone in a position of leadership or removes him by using good or bad advice from counselors, such as when He sustained David’s reign over Israel and protected him from his son, Absalom. The Lord caused Absalom to accept Hushai’s counsel rather than that of Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17:1-23, especially v. 14: “The Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring harm upon Absalom”). Often the Lord has ordained that the change of leadership regimes would come through betrayal and conspiracy (2 Kings 8:7-15, esp. v. 15; 14:19-21; 15:25, 30).

The Lord’s rule over the positions we hold in this life extends even far beyond the leaders of a nation to those who serve the leaders, as we see in the lives of the baker and cupbearer who served the Pharaoh in Joseph’s day (Genesis 40). Your position and mine are in God’s hands too.

Not only the positions of leadership but also the very actions of leaders are ultimately under the control of our sovereign Lord. Proverbs 21:1 says, “The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will.” Even those who pronounced an unjust judgment on Jesus unknowingly fulfilled God’s purposes: “Truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your plan had predestined to take place” (Acts 4:27,28).

We are responsible to seek the election of wise and just leaders. We are also responsible to honor them and to pray for them (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4), even those whom we distrust or perhaps just dislike. Ultimately, even in times when our leaders disappoint us or when they rule unjustly and against everything we believe as Christians (remember the Caesars in biblical times!), Jesus still reigns.

Our hope should not be built on earthly positions of leadership but on a heavenly throne. Whoever wins the presidential election on November 4, we as Christians know that Jesus sits in the most supremely powerful office and God’s will for the nations of the world will be accomplished.

Dr. Robert C. (“Ric”) Cannada Jr. is the chancellor and chief executive officer of RTS.
o one likes going to the dentist. It can be uncomfortable — painful, even! — especially when all sorts of sharp objects are stuck into your mouth, which must inevitably be done (so be warned!). Didn’t our parents tell us to never stick sharp objects in our mouths? So as obedient children (or more likely scaredy-cats), we vow to avoid the dentist altogether unless absolutely necessary.

Perhaps a similar rationale is at work with Revelation. We have tried to read the Bible through in a year, and 18 months into our project we arrive at Revelation — the final frontier! We are eager to finish, but just a little reticent about the book we must finish with. In the past it has been painful, but we hope that this time we have gained new wisdom from the Lord and will crack a previously impenetrable nut.

Alas, the mysteries are still as great as ever. The “weird and wonderful” is just as weird and wonderful as the last time we tried to read it, and it is with more relief than pleasure that we finish Revelation. As with the dentist, we vow to avoid Revelation altogether unless absolutely necessary.

What Glasses Are You Wearing?

But perhaps a major reason for our pain is that we fail to approach Revelation in the right way. As with the person who puts on “rose-colored glasses” and views everything in a rosy way, perhaps we have chosen the wrong reading glasses. If you don’t know much theology, you might try to read Revelation with the same glasses as the Gospels, or Paul’s letters. Those are comfortable glasses, and have been useful in the past. But here they don’t seem appropriate.

If we have done a bit more reading or study, we may choose more complex and specific spectacles: “Preterist specs” (reading Revelation as referring to events of the first century), “futurist goggles” (reading it as relating to the end times), “historist shades” (as a map of history), or an “idealist monocle” (reading it as timeless truths). But even here, things never quite fit perfectly, so we have to mix and match a little.

Let’s investigate what happens when we take the way the vision of Revelation comes to us (its overall style, and the ebb and flow of how it is presented) as the key to understanding it. Rather than deciding in advance that one part is past and another is future, what happens when we ask how the original audience would read it sequentially, in light of their own hopes and fears?

We know that the first readers were suffering Christians (1:9) looking earnestly for Jesus’ return (22:20, 21) to bring justice and make everything right. We also know that “apocalyptic” visions are deliberately graphic, much like poetry, in presenting grand imagery meant to inspire and depress, to prod and poke the emotions. So with these few simple ideas in hand, let’s see how a reader in that situation would have been carried along by the flow of the text itself.

A Stern Warning

Revelation 1 would have been everything the people hoped for. In the first few lines they are told that the revelation concerns “what must soon take place.” That would start your heart racing, especially when John turns to see someone “like the son of man” (1:13), and they are reminded via Daniel 7:13 of the enthroned Jesus!

As expected, everything about him is amazing: eyes like blazing fire; feet like bronze glowing in the furnace; and a sharp, double-edged sword coming out of his mouth (1:14-16), ready to judge! Everything here smells like Jesus’ return and judgment, and because he is already pictured as standing among the churches (the lampstands in 1:13), you might conclude this is a picture of Christ’s return to judge the world. In what follows, they might anticipate a full description of how he will judge, commenting on exact times or a description of how the saints will receive their new bodies. All is sweet!

Instead, however, there is the immediate issuing of stern letters from this glorious one to each of the churches. Each contains dire warnings, threatening judgment if they do not repent (2:5, 16, 22). Reading the account in light of the first read-
er’s expectations, therefore, chapters 1-3 would begin with anticipation but then quickly slide into horror as the people are told that judgment begins with the house of God (1 Peter 4:17).

“Medicine Followed by Candy”

Chapter 4 cannot come soon enough, because it is a picture of the throne of God, and the one who holds in his hand the decree that, in light of expected judgment, must surely concern the end. A brief heart palpitation occurs at the suggestion that no one is able to open it (the sort of emotional ebb and flow characterizing this whole section).

But such things serve to only increase appreciation for the Lamb, who alone is worthy to enact God’s decrees (5:6-10). And judgment it is (chapter 6)! With echoes of Zechariah 6, the four horsemen come to bring final judgment on the earth. But wait — with the fourth rider comes news that only a quarter of the earth is destroyed (6:8). And the shocking question descends: “Are our expectations again to be dashed? Is this again something other than final judgment?”

The emotional slide of chapters 1-3 is again repeated, as their worst fears are realized. And although the sixth seal brings reassurance that there will be a final judgment (6:12-17), the saints under the throne express what everyone is thinking: “How long, sovereign Lord, holy and true, until You judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” And they are told, “Wait a little longer until the number of [your] fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as [you have been is] completed” (6:10,11).

So after the first bitter pill (of judgment beginning with the household of God — chapters 2-3) comes the bombshell that justice (while already present) may not save the readers from a horrible death. Some of them at least must die before Jesus comes back!

Interestingly, the same movement of “medicine followed by candy” is then repeated. Just as in chapter 4, where an encouraging vision of heaven followed the twist of chapters 1-3, so again in chapter 7 they are given a glimpse of their own glorious rest in heaven.

Application for Today

Much more could be said, particularly about how evangelism is set up as the order for the day (9:20–11:14) while we wait (potentially in persecution and with little fruit). Hopefully, though, this will give you a taste for reading Revelation in terms of the emotional ebb and flow of the audience themselves and how they would respond to the vision given. This in turn produces valuable application for today:

As we (hopefully) expect Jesus’ return, do we remember that judgment begins with the people of God? We are called to be holy just as he is holy. Let us not judge society around us before we first look at ourselves.

As we receive this personal challenge, we should also note the corporate nature of the local church in chapters 2 and 3. What does this say about our “connectedness” with other Christians within the same body? What does it say about our responsibility to each other and how we live and function as a member of a local body?

Notice also how the Lord instructs suffering people. The hard word (that some will die) is neither delivered like a hammer nor avoided. How well do we balance truth with encouragement?

Finally, take note of the picture of heaven in chapter 7. It is meant for the greatest encouragement — even though we may die before the Lord comes and even die in persecution, we go to a wonderful place. It is where we will never again hunger or thirst, “for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be [our] shepherd” (7:16). Read this chapter and ponder heaven. Hallelujah! Praise Jesus our shepherd!

Dr. Bruce Lowe is an assistant professor of New Testament at RTS-Atlanta. A native of Australia, the RTS-Orlando graduate received his first doctorate in analytical chemistry and is completing a doctorate in New Testament studies at Macquarie University in Sydney.
A Window of Opportunity

by Paul Schwarz
they grew up speaking different languages in different lands. One is a third-generation believer and a preacher’s kid; the other came to faith in Christ at age 16. And while one works from offices located in the historic White House on the RTS-Jackson campus, the other spends much time working and studying in Europe and the Middle East.

The contrasts between Bassam Chedid and Sasan Tavassoli illustrate an often-overlooked reality in ministry to Muslims today. Yes, the two men do share a common Christian faith, a common Middle Eastern heritage, a common RTS degree and a common passion for bringing the gospel to people — many of whom name themselves as Muslims. But the nuances to their distinct testimonies and ministry callings should be instructive to the body of Christ in its need to come to grips with the face of Islam today and the challenge it presents to the advance of the gospel.

Just as Bassam and Sasan have clear differences in their respective backgrounds, Islam itself is not a monolithic entity. Not all Muslims are terrorists, nor do they all speak Arabic or even hail from the Middle East, nor do the women all wear head-to-toe *burqas* nor have all Muslim men become billionnaire oil barons. Islam is a much-misunderstood religion, and as a result, many Christians shy away from reaching out to them with the gospel.

**Muslims Drawn to Christ**

Sasan’s life, though, serves as one example of how a sovereign God uses faithful, effective witnesses to draw His own from the Muslim world. The native of Iran was sent out of the country as a teenager a few years after the Ayatollah Khomeini–led revolution in 1979. His parents wanted to avoid Sasan being drafted into the Iranian army during the heart of the Iran-Iraq war.

Instead of being sent to England to live in a Muslim community there, as was the original plan, Sasan somehow ended up in Portugal attending a Christian school run by American missionaries. Through the school and through the influence of other missionaries, Sasan placed his faith in Christ as his Savior.

Today Sasan describes himself as “an itinerant theologian/teacher for the Iranian community,” serving as a missionary with an organization called the Outreach Foundation. He speaks at churches to help equip Christians to reach out to Muslims with the gospel, but spends most of his time helping produce multimedia materials targeted for Iranians both stateside and abroad.

Sasan has learned four prominent factors drawing Muslims to salvation in Christ. “Many Muslims are drawn to the gospel because they find an assurance of salvation in the Christian faith they have not found in Islam,” he says. “Another factor is the love of God — as they read in the Bible, hear in the gospel, and see expressed in the Christian community.

“The third factor that may be weird for Westerners is dreams and visions of Jesus. It’s a very common theme in the testimonies of Muslims to have had dreams or visions of Christ or some kind of religious scene of significance. The fourth factor is answer to prayers. Many Muslims believe in Jesus as a prophet already, so in times of desperation they pray to Jesus, and He was able to deliver them, and they believe that Jesus is the true deliverer, the true Savior.”

Sasan and Bassam both testify to the openness of many Muslims stateside and internationally to the gospel. Bassam is the founder of Children of Abraham, a ministry focused not on Muslims per se but on Arabs (noting that many Arabs come from Christian backgrounds, albeit nominally in many cases). The COA office space in the RTS-Jackson White House is packed with magazines, books and Bibles in the familiar right-to-left Arabic script — as such, the front covers are located on what would be the back covers of English publications.

COA sends an evangelistic magazine to a mailing list of more than 70,000 worldwide, and has distributed about 7,000 Arabic Bibles. A current project involves the development of an Arabic study Bible. “We need to introduce the Bible to Muslims,” says Bassam, a native of Syria who traces his lineage back to the biblical land of Bashan. “This is the precious living Word of the living God. We need to help Muslims understand the theme of the gospel from Genesis to Revelation. It’s not the Old Testament for the Jews and the New Testament for the Christians, it’s Christ, and that idea has been foreign for many Muslims.”

Continued on next page
Theological barriers are nothing for Christians to fear.

Breaking Down the Barriers

With this in mind, the main challenge Islam presents today is theological. “We live in a day where people are concerned about the military, political and cultural challenges of Islam, and these are all real,” Sasan advises. “[But] the heart of the challenge is that Islam claims to be God’s final revelation to humanity in the form of the Koran, the prophet Muhammad and [how] the revelation given to humanity through him in the Koran is God’s final word that supersedes all previous religions and revelations.”

Theological barriers are nothing for Christians to fear, though. Both Bassam and Sasan testify to the benefits of building bridges of friendship to the Muslims whom God has brought to our doorsteps. Bassam tells the story of befriending a man from a Middle Eastern country closed to traditional access to the gospel. “This man came with the idea of opposing Christianity,” the RTS-Jackson graduate recalls. “I got to know him more and more, and one time he asked me if I could take him to church. After that we started dialoguing, asking all kinds of questions. It took about three to four months until he received the Lord.” The man returned to his country, and at great personal risk he smuggled Bibles with him.

“This example is one of many of those coming to the United States,” Bassam continues. “They come with very little knowledge about Christianity, great misconceptions and great misunderstandings, and their consciences are almost inoculated against anything called Christianity; their mind has been captivated by Islam as a way of life. They come here ready to fight for the cause of Islam, and it takes a loving Christian with patience to explain the nature of Christianity to them, to befriend them.” Bassam then speculates on what difference it might have made if someone like Osama bin Laden, who spent time in the United States as a college student, had been invited to a Christian home or to a church.

Rules of Engagement

Sasan also observes that Christians have a window of opportunity for dialogue with Muslims who in the aftermath of 9/11 are eager for a public image makeover. “Many Muslims,” he says, “especially in the West but also around the world, really became interested in presenting Islam to non-Muslims in a friendly, positive way. Of course they tried to put a huge spin on it, but still, as Muslims have become a lot more interested in opening up their mosques, I really sense a huge activity in the Muslim world to build relationships.”

He then cites an example of a church in Atlanta that turned this openness into a ministry opportunity. Church leaders invited a group of Muslims from a local community to join them on a Sunday afternoon. The imam of the mosque along with 100 Muslims came to the church, where the pastor and 100 or so Christians gathered. The imam talked about why he is a Muslim, the pastor talked about why he is a Christian, and then they both addressed some of the questions and misconceptions about their faiths. The Muslims went to another building, said their afternoon prayers, and then came back for a meal with the Christians. At each table a number of Christians and Muslims ate together.

“We [often] think that dialogue is a dirty word,” Sasan says. “But dialogue is not a compromise. You try to express honestly, sincerely and respectfully what you believe and your questions about the other person’s faith. Let me also express a caution: Sometimes evangelical Christians who are not aware of the history of Islam can be too naive in interpreting some of the Muslim gestures. Sometimes Muslims try to portray themselves as peace-loving, but if you understand the history, sometimes peace is only given in terms of if you submit to Islam. Obviously that’s not the kind of peace we are after.

“But I believe that many Muslims, whether in America or in Muslim countries, want to open up to better relationships with non-Muslims. We evangelicals need to take that offer and engage Muslims seriously in that way.”

Misconceptions on Both Sides

Part of the responsibility of Western Christians in befriending and evangelizing Muslims involves breaking down false Muslim notions concerning the Christian faith. “There is misconception about the nature of Christianity,” explains Bassam, “because their sources were wrong to start with. Muhammad was exposed to heretical Christianity — more like folk religion.” The Muslim mind also confuses Christianity with, among other things, warfare (in the name of the Crusades and other conflicts), cultural decadence (equating Western entertainment exports with an inability of Christianity to influence society) and polytheism (through failure to comprehend the Trinity).

Westerners are equally prone to misunderstanding the nature of Islam. “Less than a quarter of Muslims in the world are Arab speakers,” says Sasan, “and even in the Middle East, not all Middle Eastern countries speak Arabic. The great implication is that there are great cultural varieties in the Muslim world; Islam is not one monolithic religion.

“I learned when I was a young Christian that you need to treat people as individuals and not stereotype the whole religion. I grew up in a Sufi Muslim home — the closest thing I could describe it as would be a New Age version of Islam. You also have a lot of moderate Muslims who are devout believers but would never think that engaging in violence is justified in this world. And you have the radicals — the terrorists, the angry ones. There is a broad range of Muslims, so we need to approach Muslims differently.”
The Power of the Gospel

The commitment to dialogue with Muslims underscores a confidence in the gospel — in fact, in the nature and attributes of Jesus Himself. “We need to exalt Christ,” affirms Bassam. “He is the bright Morning Star. When He shines, He radiates, and everything [else] will be eliminated in the process. Many Christians, unfortunately, look upon [Islam and Muslims] with disdain. We cannot afford to do that. We need to introduce them to Christ — He Himself captivates the heart.”

“It has been said that the difference between Muhammad and Christ was that Muhammad had chosen the way of success and Christ the way of defeat — in other words, the way of brokenness, of giving Himself to glorify His Father, carrying His cross. That’s not found in Islam, and that’s very appealing to Muslims.”

And worldwide, Muslims are responding to the gospel in unprecedented numbers. According to Sasan, there were about 2,500 evangelical Christians in Iran in 1979, when the Ayatollah Khomeini took power. Until then there had been nearly 200 years of missionary activity in Iran, but after the revolution the missionaries were expelled from the country.

“The Iranian regime said that now that missionaries are out, this is the end of the church,” Sasan says. “Today, almost 30 years after the revolution, the conservative estimates put the number of Christians in Iran at about 1 million. So just in the past few years, we have had about a million Iranians who have made a profession of faith in Christ. Many Muslims have become disillusioned with Islam, and they are turning to other answers.”

Sasan and Bassam encourage Christians that now is the time to reach out to Muslims around them with the true Answer.

“We must not let fear dominate our thinking about Muslims,” declares Sasan, who continually addresses this subject when speaking in churches. Also, according to Bassam, personal testimony goes a long way. “When we share our personal testimonies with Muslims,” he observes, “you get so much mileage out of that because they cannot argue with your experience.”

For more information about Children of Abraham and the Outreach Foundation, respectively, visit www.coabraham.org and www.theoutreachfoundation.org.

A Common Word

In the fall of 2007, a worldwide consortium of Muslim leaders created the document A Common Word Between Us, purporting to harmonize Islam and Christianity. The document is part of a trend in which Muslim leaders seek to present a more positive public face for Islam; one aspect of this trend has involved proselytizing methods influenced by Christian evangelism. (The original document can be found at www.acommonword.com).

An outspoken analyst of the document has been Dr. Thomas Johnson, a European-based scholar, a visiting and adjunct professor at RTS, and an extensive writer on church-state relations. “We classical Protestants do not need to try to imitate our Muslim neighbors and seek to impose a theonomy or theocracy on our societies,” Dr. Johnson observes. “Whether called sharia or theonomy, such attempts and desires ignore the work of God in the world.”

His own response to A Common Word is available by visiting www.wrfnet.org and then clicking in succession on WRF Articles of Interest, Islam and Proposed Response to “A Common Word.”
The direction of grief moves toward restoration. In Jeremiah 31, a passage about full restoration, God deliberately recognized loss first and did not overlook it. This passage is not just about hope alone, but it acknowledges the tension that life has been taken and it will be restored. Jeremiah shows us that restoration begins from a place of scattering. The children of Israel are either on their way into exile or already in exile when they received this message about full restoration.

Grief starts in such an awkward place; a disorganized, often confusing place. Grief is provoked by loss. From the death of a loved one to the loss of a dream, loss is varied in its experience. It often comes as a surprise — someone described it as a “gasp,” where your breath is knocked out of you. Or, loss is known by its gnawing, relentless ache that cannot be ignored or identified. Confrontation with death creates disillusionment and disorientation, a scattering. Even if you see death coming from a distance, there is still a gasp when it arrives. Life is changed, and grief gives voice to that change. Healing begins from a place of scattering, and grief begins with recognized loss.

By entering into your loss, you become more human, more available to God. Grief blows into flames the embers of hope for life without leaving unacknowledged the pain of where you are now. Grief does not act like you should be somewhere you are not, like you need to get over your mourning. It does not demand that you feel happy or say that you should replace/alter your sadness — rather it does the opposite; it acknowledges your loss as a necessary part in healing. Loss reminds you this is not your home, and grief helps you endure it and therein lays its value. It does not let up or answer the whys and hows which often would suffice our understanding, but rather grief helps you remain in a place of waiting for an answer only God can offer you. (The process of grieving opens you up to a
more meaningful encounter with God. It is in the rawness of this place that God becomes not someone who you just meet on Sunday, and Someone that I only use to help me feel better about my sin with, but I begin to ache over larger things with God. My eyes were focused on small things that I could control, and sorrow has helped me see that I do not trust a big God who allows such difficulty to happen.)

Grief ushers us into a meaningful encounter with God, as backward as that sounds. The direction is not an answer to the pain we thought we wanted. God meets you in the grief with Himself. The meaningful encounter with God centers on receiving His kindness in the midst of the tension of Hope and Loss together. In the Message, Jeremiah 31:1-6 states clearly that “Israel, out looking for . . . rest, met God out looking for them!” Israel would be coming from exile through the wilderness; loss, looking for God, met God out looking for them: hope. The hope is not an answer or even a better life, but it is that God is out looking for you, and the grief is the path into the wilderness. This is reminiscent of the prodigal coming home finding his father running to meet him with a robe and a ring of sonship.

As we begin to trust our grief, though, we do not like where it takes us into such deep tension. We find that sorrow is on the opposing team of death; in fact, it is grief that speaks the truth most clearly that death is not supposed to be a part of this life. Death is not just a cycle of life but rather evidence that something truly is wrong. When your sorrow begins to feel the injustice of Death, you are also opening up to a hope for Life that can only be answered by God. It is engaging this larger difficulty with Christian grief that we listen to the cadence of home, the drumbeat of heaven. A whisper, an echo: “I am the one who will make this right, I will be your God and you will be my people.” Your grief matters, and in the tension of hope and loss, you begin to hear Cadences of Home. The familiar ring is the voice of God “out looking for you.” Sorrow opens you to the dual reality of real loss of life and real longing for life. It does not disguise it. Sorrow helps us remember God’s name where we have forgotten Him.

It is difficult to believe that grief can journey through all of that confusion to help find rest. What I am finding is that grief helps me remember who I have forgotten and that I long for Him to meet me in the middle of the sorrow. Grief helps me to quit striving so much to figure it out and simply be sad for my loss and long for God to make it right again. Grief exposes the tension of this life, and faith in Christ creates in you the imagination for restoration.

Hear what Roger Edwards wrote as he defined Christian grief: “There is just one honest way to respond to loss. That way is to grieve. But, in order for it to take us to a good place, it must be a particular kind of grief; it must be Christian grief. It is to face the truth about death while maintaining a hope for life. This kind of grief allows the coldness of death, and the longing for life to co-mingle inside the heart. It is a painful co-existence, pulling and tearing, but ultimately healing.” Ache mingled with hope — nothing less.

We grieve the loss of a loved one; we continue to grieve because we are reminded about how much we want Jesus to come and make it right. It is this tension that makes room for laughter, for healing, for restoration. Grief creates space for restoration. Laughter is a great biblical picture of restoration. This laughter does not forget grief or sorrow but flows from it and is strengthened by it. God’s laughter at death is restoration; it is the resurrection of Christ; it is healing. As we struggle to agree with God, death that at the very beginning seemed so powerful and ominous now seems lighter. Laughter is really seeing beyond the difficulty without denying the difficulty. This is why we can take sin seriously and not be overwhelmed by it and alone in it. We see restoration, and it fills us with joy. This joy must be birthed from where you are; those eyes to see come from loss. Then we say with St. Paul: “Oh, death where is your victory, where is your sting?” Paul saw beyond death; Paul saw the same restoration Jeremiah was envisioning. Laughter or restoration is ultimately the direction of grief. A New Testament picture of this is in Hebrews 12:2, where it says, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

The joy set before him is the ultimate restoration He was aiming for; that was his joy. All the while scorning the shame of the cross or death, Hope and Loss, this type of laughter was not a giggle but one of severe confidence. Scorning its shame, Jesus endured the shame of death believing that the curse of death would be broken; in other words, grief that leads to restoration. This is the life of Christ, a man of many sorrows that leads us all to ultimate restoration. Christ saw beyond the difficulty and did not deny the difficulty. And He sat at the right hand of God the Father.

Conclusion

Though seemingly an odd beginning to restoration, grief is seen as an important aspect of remembering God. The backwardness of the gospel finds itself at work in your sorrow and memory; it is through your grief that healing is encountered. John Donne, the poet, restated what St. Paul said, but a little differently, so let these words encourage you: “Death, be not proud, though some have called thee Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so; . . . One short sleep past, we wake eternally, Perpetual youth, and life, and laughter with thee.” The resurrection of Christ; it is healing. As we struggle to agree with God, death that at the very beginning seemed so powerful and ominous now seems lighter. Laughter is really seeing beyond the difficulty without denying the difficulty. This is why we can take sin seriously and not be overwhelmed by it and alone in it. We see restoration, and it fills us with joy. This joy must be birthed from where you are; those eyes to see come from loss. Then we say with St. Paul: “Oh, death where is your victory, where is your sting?” Paul saw beyond death; Paul saw the same restoration Jeremiah was envisioning. Laughter or restoration is ultimately the direction of grief. A New Testament picture of this is in Hebrews 12:2, where it says, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

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To listen to the podcast of Dewayne’s funeral service, which contains numerous personal insights into Dewayne’s life, visit ompcsersmons.podbean.com/2008/06/26/dewayne-wood-funeral.
Reformed Christians are fond of historical connections — especially those involving Calvinism and its worldwide proliferation. RTS is no exception. Most frequently we trace our heritage backward from John Calvin to the apostle Paul and other biblical writers. Calvin became the Reformation’s most able theologian, biblical expositor, educator and ecclesiastical leader. Under his prudent guidance, the Swiss city of Geneva became an international center, spreading Reformed Christianity worldwide.

In asking what historical links connect Calvin to today, one answer lies in the distinctive ministry of “Old Princeton.” From its inception in 1812 until its reorganization in 1929, Princeton Theological Seminary profoundly shaped international Calvinism. Both Geneva and Old Princeton achieved a reputation of sound biblical teaching in the context of theological controversies, attracted diverse student bodies to disperse the gospel, and equipped sound pastors and missionaries. In the 21st century, RTS aspires to similar goals.

Geneva

Geneva was the birthplace of historic Calvinism. The city began its rise by receiving its political independence prior to Calvin. His arrival and subsequent ministry marked a religious turning point. A born leader possessing unique intellectual gifts, Calvin and his colleague William Farel labored to purge the church of Medieval corruptions. They would reform theology, piety, liturgy and ecclesiastical practices by establishing a thoroughly Reformed church based on biblical principles.

Central to Calvin’s many changes was his insistence on the centrality of Scripture as the source of all truth. Calvin made his first contribution by publishing his Institutes of the Christian Religion in 1536. It began as a mere handbook to instruct fellow Christians who hungered for biblical teaching, but by the final edition decades later, it became a signature document of the Reformation.

The Institutes distilled from the Bible in clear, coherent prose the great doctrines of Reformed theology while radiating a profound Christian devotion, carefully reformulating the sacraments, and delineating church and civil gov-
ernment. In the process Calvin systematically presented biblical truth while pointing out how contemporary Catholic and Anabaptist writers misinterpreted the Bible.

Calvin revolutionized Christian ministry based upon the Bible. Prior to the Reformation, pastoral care focused primarily on the sacraments as the exclusive means by which people receive the grace of God. While the sacraments were anything but minor in Geneva, Calvin viewed the ministry of the Word of God as foremost in importance — preaching, teaching and applying the Scriptures to every area of life. In fact, the true church exists only where the Bible is faithfully expounded, the sacraments celebrated and discipline practiced.

Calvin labored feverishly to make biblical truth accessible to parishioners. His weekly routine included preaching every other day, lecturing every third day and presenting a biblical exposition each Friday. No area of life escaped his attention — he applied biblical truth to individuals, the marketplace, political rule and social conditions. So that everyone could apply biblical knowledge to everyday situations, Calvin published commentaries on 49 of the 66 canonical books.

Crucial to the proliferation of Reformed Christianity was Calvin’s ability to extend its influence beyond Geneva. He accomplished this by establishing the Geneva Academy, a vast international correspondence and missionary outreach.

When the academy opened in 1559, students flocked from across Europe to receive pastoral training. Faculty left posts at other schools to fill chairs in theology, Greek, Hebrew and philosophy. The academy’s curriculum ensured that a Reformed pastorate would be an educated ministry. The most glowing compliment paid to Geneva’s educational efforts came from Scottish reformer John Knox, who proclaimed it “the most perfect school of Christ since the apostles.” Pastors returned to their native lands proficient in biblical languages, equipped in theological precision and enthusiastic to propagate the Reformed faith.

Calvin developed an international network by communicating with other scholars and dedicating treatises to European rulers. His voluminous correspondence included letters to other Reformers probing the great theological issues of the day. He implored the Holy Roman Emperor to reform the church; he wrote or dedicated treatises to political figures in England, Poland, Denmark and Sweden. Above all he offered pastoral counsel in response to inquiries from Frenchmen trained at the academy. The result was a profound influence upon the burgeoning Reformed tradition that spread throughout Europe in the 16th century.

Thus, when Calvinism burst into history, it quickly dominated wherever it took root — assuming an international character. It rested on a sound foundation in biblical truth, ignoring in pastors and their congregations a passion that would take the faith far beyond its original Genevan boundaries.

Princeton

Calvinism came to America through colonizing efforts of England and Holland. Princeton reprised Geneva’s reputation in becoming 19th-century America’s educational, ecclesiastical and cultural leader in the Reformed tradition.

The seminary originated in the post-Great Awakening and post-Revolutionary eras, when the religious identity of America was in jeopardy. All denominations, including Presbyterianism, experienced a shortage of pastors. To preserve the church and promote its mission, leaders devised the “Plan of a Theological Seminary” (1810), which detailed the organization, academic curriculum and spiritual practices to prepare pastors for ministry. At the heart of its mission was Reformed theology originated by Calvin at Geneva and subsequently finding its richest expression in the Westminster Standards of 1648.

The plan identified theological disciplines and competencies that students must master: proficiency in Hebrew and Greek; ability to analyze, interpret and illustrate Scripture; facility in theology; and apologetic skill. In addition to theological soundness and intellectual rigor, its founders envisioned Princeton as a nursery of vital piety. Students should develop habits of private devotion as well as participate in corporate worship.

Procedurally, these mandates were carried out by faculty members such as Archibald Alexander, Charles Hodge, Benjamin B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen. Widely recognized for excellence in their respective disciplines, Princetonians produced thousands of pages in published works (commentaries, systematic theologies, histories, devotionals and monographs). Through *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, one of the foremost theological journals of the 19th century, they interacted with every major scholar and theological debate. They offered a Reformed perspective on virtually every topic of intellectual or cultural interest, countering the rising tide of Arminianism, theological liberalism and secularism.

Professors actively participated in denominational debates, weighed in on scientific developments including Darwinism, and lamented the destructive turbulence of the Civil War. They also corresponded with European scholars and church leaders over theological developments at home and abroad.

These efforts resulted in Princeton becoming the American center for international Calvinism. Enrollment flourished to where Princeton frequently exceeded all other seminaries. While the majority of students originated from the Mid-Atlantic, many came from the South, the Midwest and beyond. The student body became truly international as hundreds left their homes in England, Ireland, Canada and Scotland. At the height of late 19th-century missions, over 150 came from Asia.

Upon completing their studies, graduates dispersed across the nation. The vast majority filled pulpits, faithfully ministering in local churches both small and large. They also moderated general

Continued on Page 19
My Vision for Leadership

by Dr. Mike Milton
After six years as pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., I began to wonder if God was opening my heart to something else. I would have been happy to remain there, because I loved the people, and there's nothing I love more than preaching the gospel, and trying to bring the balm of Christ to broken hearts.

But only three days into a deliberate season of prayer, I received an invitation to think and pray about the RTS-Charlotte presidency. That surprised me, though I guess I should have expected it because I was praying to that end. In my life I try to find the stories that God is writing and what the next chapter could be, so over about nine months or so, there became an increasing understanding that this could be a call of the Lord. This didn't come instantly; it came through a process of prayer.

When it came time to tell the congregation about my decision, I was brought back to when my family and I first visited the Charlotte campus. I was trying to envision what it would be like to be the president there when I happened to see a tree out on the lawn. I told my son John Michael, who was 13 at the time, "Look at that tree — I can see myself sitting there, maybe talking with students about the pastoral ministry and the kingdom of God."

The morning I was to tell the congregation what God had done in my life, I had some tears, and my son said, "Dad, remember that tree, because we're not leaving people; we're going to a people." We hadn't talked about that tree in four months. That emboldened me. I told that story to the congregation that morning.

It wasn't easy to leave, because I loved preaching and leading in worship. But now it was time to share that love with others and begin to impart vision for that into Chattanooga.

On September 21 at 6 p.m. at Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church in Matthews, N.C., Dr. Milton will be formally inaugurated as president of RTS-Charlotte. Here he outlines how God called him to the seminary and gives his perspective on training leaders for the worldwide body of Christ.

That is not my identity. I was supposed to have been aborted. But that is not my identity. I was abandoned, abused and kidnapped — all before I was 5 years old. But that is not my identity. I hear folks talk about their identity in terms of their heredity — I am from English stock or I am a Choctaw Indian. I am both of those things, but that is not my identity.

Some say, “I was adopted” or “I was orphaned” or “My father was a drunk and my mother insane,” and that is their identity. I could, myself, use those phrases to describe my life. But that is not my identity.

“I was divorced” and “I lost my kids” and “I made some terrible choices” are all monikers that some use to describe their essential personhood. But not me, even though I could utter those hard confessions to you now. “I am a successful businessman, a ‘golden-haired fast tracker,’ grooming for the vice presidency of a major corporation. That is who I am.” I was that too. But that is not who I am.

Perhaps some in my position today would even claim, “I was the pastor of one of the greatest churches in America.” I have been a pastor; I do think the historic First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga, Tenn., is a one-of-a-kind church in our nation. Being a minister and being at that particular church is an extension of my identity. But that is not who I am.

My identity is, quite simply, completely related to Jesus Christ. Some reading this will not like my saying that. They will want more. They will want “depth.”

Continued on Page 18
Continued from Page 17

They will want “irony.” But He is all there is to me. I am as deep as this: I have only Him. There is no mystery, irony or feature about me that is amazing or even interesting but that He chose me and I am His. That is the story of stories as far as I can tell.

You need to know that I am not a religious man, as one might think of that term, even though I am an ordained Presbyterian minister. I am simply a disciple, a follower of Jesus of Nazareth. Sometimes I follow Him closely and sometimes I don’t, to my own hurt and my own shame. But I am His. And He is mine — in the sense that He has given His life to me.

I am not seeking to be super-spiritual with you. I am saying that I knew a Mike Milton before this resurrected God-Man came and revealed the Good News to me. That Mike Milton was reared with kind, aging, nurturing hands placed on his head every day of his life — as if to convey blessing (and it did) — by his Aunt Eva.

That Mike Milton was baptized as an infant at Felicity Methodist Episcopal Church in the garden district of New Orleans one Sunday morning when his alcoholic father woke up from a drunken stupor, remembered his childhood of faith, put on a clean shirt, took his baby boy out of the mess he had brought him into, and sought to make peace with God — and somehow trust in a God of grace that would make something good out of the boy’s life.

That Mike Milton — orphaned and placed by the courts into the custody of his father’s sister, Eva Turner, a 65-year-old widow who lived on a little piece of ground with some chickens in a rural, poverty-stricken area north and east of Baton Rouge going up toward Amite County, Mississippi — did not know God.

He would walk an aisle in a Baptist church at age 7, get immersed, all wet in covenant waters, again. But his mind was not wet, his soul not saturated with Christ alone. It was an immersion of the body but not the soul. That Mike Milton, who could never remember a time when he didn’t hear the name of Jesus, could not understand the words of the Puritan: “I bless thee for the happy moment when I first saw thy law fulfilled in Christ, wrath appeased, death destroyed, sin forgiven, my soul saved.”

The Mike Milton I am speaking of was not saved. I really mean that. He was a lost soul. You know what I mean because someone reading this feels that way about herself.

That eternal life has already started. I am subject to sin and shame in this world and in this flesh, but by His grace, I am moving closer to Him, closer to a day when He will complete in me what He has started.


In December 2007, Dr. Milton accepted the call to become president of RTS-Charlotte, where he is also a professor of practical theology. Before coming to RTS he worked in the business world and as a top-secret Navy linguist, later entering pastoral ministry.

To read Dr. Milton’s blog, visit thecall.rts.edu. His books A Theology of Mincemeat Pie: Discovering God’s Grace in Everyday Places and What Is the Doctrine of the Preservation of the Saints? are scheduled to be released later this year by P&R Publishing.
assemblies, enrolled in graduate programs, and became professors and presidents of colleges and seminaries. Hundreds pursued further studies at prestigious European universities.

Just as Geneva commissioned pastors to plant Reformed churches in their native lands, over 5 percent of Princeton students took Calvinism to all parts of the globe. John Nevius went to China in 1854, adapting a plan of planting self-propagating, self-supporting and self-governing churches free from Western control. The “Nevius Plan” enabled Korea to become home to the fastest-growing church in the world in the 20th century.

**RTS**

Like its predecessors Geneva and Old Princeton, RTS originated to propagate the vibrant biblical teachings of the Reformation. Theological education in America had declined markedly by the 1960s. Seminaries had moved from firm acceptance of Reformed doctrine to liberalism and neo-orthodoxy. Northern Presbyterianism had welcomed extreme theological diversity, and Southern seminaries inclined to follow their lead. Acutely aware that the survival of the gospel was at stake, RTS founders envisioned a seminary that would reject trends toward modernism, instead recapturing the faithfulness and zeal of Reformed confessionalism.

RTS attempts to replicate the Reformation goals of its predecessors — equipping leaders with the full-orbed Calvinism that changed the world in the 16th century and energized the church in 19th- and 20th-century America. As RTS prepares 21st-century leaders, it does not have to reinvent the wheel. Following Calvin and the Princetonians, RTS will continue its powerful calling — to faithfully educate and send Reformed ministers worldwide.


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Continued from Page 3

- **Bruce Baugus** (left) has been appointed assistant professor of philosophy and theology at RTS-Jackson. He comes to RTS from Grand Rapids, Mich., where he was a Ph.D. student at Calvin Seminary and is in the final stages of writing his dissertation on Kierkegaard.

- **Scott Redd** (M.Div. ’04) has been appointed professor of Old Testament at RTS-Orlando and will begin teaching in 2009. He is a Ph.D. candidate and served as director of community life at Christ the King Presbyterian Church, Raleigh, N.C. Prior to seminary he worked in the business world in Washington, D.C.

**RTS TOURS**

- Celebrate the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth by joining Dr. and Mrs. Mike Milton for “Luther, Calvin and the Pope: An RTS Reformation Heritage Tour” on the 500th anniversary of John Calvin’s birth, July 3-12, 2009. See Luther’s Germany and Calvin’s Switzerland, and then depart from Rome. For more information, e-mail cht@rts.edu with RTS 2009 Reformation Tour in the subject line.

**CAMPUS EVENTS**

**Jackson**

- The RTS World Missions Conference will meet Sept. 9-11. The speaker, Thabiti Anyabwile (left), is a former Muslim who is now senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Grand Cayman.

**Washington, D.C.**

- Dr. William Edgar, professor of apologetics at Westminster Seminary, will teach “Introduction to Apologetics” during the fall semester. Dr. Richard B. Giffin, Charles Krahe professor of biblical and systematic theology at Westminster, will teach “The Theology of Hebrews” during the spring 2009 semester.

**Charlotte**

- On Sept. 21, Dr. Mike Milton will be inaugurated and installed as the third president of RTS-Charlotte at 6 p.m. at Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church, Matthews, N.C. The Rev. Dr. John Guest, rector of Christ Church at Grove Farm, Sewickley, Pa., will be guest speaker. On Sept. 22, an “Honor the Past, Build for the Future” dedication event and reception will take place on campus, followed by campus tours.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Dr. Charles S. Mackenzie** (left), professor of philosophy and theology, will now be called distinguished professor of philosophy and theology. In July the RTS Executive Committee formally approved this title, given to faculty members recognized by colleagues worldwide as leaders in their fields.

- On July 1, RTS opened its new MindAndHeart.com online bookstore. As an Amazon Associate bookstore, anything you can buy on Amazon can be bought at MindAndHeart.com. There are also sections with RTS faculty books, recommended books, featured items and used-book options. Receive guaranteed Amazon.com prices while supporting RTS — the seminary receives a small fee on each MindAndHeart.com purchase. Please share this Web address with all your friends.
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