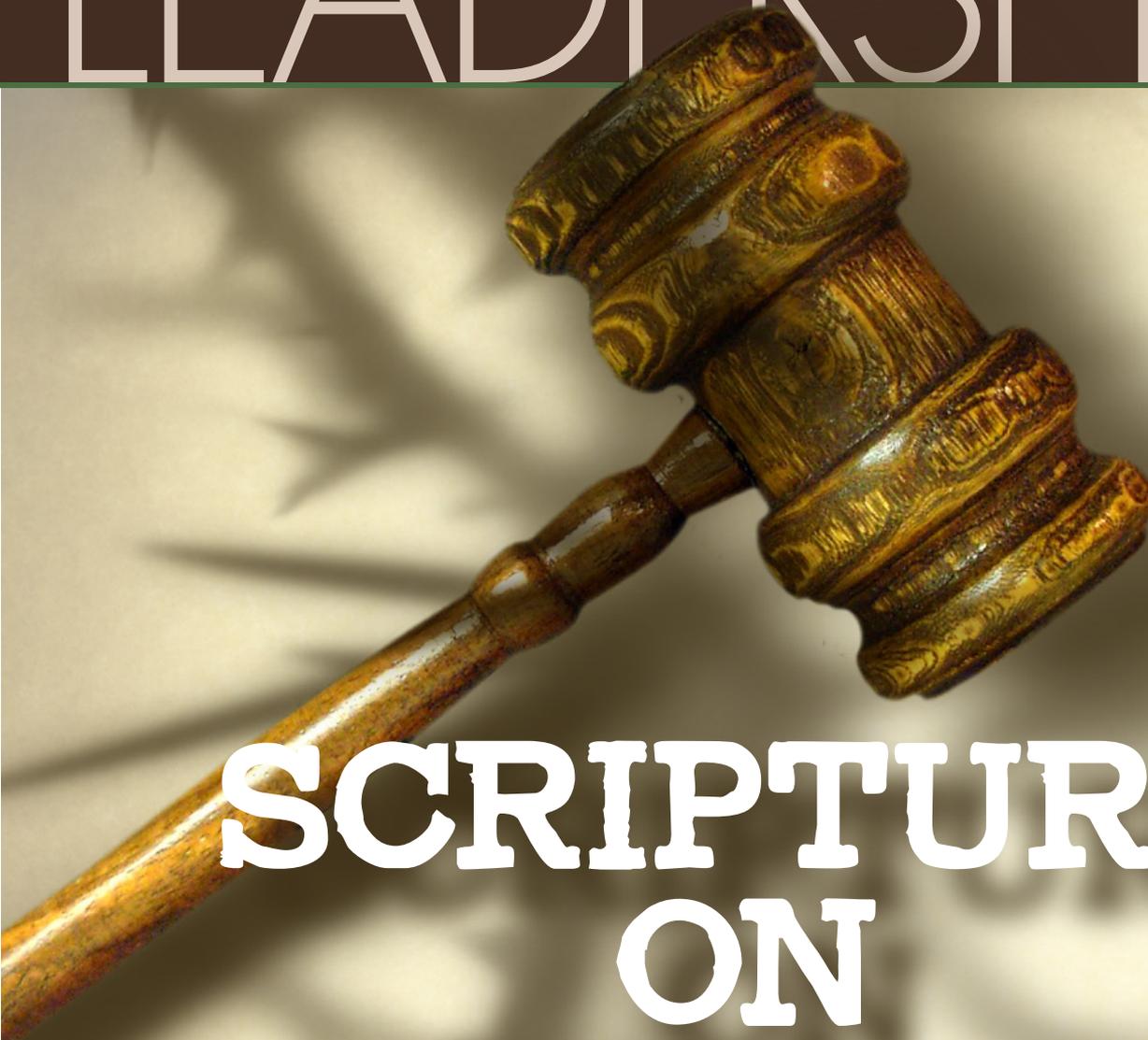


# MINISTRY &

REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SPRING/SUMMER 2015  
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# LEADERSHIP



## SCRIPTURE ON TRIAL

Defending the Bible  
in a culture of skepticism



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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.

Recently I had the privilege of preaching at the Shepherds' Conference hosted by The Master's College and Grace Community Church in California. John MacArthur asked me to preach on 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

In this passage Paul is encouraging Timothy and reminding him of a truth that is absolutely vital for today's ministers in order that they go on preaching faithfully and trusting God to do His work through His Word. Brothers and sisters, we need encouragement because the world we inhabit does not help us believe the truth of this passage. Everywhere we turn, we see assaults on the integrity, authority, infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture.

Sadly, the primary assaults on the Word of God over the past 200 years have come from people who call themselves Christians. In fact, one church leader has said that the Bible is only a reference point for the Word of God, not the Word itself, and that *Sola Scriptura* is dead.

But in the passage I preached on, in just three words in the original Greek, Paul articulates and asserts the doctrine of plenary, verbal inspiration of Scripture. Pastors who preach the Word are speaking a Word above all earthly powers, and those who preach it faith-

fully have become mouthpieces of the living God to facilitate an engagement between the God of the universe and His people, whereby they receive a message of God, grace and godliness.

As the chancellor and CEO of RTS, it is my privilege to serve an institution dedicated to preparing pastors, church planters, missionaries and other church leaders for the work of the gospel for the rest of their lives. Every year, hundreds at a time, we send people into the service of God's people in the work of evangelism and discipleship. In my leadership role at RTS, it is my responsibility to wake up each morning believing the truth about the Bible, and we as a faculty need to pour everything we can into our students so that they stand fast.

One example of a faculty member faithfully accomplishing this task is Dr. Michael Kruger, president of our Charlotte campus. In a two-part series on his excellent blog, Canon Fodder, he addressed the attacks on Scripture made in *Newsweek* magazine. An adaptation of what Dr. Kruger posted on his blog can be found in "Scripture on Trial" on pages 6-9.

RTS was founded nearly 50 years ago on the inerrancy of Scripture, the doctrines of grace and the Great Commission. Let us not lose confidence in the Word of God, and moreover, let us not lose our delight in the God of the Word, who spoke the universe into existence and speaks to us today. **M**

Lyn Perez, Editor in Chief

Paul Schwarz, Managing Editor

Bill Henderson Design, Graphic Design

Stephanie Hartley, Dawn Kilgore, Editorial Assistants

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. Steve Childers** spoke at the Desiring God Conference, Minnesota, February.

**Dr. Ligon Duncan** was a plenary speaker at The Gospel Coalition National Conference, Orlando, Fla., April; and will speak at the Banner of Truth Conference, Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, May 26-28; at the RTS Alumni & Friends Lunch at the PCA General Assembly; at the RTS Alumni & Friends Breakfast at the EPC General Assembly, June; and at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Sept. 25.

**Dr. William Fullilove** will speak to the C.S. Lewis Institute Fellows, May 2, Atlanta, on "How to Determine Your Calling."

**Dr. Howard Griffith** will speak at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., May 23, on "Church Authority in Reformed Perspective."

**Dr. Andrew Hoffercker** (emeritus) preached during the inauguration weekend for Paul McNulty as president of Grove City (Pa.) College, March 22.

**Dr. Don Sweeting** will speak at Chain of Lakes Community Church, Chicago, June 28, for its annual Education Sunday.

## TRAVEL (INTERNATIONAL)

**Dr. Ligon Duncan** was in South Africa in January. He spoke at the Grace Ministers' Conference; preached at Bethany Baptist Church, Constantia Park Baptist Church, Christ Church Somerset West, Plumstead Baptist Church and Goodwood Baptist Church; and spoke and represented RTS at the GKSA Synod. He, along with Dr. Steve Childers, spoke at the World Reformed Fellowship General Assembly, Sao Paulo, Brazil, March 27, where Dr. James

Anderson and Mr. John Muether led the workshop "The Challenge of Islam."

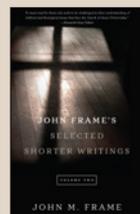
**Dr. Michael McKelvey** will participate in the Young Scholars Summit at Tyndale House, Cambridge, England, June 6-11, on the topic "What Qualifies a Psalm to be 'Messianic?'"

**Dr. Guy Waters** will teach the course Theology of Paul at the L'Association D'Églises Réformées Baptistes du Québec, Montreal, May 25-29; and the course A Biblical Theology of Covenant at the Presbyterian Theological College, Melbourne, Australia, July 27-31.

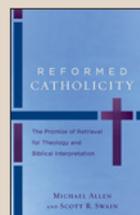
## PUBLICATIONS

**Dr. James Anderson** contributed an updated entry for "Paradox in Theology" for the second edition of the upcoming *New Dictionary in Theology*. He also reviewed *Christian Philosophy: A Systematic and Narrative Introduction* (Baker Academic, 2013), written by Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen, (upcoming in *Expository Times*).

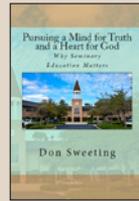
**Dr. John Currid** contributed as Old Testament editor for the historical books in the new *Reformation Study Bible* and has written notes for 1-2 Samuel in the *NIV Zondervan Study Bible* (due August).



**Dr. John Frame** has published the second volume of *John Frame's Selected Shorter Writings* (P&R, March 2014).



**Dr. Scott Swain** and **Dr. Michael Allen** co-authored *Reformed Catholicity: The Promise of Retrieval for Theology and Biblical Interpretation* (Baker Academic, January)



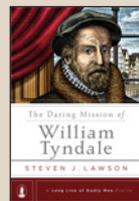
**Dr. Don Sweeting** has published *Pursuing a Mind for Truth and a Heart for God — Why Seminary Education Matters*, a booklet explaining the value of seminary education.

**Dr. Derek Thomas** is the general editor of *The Works of William Perkins* — volume 1 was released in January.

**Dr. Guy Waters** published a review of Jarvis Williams' *For Whom Did Christ Die? The Extent of the Atonement in Paul's Theology* in the *SBTS Journal of Theology* and reviewed Scot McKnight's book *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church* for Ref21.

## ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS

**Melissa Kruger** (RTS alumna and wife of Dr. Mike Kruger, president of RTS-Charlotte) has published *Walking With God in the Season of Motherhood* (WaterBrook Press, March).



**Dr. Steven Lawson** (D.Min., '09) has released *The Daring Mission of William Tyndale* (Reformation Trust, January) as part of the *Long Line of Godly Men* series.

**Steve Parr** has published *Moments With the Master: 365-Day Poetry Devotional* (Zulon Press, December 2014), the first of a five-book yearly devotional series written in Haiku poetry form to inspire believers to spend increasing time with God.

**Steve Bateman** (D.Min., '04) has published *Brother, Stand Firm! Seven Things Every Man Should Know, Practice, and Invest in the Next Generation* (Wipf & Stock, November 2014).

## COMMENCEMENTS

### Jackson

Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m., First Presbyterian Church, Jackson. Speaker: Dr. David Strain, senior pastor.

### Orlando



Friday, May 22, 6 p.m., St. Andrew's Chapel, Sanford, Fla. Speaker: Dr. Bryan Chapel, senior pastor, Grace Presbyterian Church, Peoria, Ill., and former chancellor, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis.

### Atlanta

Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. campus chapel. Speaker: Joe Novenson, senior teaching pastor, Lookout Mountain (Ga.) Presbyterian Church.

### Charlotte

Saturday, May 23, 11 a.m., Christ Covenant Church, Matthews, N.C. Speaker: Dr. Richard Phillips, senior minister, Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, S.C., who serves on the board and council of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, the council of The Gospel Coalition, and the board of trustees of Westminster Theological Seminary.

### Washington, D.C.

Friday, May 29, 7:30 p.m., McLean (Va.) Presbyterian Church. Speaker: William Edgar, professor of apologetics, Westminster Theological Seminary.

### Houston

Saturday, May 2, 4 p.m., Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Speaker: David Dykstra, pastor, Grace Covenant Baptist Church, New Waverly, Texas. This will be the first RTS-Houston graduation — the sole graduate will be Matt Stahl, who is responsible for recruiting there and is the assistant to Rev. Tim McKeown, RTS-Houston executive director.

Continued on Page 19

# Grace and Law:

The balance between the two is the key to sanctification.

When a child enters a family, either by birth or adoption, something momentous happens, and neither the child nor the family will ever be the same again. The child now has a home, a place of belonging. In a few extreme cases, a family will disinherit a child. But for the most part, the child belongs to the family in perpetuity, and the family belongs to him or to her. In the family of God, membership is absolutely permanent. Jesus says in John 10:27-29, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”

Here Jesus speaks of a flock of sheep as a metaphor for the family of God. In Romans 8:14-17, Paul treats the relationship more literally:

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.”

As sons and children, we are heirs with Christ. We have a glorious destiny. And nobody can take that away from us, as Romans 8:38-39 reminds us: “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

How can Paul be so sure that nothing can separate us

from God’s love? The answer, according to Ephesians 2:8-9, is that our membership in God’s family is by *grace*: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Like birth and adoption, our membership in God’s family is a free gift. In our earthly families, we didn’t earn our right to be born, or to be adopted. Our membership in the family is a sheer gift, a bequest of someone else. The same is true of the family of God. Our new birth is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus answered Nicodemus in John 3:5-6, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Unlike our earthly families, our entrance into God’s family is by both birth and adoption: “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:4-6).

As the Holy Spirit gives us new birth, so Jesus’ redeeming work on the cross gives us adoption as God’s sons. Both in the figure of birth and the figure of adoption, we become members of God’s family by grace, by God’s gift.

But of course joining the family is not the final story — either in our earthly families or in the family of God. In the family of God, as we’ve seen, joining the family is permanent, and it guarantees a good end. But between the begin-

We obey because God works in us, giving us the grace to obey.



ning and the end, there are a lot of ups and downs.

Good parents set boundaries for their children, and when the children rebel, there is unpleasantness. Nobody will disown a child for staying up past curfew, but a good parent won't ignore it either. In the family of God, too, there is "fatherly discipline," as Hebrews 12:7-11 reminds us:

"It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

As Jesus himself sums it up in John 14:15, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

That is the role of *law* in the Christian life. If we belong to Jesus by grace, we will want to obey Him, and His commands measure that obedience. That is the path of *sanctification*. You can see that there is no conflict between salvation by grace and sanctification measured by law.

The point is not that God gives us grace at the beginning and after that it is all law. God continues to give grace day by day. Paul brings the two together in Philippians 2:12-13: "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."

Here there is no competition between grace and law. We obey *because* God works in us, giving us the grace to obey.

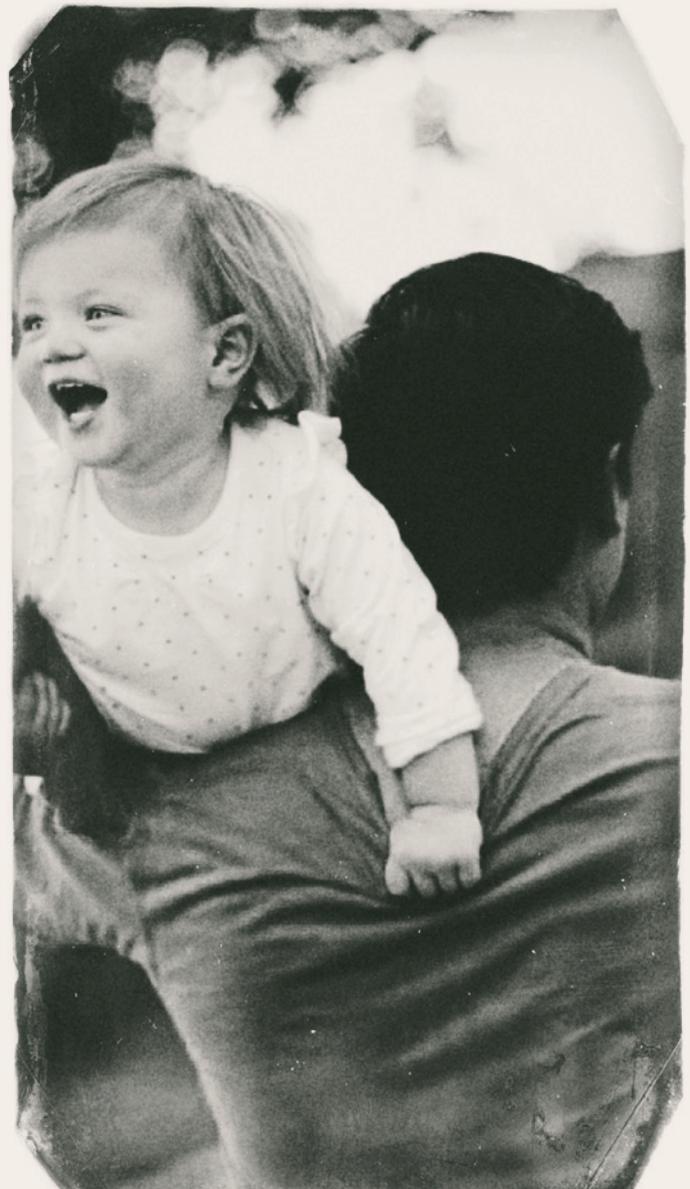
A clear understanding of the biblical relationship of grace and law will help us through dangers of two types. For one, sometimes we get to thinking that since salvation is by grace we don't need to put in any effort. But no, God's grace energizes us to fight a spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:11-17) and to run a spiritual race (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Secondly, sometimes we get to thinking that since Scripture abounds in commands and laws, it is all up to us. But no, according to Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved through

faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

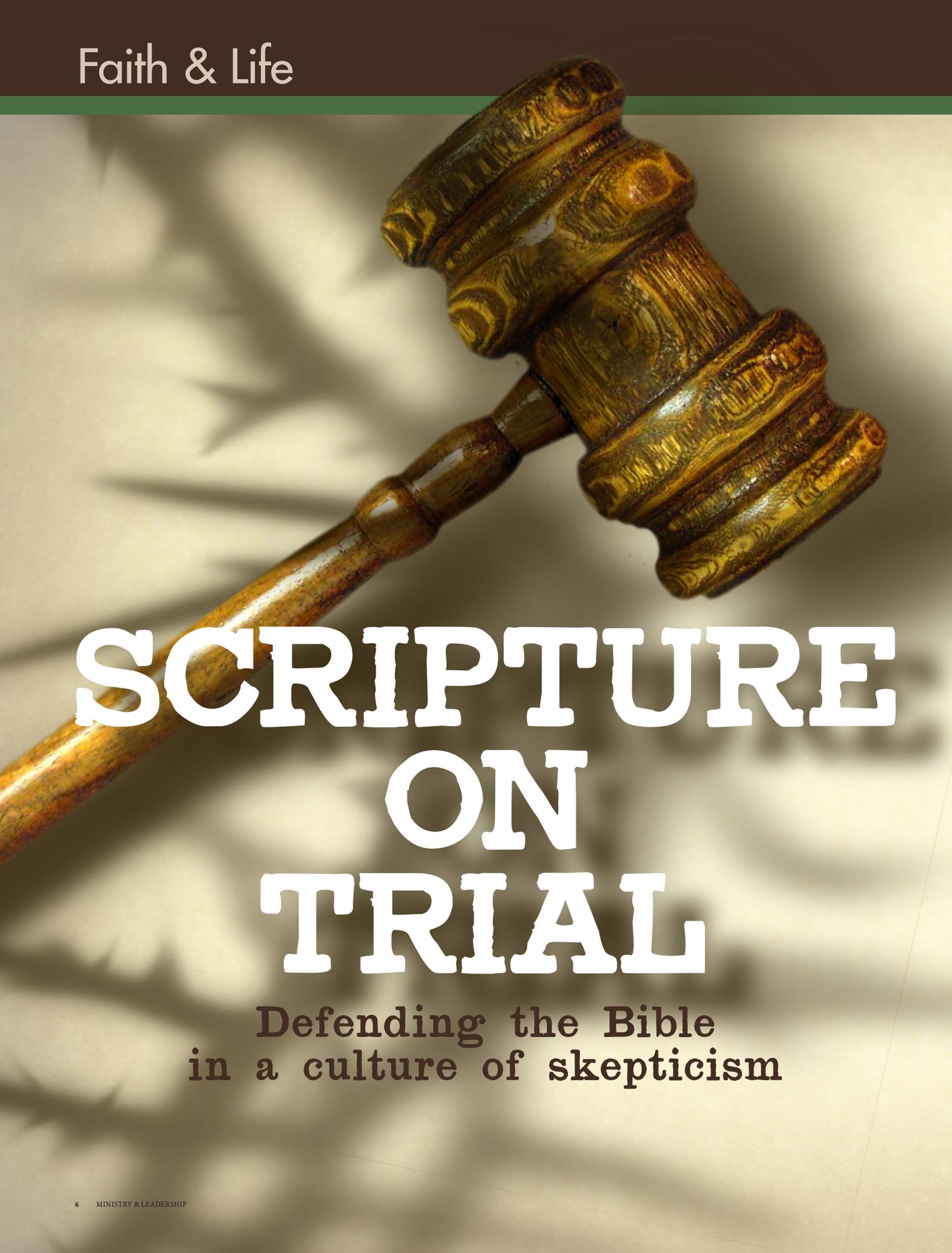
So we need to keep reminding ourselves that our family membership is all of grace, and that the Lord Jesus will keep us to the end.

Keeping the balance may be hard at times. But the theological issue is not difficult. Just think about a happy family and remember that our relation to God is a lot like that. **M**

*Dr. Frame is J.D. Trimble professor of systematic theology and philosophy at RTS-Orlando. He is best known for his prolific writings, particularly his award-winning, four-volume Theology of Lordship series.*



Photograph by Elizabeth Sloan



# SCRIPTURE ON TRIAL

Defending the Bible  
in a culture of skepticism



**This article is based on Dr. Kruger's two-part rebuttal to Kurt Eichenwald's much-publicized December 23, 2014, article in *Newsweek* magazine. Dr. Kruger's rebuttals on his blog, which include responses from Eichenwald himself in the comments on the posts, may be found at [www.michaeljkruger.com](http://www.michaeljkruger.com) by searching for *Newsweek*. The rebuttals delve into deeper detail concerning the issues addressed here.**

It seems that almost every Christmas and Easter, some major news publication comes out with a story criticizing the Bible and questioning its historical reliability. Such articles, timed purposefully to challenge Christian beliefs precisely when they are being celebrated, often encapsulate the standard objections to Christianity prevalent in our modern world.

Inasmuch as we should engage our world for the cause of Christ, it is important that we are able to offer a response to these objections when they arise. Here I have gathered together some of the most common challenges to the authority of the Bible, along with a brief response to each.

### **THE BIBLE HAS NOT BEEN RELIABLY TRANSMITTED**

One of the most common claims about the Bible is that it has been corrupted or changed throughout its many years of transmission history. Since the Bible has been copied thousands of times by scribes — scribes who were error-prone amateurs who often made mistakes — then how can we ever be sure that we possess what was originally written?

Such accusations are usually accompanied by some stock examples of textual changes, such as the doubtful verses at the end of Mark's Gospel (Mark 16:9-20), or the story of the women caught in adultery (John 7:53-8:11).

But, such accusations overlook the tremendous evidence for the reliability of the Bible's transmission over time. We have early and abundant copies of both the Old and the New Testament texts — more than other comparable ancient documents — which allows us to observe how different these copies really are.

And how different are they? Not much. By comparing these many manuscripts we learn that the vast majority of textual differences are very minor — spelling differences, word order changes, etc. Even though there are a few textual changes that are larger (e.g., Mark 16:9-20; John 7:53-8:11), these do not challenge our ability to recover the original text

because we can identify them as later additions. Therefore, we know such stories are not original.

In the end, we can have a high degree of confidence that the text we read in the Bible today was the text written by the original authors back then.

### **THE BIBLE HAS NOT BEEN RELIABLY TRANSLATED**

Another objection that arises, closely related to the first, is that the Bible has not been reliably translated into other languages. Indeed, not only are these translations unreliable, it is argued, but they are intentionally corrupted to make the Bible support the political and theological agendas of the translator.

By way of response, we should first acknowledge that not all translations are necessarily good ones. Any translator may make mistakes (whether intentional nor not), so it is possible, in principle, that some translations contain errors. Some ancient translators may have simply lacked the linguistic skills to reliably accomplish such a task.

It is for precisely this reason that Christians have uniformly acknowledged that God inspired the words of the Bible in the original languages, not necessarily in any given translation. This is why many evangelical seminaries, like RTS, insist that students learn the Bible in the original language.

That said, it should also be acknowledged that, for the most part, we have very reliable English translations today that can be trusted by modern Christians. The fact that such translations (and translational methodologies) are subject to the scrutiny of other scholars reduces the possibility that political-theological agendas can corrupt the translational process. And even if they did corrupt the process, it is more likely that we would be able to identify such corruption when it occurred.

Continued on Page 8

## EARLY CHRISTIANITY WAS WILDLY DIVERSE WITH NO THEOLOGICAL CONSENSUS

No critique of early Christianity would be complete without trotting out the standard claims that early Christians couldn't agree on much of anything, and everyone was busy fighting over early Christian doctrines. Diversity ruled the day, we are told. In the earliest years there was no such thing as Christianity. Instead, there were Christianities (plural), each claiming to be the original version.

The standard example of such claims pertains to the divinity of Jesus. The earliest Christians, it is argued, did not necessarily believe that Jesus was divine at all. In fact, no one could really agree about who exactly Jesus was. It was not until Constantine invoked political pressure at the Council of Nicea in the fourth century that Christians finally began to “agree” that Jesus was God in the flesh.

But, this whole line of reasoning is a misrepresentation of the historical facts. While there were certainly some early groups who thought Jesus was only human, the belief that Jesus was fully divine goes all the way back to the writings of the New Testament itself in the first century. In Philippians 2:6-11, Paul recites an early Christian “hymn” that likely goes back even further than the letter itself. In this hymn, Christ is clearly exalted as God Himself and given “the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth” (2:9-10).

In addition, Jesus is clearly regarded as divine in a variety of second-century Christian texts, the earliest writings outside of the New Testament. For example, Ignatius the bishop of Antioch writes his letter to Polycarp (c. 110) and plainly states, “I bid you farewell always in our God Jesus Christ” (8.3).

## APOCRYPHAL GOSPELS WERE JUST AS POPULAR AS CANONICAL GOSPELS

In order to impugn the integrity of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, critics will often appeal to the existence of apocryphal gospels (stories of Jesus outside of the New Testament) such as the Gospel of Thomas or the Gospel of Peter. Such gospels, we are told, were just as popular as the ones that ended up in our New Testaments, and therefore just as valid. The only reason we have the four Gospels that we do is because Constantine (again) intervened at the Council of Nicea and forced the church to pick just these four.

Once again, this whole narrative is substantially misleading. Despite the popularity of the idea that the canon was decided at Nicea by Constantine — an idea that appears in the fictional book *The Da Vinci Code* — it is simply false. The truth is that Constantine had nothing to do with which books were placed into the New Testament, nor did the Council of Nicea for that matter.

Moreover, the historical evidence suggests that the four canonical Gospels were, by far, the most widely used and valued in

early Christianity. Not only are they expressly affirmed by some of our earliest Christian sources (e.g., Irenaeus, the Muratorian canon, Clement of Alexandria), but they are quoted and cited much more extensively than apocryphal texts.

Indeed, no apocryphal gospel was ever a serious contender for a spot in the New Testament canon. They never appear on any canonical lists, and they are never bound together with the canonical Gospels in any early manuscripts. For the earliest Christians, the authoritative sources for the life of Jesus were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

**It is for precisely this reason that Christians have uniformly acknowledged that God inspired the words of the Bible in the original languages, not necessarily in any given translation. This is why many evangelical seminaries, like RTS, insist that students learn the Bible in the original language.**

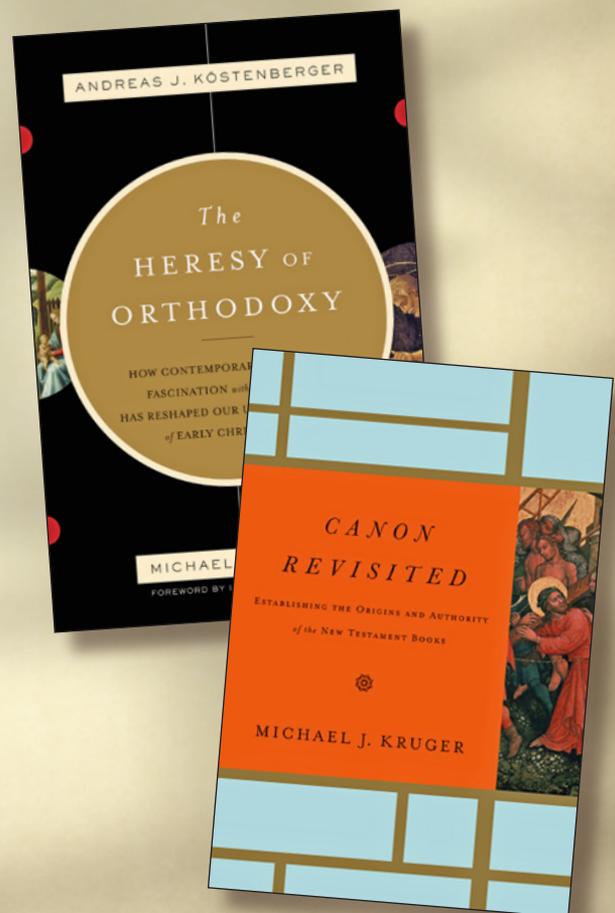
## THE BIBLE CONTRADICTS ITSELF

Virtually every attack on the authority of the Bible includes the claim that the Bible, at numerous points, contradicts itself. There are just too many discrepancies for the Bible to be trusted, we are told. And most of these supposed discrepancies have to do with the four Gospels. Was there one angel

# FOR FURTHER READING

## To dig deeper into the issues

by Dr. Kruger in his article, look for his books *The Heresy of Orthodoxy* (with Andreas Kostenberger) and *Canon Revisited* (he specializes in the study of canonical Scripture, as referenced in the title of his blog, Canon Fodder). He also recommends *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* by Craig Blomberg, *Who Chose the Gospels?* by Dr. Charles Hill (professor at RTS-Orlando), and *Truth Matters* by Kostenberger and Darrell Bock. Visit the RTS online bookstore at [www.mindandheart.com](http://www.mindandheart.com) to begin your search for these books.



at the tomb or two? Did Jesus cleanse at the beginning of his ministry (John) or at the end of his ministry (the Synoptics)? Why does Jesus use different words in different Gospels?

Of course, there are many more proposed contradictions beyond these examples. And there is no way that a brief article such as this could ever deal with each one of them. But, many such discrepancies could be resolved if some basic principles of ancient historiography were kept in mind.

First, in ancient history, stories did not have to be told in a chronological fashion. Order was often changed for thematic or practical reasons. Second, when passing along the teachings or sayings of an individual, words were often not quoted verbatim. On the contrary, such sayings were often condensed, reworded or summarized in order to save space or meet the needs of the audience in mind. Third, if an author fails to mention the occurrence of an event or action, we should not, on that basis, conclude that the event or action did not occur. If we did so, we would be appealing to an argument from silence — which is widely regarded as fallacious. Authors would leave out details for all sorts of reasons, and we must be careful of the conclusions we draw from omissions.

When these three principles are applied carefully, and a person is willing to approach the text as innocent until proven guilty (rather than the opposite), then the vast majority of apparent contradictions quickly disappear.

Moreover, it should be acknowledged that for generations, evangelical scholars have interacted with these problematic passages in extensive detail and have offered cogent responses and explanations. Many of these responses can be found in the major commentaries on the Gospels.

## CONCLUSION

We have examined some of the most common challenges to the authority and integrity of the Bible. While we have only been able to offer a limited response here, we have seen that the Bible has excellent historical credentials and can be trusted to give us the very words of God himself.

Such a conclusion should come as no surprise. Jesus also affirmed the trustworthiness of the Bible: “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). **M**

*Dr. Kruger is the president of RTS-Charlotte as well as Samuel C. Patterson professor of New Testament and early Christianity. Read his blog at [www.michaeljkruger.com](http://www.michaeljkruger.com), and follow him on Twitter @michaeljkruger.*

# RETHINKING

JIM WEHNER HELPS RENEW INNER-CITY ATLANTA ONE NEIGHBORHOOD AT A TIME.

**A** well-worn pastoral analogy compares the Christian life to a marathon, not a 100-yard sprint. Jim Wehner has lived that analogy, being a former pastor who has run four marathons and has his eye on training for a fifth this fall, if a balky knee will let him. “I’ve never been fast,” admits the RTS-Atlanta graduate. “It’s not about speed for me. I feel like some of my best thinking is done when I’m out there on my own just tooling along.”

Some of that thinking involves his current ministry, which is based on a different approach to meeting the myriad of needs in the inner-city neighborhoods of Atlanta. Jim is the president of FCS Urban Ministries, which, according to its mission statement, “partners with under-served neighborhoods to provide innovative and holistic development that produces flourishing communities where God’s Shalom is present.”

Jim’s journey to Atlanta and FCS couldn’t have been more circuitous. His father transferred frequently with his company, so Jim grew up in Indiana, attended high school in Connecticut, moved to Idaho after high school, went to college in Washington state, worked in Seattle after college, moved to New York and then Dallas, finally settling in Atlanta with his wife and children 20 years ago. When asked if there’s any place he hasn’t called home, “I haven’t lived in North Dakota,” he quips.

After many years in retail business, Jim began to sense a calling to vocational minis-



try. “I loved what I was doing,” he says, “but I began to sense that life was moving in a different direction for me.” In 1999 Jim left his company to become a church planter, pastoring a suburban Atlanta congregation. Though his denomination did not require a seminary degree for its pastors, he began attending RTS-Atlanta in 2002, graduating in 2008.

“In preaching and teaching, but more importantly pastorally, RTS was perfect at the time when I needed it,” Jim explains. “It’s one thing to know certain texts; it’s another to talk to somebody in the congregation who needs to hear from God and apply those texts in a real-life situation.”

Jim’s real-life situation changed in 2008 when he left pastoral ministry to join FCS. “We got benevolence calls every week,” he says, admitting that “I was unprepared for minis-



Jim talks to a group of FCS volunteers working on a home-building project coordinated by the ministry.

# CHARITY

BY PAUL SCHWARZ

tering to a group of people I didn't know a lot about. I had grown up middle class, so ministering to people struggling with poverty led to all sorts of things I didn't have a lot of context for." In the process of addressing those needs, Jim discovered that his business background fit well with helping meet physical and spiritual needs in the inner city.

In a new role as director of housing with FCS, Jim was part of a team implementing a different approach to urban ministry. What distinguishes FCS is its emphasis on long-term community development as opposed to short-term relief. "Relief answers a crisis need — for instance, if there's a tornado or a house burns down," Jim explains. "When you answer that crisis need with tangible relief, people are helped. On the other hand, if you answer chronic need with relief, meaning continual giveaway, then you build dependency, and people don't move in such a way as to help themselves. The struggle for the church is that almost all ministry and outreach [to the poor] is built on a relief paradigm. But in the end we may not be helping as much as we think — we feel great because we're giving generously, but we're not asking questions about the dignity of the people we're giving to."

Another of the principles guiding FCS' approach to urban ministry is its emphasis on working exclusively in one neighborhood at a time. "We recognize that the amount of need will dwarf the ability of our organization if we [spread ourselves too thin]," explains Jim, who became president of FCS in early 2014.

FCS has spent the past several years in South Atlanta, a neighborhood three miles from downtown that represents the flight from cities to the suburbs due to its proximity to Turner Field, soon to be abandoned by baseball's Atlanta Braves for a new suburban stadium. In South Atlanta, FCS collaborates with community leaders to help them create ownership of solutions to social issues such as crime, poverty and housing.

But where families connect with FCS and ultimately with local churches, and "where the gospel really comes into play," according to Jim, is at the program level. FCS helps community members develop creative approaches to ministry — all with eye on development as opposed to relief.

To illustrate, Jim tells the story of a neighborhood youth development program that began when a resident named Andre was fixing a bicycle in front of his house: "One of the neighborhood boys stopped and asked, 'Can you fix my bike?' [Eventually] this guy, on his front porch, starts teaching kids

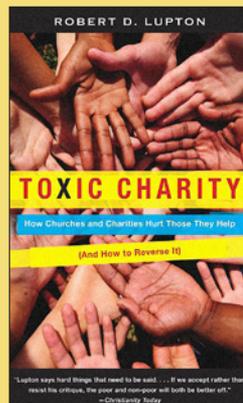
how to repair their own bikes. It led to a program where kids also learn how to be part of a team as well as learn character issues. The bike is the draw for discipleship and mentoring."

Through FCS-related programs like South Atlanta Bikes, neighborhood residents connect with local churches representing a variety of denominations. "Obviously for the gospel to go forth in the neighborhood, we want families connected to a church," Jim notes. "The churches have what the families need in terms of community connection and spiritual wholeness." FCS also plays a role in helping neighborhood churches work more effectively together, whether through monthly prayer meetings or other initiatives. "Sometimes we convene those," Jim observes, "and at other times they're convening on their own, which we love to see, because they're taking ownership of ministry in their neighborhood."

The development model of inner-city ministry requires a marathon runner's patience and perseverance. "It's much slower work, it's much quieter, and the metrics are harder to follow," Jim acknowledges. But one neighborhood at a time, he and the FCS team help lead Atlanta neighborhoods to the finish line. **M**

To learn more about FCS, visit [www.fcsministries.org](http://www.fcsministries.org).

## TOXIC CHARITY



The FCS model of inner-city ministry has spread beyond Atlanta to influence other cities. *Toxic Charity*, a book written by FCS founder Bob Lupton, gives more insight into the reasoning and the model FCS uses for Christian community development. This must-read for every pastor and church leader has informed initiatives like Lift Orlando,

led by RTS-Orlando alumnus Phil Hissom (see "Rebuilding the City Beautiful," Spring/Summer 2012 issue). *Toxic Charity* can be ordered at the RTS online bookstore at [www.mindandheart.com](http://www.mindandheart.com) by searching for the title.

# ESCAPE

A South African pastor continues

# FROM

his theological renewal in Jackson.

# LIBERALISM

BY PAUL SCHWARZ

## Gary Sinclair was desperate.

The South African pastoral intern was a year and a half into a two-year training stint in a town on the nation's eastern cape, and he had come to a crisis of faith. A steady diet of theological liberalism will do that.

"I remember crying out, 'Lord, this is not the faith I remember reading about and listening to,'" the RTS-Jackson student says. "I feel like I have nothing to offer Your people here, in terms of Scripture and centering them on Christ.' As I reflect now, my [original theological] training had dismantled a number of the various components of my faith, and I was unable to bring them back together. I cried out, 'Lord, either take me back to how I once understood things, or I need to get out [of the ministry].'"

In His faithfulness, the Lord showed Gary and his family a new trajectory to his life and ministry, one that first took him to the RTS Global Campus and then later stateside to Jackson, in preparation for returning to South Africa.

Upon Gary completing his internship, the Sinclairs moved to another city in South Africa, where Gary assumed his first official pastorate. A minister in a nearby town who shared his Reformed evangelical perspective befriended him and introduced him to a Reformed bookstore. Through these influences, "the Lord graciously grew me in my Reformed convictions," Gary says. "With that, I obviously started to see the loopholes in what's happening in the [South African] church at large."

Later, at a conference in South Africa, Gary met Dr. Derek Thomas, then a professor at RTS-Jackson and now at RTS-Atlanta. "He graciously gave me a couple of hours and helped me sort out theological issues I had been pondering for about five years that some of my colleagues in South Africa weren't able to help me grasp," Gary recalls. "He took the questions I had and grounded them, and it all made sense."

Eventually the Sinclairs moved to the capital city of Pretoria, where Gary accepted a call to a new pastorate. One ministry opportunity that opened up for Gary there involved a chaplaincy at the seminary affiliated with a local university. "That was an opportunity to pastor the students," he explains. "Because of the nature of their [liberal] training, I tried to meet with them at least once a week and find out what was going on in their lives theologically and personally, and then try to bring them back to the Scriptures and to Christ."

The picture Gary paints concerning the influence of theological liberalism on the South African church is one he and others are working to redraw. "The Lord has used those occasions to help me see this is the definite need in South Africa," he declares. "[Consider] how many people have been through the system and been persuaded to preach something else other than Christ."

While in Pretoria, as part of his ongoing theological renewal, Gary began his RTS-Global studies, which laid the groundwork for the family's move to the United States and

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**"There are plenty of ministers out there not preaching Christ but a whole variety of other messages, and it starts in the training institutions." – Gary Sinclair**



RTS-Jackson. According to Gary, he felt the need to attend seminary full time so as to better undo the faulty foundations of his theological education, with the ultimate goal being the equipping of a new generation of gospel ministers in South Africa.

“That is the big need in South Africa,” Gary declares. “There are plenty of ministers out there not preaching Christ but a whole variety of other messages, and it starts in the

training institutions. Over the years I saw how the desire for evangelism, for proclaiming Christ was decimated. So it has to begin with a solidly confessional, Reformed institution committed to raising up a generation of men who will go out and proclaim Christ from across the different cultural groups in South Africa. I want to be involved in pasto-

Continued on Page 14

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## RTS-GLOBAL: THREE DEGREES OF PREPARATION

Commitments to family, church and work make it impossible for people like Steven Johnstone (see “A Global Influence” on page 15) to attend seminary classes on a traditional campus. RTS-Global offers access to some of the high-quality, evangelical, biblically based training for which RTS is known worldwide.

Continuing to stay on the forefront of keeping theological education flexible, available and accessible, RTS now offers

three degrees — Master of Arts (Biblical Studies), Master of Arts (Theological Studies) and Master of Arts (Religion) — in which all coursework can be taken online. These degree programs allow students to complete their seminary education without leaving their current occupation, community and church. **M**

*For more information, visit [www.rts.edu/online-degrees](http://www.rts.edu/online-degrees).*



Members of the Limpopo Gospel Choir perform (left) at the South African church at which Gary (below, with family) pastored. He observes that the country continues to heal from years of institutionalized racial segregation.



Continued from Page 13

ral work, but I certainly want to get involved in some form of training and teaching gospel ministers.”

The Sinclairs’ journey stateside to accomplish that goal has been “interesting,” as Gary understatedly describes it. “[At a restaurant I ordered] a hamburger and chips, and literally got a packet of chips, not fries! But my [wife, Petula,] and I can honestly say that we’re now starting to feel like we’re adjusting and settling in.”

Part of the smoothness of that adjustment has come from the encouragement of the people at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, where Gary serves as a Christian education intern. “If it weren’t for the entire Christian community, where love is being expressed, I’m not sure we would have survived.”

Gary performs a baptism in his previous church in the South African executive capital, Pretoria (the nation has three capital cities, Cape Town and Bloemfontein being the others).



Gary calls that same Christian community to pray for South Africa, as according to him, a solid Reformed witness is desperately needed there. “Much is happening in the country, both wicked and encouraging,” he reports. “Pray that the Lord would sustain the existent faithful witness and cause more faithful gospel laborers to be sent to declare the riches of the glory of Christ, unflinching and uncompromising in their proclamation of truth.”

In doing so, those who pray for South Africa follow in the footsteps of Gary’s own prayer of desperation many years ago. **M**

*Gary began his RTS education though the Global Campus. For more information, see “Three Degrees of Preparation” on page 13.*

## CHANCELLOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Dr. Ligon Duncan, RTS chancellor and CEO, rang in the new year in January by traveling to South Africa. He spoke at the Grace Ministers’ Conference, preached at five churches, spoke and represented RTS at the GKSA (Reformed Churches in South Africa) Synod, and gave the opening lectures for the 2015 academic year at Mukhanyo Theological College in Kwamhlanga.

Photos from his trip can be found on his Facebook page — if you haven’t “liked” his page yet, you can do so now by searching for J. Ligon Duncan. **M**

# STEVEN JOHNSTONE: A GLOBAL INFLUENCE

BY PAUL SCHWARZ

**When Steven Johnstone and Gary Sinclair** (see main article) traveled from South Africa to Charlotte for their orientation to the RTS Global Campus, the two men met for the first time and forged a friendship. Gary has since continued his RTS education stateside at the Jackson campus, but Steven is still working on an RTS-Global degree while leading a Bible college affiliated with Church-on-Main, a congregation in Cape Town, more than 800 miles away from Pretoria (where Gary pastored).

Steven's background makes him an unlikely candidate to be a Bible teacher. By his own admission, the former cricket player wasted his youthful years in living reminiscent of the Prodigal Son. In his early 20s, though, Steven walked into a church with his then-live-in girlfriend and re-heard the gospel message with new ears — and walked out of that same church with a new heart.

“Our lives changed instantaneously,” he recalls, fighting back tears at the end of a 20-minute recollection of his and his girlfriend (now wife)'s conversion. Part of Steven's changed life involved embarking on a business path that led him around the world as a real estate investment trainer, as well as brought him and his family to Church-on-Main.

Steven's connection with RTS-Global also bears unusual note, in that part of the inspiration for it comes from a conversation with a nonbeliever. “She had gone back to university in her mid-50s to do a Ph.D.,” he explains, “and I casually mentioned that I'd always wanted to study and do a master's degree. She just said, ‘Do it! You'll love it! Don't be scared — it doesn't matter about your age. It's amazing how the Lord used her to give me the courage.’”

Duly inspired, Steven began searching online and discovered RTS-Global, finding that it fit his need for a program without residency requirements that would have forced him to uproot his family. “It has been an incredibly fruitful time,” says Steven about his three years of study so far, during which he has launched Church-on-Main Bible College. Steven teaches courses covering a variety of subjects, in an effort

to provide church members and others with what he calls “a world-class theological education in a church setting.”

The Bible college appears to be bearing fruit in the lives of its students. “I still have moments thinking of how I could not afford to have this knowledge in my life,” says Nicky Lewis, who took Steven's course on covenant theology. “Now I feel that I have grown and matured so much more in my relationship with God. The course is very intense, and you need to be focused, but Steve shepherded and facilitated the



Steven and his family live in Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa (Bloemfontein is the judicial capital).

course with such integrity and skill. Now that I have entered the doors of Bible college I feel a great sense of excitement and hunger to learn more. I cannot wait for the next course.”

From opposite sides of the Atlantic for the time being, Steven and Gary continue to exert a positive influence on the theological health of the South African church. **M**

To access Church-on-Main Bible College resources prepared by Steven, visit [www.churchonmain.org.za/bible-college-2](http://www.churchonmain.org.za/bible-college-2).

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**Steven's background makes him an unlikely candidate to be a Bible teacher.**

## DeYoung, Restless and Reformed

**K**evin DeYoung is one of the most visible figures in the new generation of Reformed evangelical pastors and church leaders. His popular blog on the Gospel Coalition website illustrates his connection to the growth of what has become known as the “young, restless and Reformed” movement popularized by author Collin Hansen (the title of this article quotes Kevin’s co-opting of his friend’s book title for his blog title).

For all of Kevin’s identity with the so-called “new Calvinism,” though, he more identifies himself as senior pastor of University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan, near Michigan State University (Kevin is a loyal fan of the Spartans). *M&L* managing editor Paul Schwarz caught up with Kevin to get his perspective on pastoral ministry, the “young, restless and Reformed” movement, and where he sees the church headed in a new generation.

**Q** How do you balance the responsibilities of pastoring a local church with the broader platform you’ve been given within the body of Christ?

Hopefully, pastoring a local church and having a broader platform actually feed each other. Having a broader platform enables me to bring into local church ministry different experiences and resources. For example, if I have a question about the PCA denomination, I’ll get Ligon Duncan on the phone. I wouldn’t be able to do that if we hadn’t become friends through having been places and doing events together.

Conversely, any sort of public ministry has to be rooted in the local church, so I’m always bringing real-world experiences to bear. For example, we just had a 23-year-old man in our congregation die of cancer, leaving behind a wife who’s now a widow at 23 or 24. These things happen in real life in church ministry. While I can’t do everything, and I have a very good team around me to help do things, I never want to be too big, so to speak, that I’m not involved in speaking at funerals and praying for people in the hospitals, because that’s where ministry happens — not just in the pulpit, or in writing books and blogs.

I have elders who support me and want to make sure I’m involved and invested in the local church as a pastor, while

at the same time they see the value in some of these broader church things. These are older men who have been around for years and years — none of them are too impressed with me, or are even that invested in the world of blogs and social media, so they have a much more accurate view of who I am and who I’m supposed to be in the church, and they keep me grounded and honest.

**Q** You’ve become one of the public faces of what’s known as the “young, restless and Reformed” movement. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this movement?

Starting with weaknesses, anytime you’re talking about movements, it’s hard to know exactly who or what we’re talking about. I’ve been part of the “new Calvinism,” or “young, restless and Reformed,” but I’ve also been a member of a mainline denomination, I’m confessionally Reformed, and I resonate with all the old Reformed guys. So am I “old Calvinism” or “new Calvinism”?

Another weakness is that movements like these need at some point to be historically rooted, and some of the “young, restless and Reformed” are. But you need historical context and rootedness, I think, if you’re going to have long-term viability and health.

Also, one of the dangers of movements like this is where you draw the line — which things become non-negotiable, such as church polity or the sacraments. Folks can “agree to disagree” in terms of friendships and some wider ministry, which can be appropriate, but there’s also a danger when issues become marginalized.

As far as positives, though, we should be grateful that an increasing number of young people find their theological anchor point in broadly Reformed writers, have a passion for Reformed soteriology, are grounded in a belief that Scripture is inspired and inerrant, see the importance of doctrine, and preach and teach a God who is big and sovereign. All these things, I hope, would encourage any Calvinist, old or new.

Even though I have important theological differences with some of these brothers and sisters, how can I not be grateful for people reading the sort of works that Reformed and Presbyterian people would love our young people to read and be growing in? In many ways it’s a recalibrating of what has been very good in historic evangelicalism.

We see a coalescing of folks, movements and churches with Reformed soteriology, evangelical conviction and a vibrant faith. That's never to replace a confessionally Reformed and Presbyterian identity, but we're also grateful for what the Lord seems to be doing.

So when we had a conference in Lansing a few years ago and had Presbyterians speak, a Baptist like John Piper speak, and 3,000 mostly young people show up for a conference to hear about the five "Solos," how can we not rejoice in that? It's not the local church, and it's not everything the church ought to be doing, but as an infusion of good, robust, biblical teaching, I say go for it.

**Q** Many people like to talk about being "gospel-centered." What does that term really mean, and how has it come to mean something it shouldn't?

Even our best terms can either be co-opted or lose value due to overuse, like "evangelical." "Gospel-centered" and "evangelical" are in some ways the same term etymologically. I think "gospel-centered" is trying to get at wanting to make central the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection, justification by faith alone, historic Reformation principles of grace alone and Christ alone, and that it's not what we do to make our way to God but what God has done to come down and save us.

But it's almost become a cliché — "gospel-centered parenting," "gospel-centered preaching," "gospel-centered rabbit care." More concerning is the way the term can be used for doctrinal imbalances, such as the gospel becoming seen as unconditional affirmation in Christ, so that if we're gospel-centered, we don't exhort people, don't insist upon obedience to the law, and no longer warn people. It's very clear that one of the aspects of gospel preaching is admonition.

Right now I'm preaching through 1 John, a book about assurance and how we know who's a Christian, and one of the signs is that you're obedient to the commands. There are very stern, striking commands and warnings, and it's not somehow no longer gospel-centered because I'm not telling people they feel bad but they're OK because Jesus loves them. It's a precious message to weary sinners, but that's not the only way that God administers grace to us. When He warns us, He calls us back to repentance and obedience. That, too, is a gracious word that is fitting for gospel-centered preaching, living and ministry.



# Interview: Kevin DeYoung

Continued from Page 17

**Q** In your connectedness to what's happening on a greater cultural scale, what do you see as an important developing trend in the Reformed evangelical movement?

One trend that is both encouraging and a word of caution is how we see and practice expositional preaching. In our broadly Reformed evangelical circles, we profess to believe in the importance of preaching, and we have many conferences where preaching is on the platform. I'm less confident, though, that we know how to do it well, that people are being trained in it well, and that most of our popular preachers are even good models for it. So I hope that in the years ahead there are more resources for expositional preaching. I'm thankful for places like RTS that really hammer this home for students.

Also, along the lines of what we talked about earlier, I think it remains to be seen how this "young, restless and Reformed" movement blossoms in the decades ahead. Best-case scenario, you find continued robust doctrinal core among Reformed evangelical folks, while at the same time you have people finding rootedness in a particular denominational tradition, so that it's not a new Calvinism blossoming at the expense of traditional Reformed and Presbyterian communion, but the two serving overlapping purposes.

I hope that in the coming together, we recognize what we have in common and minister together, but continue to be good church people involved in the machinery and life of institutions and organizations that young people sometimes find distasteful but should consider an official part of how Christ governs His church. I also hope we don't see a fizzling out because the energy was faddish or just tied to personalities.

**Q** What challenges will the new generation of pastors face, and what will it take to prepare them for those challenges?

In one sense, we believe in a biblical anthropology and Christology, so the problem and the solution are the same as they always have been. So I have little patience for the cries in some circles of constant "change or die," that we can't do anything the way we've done it before. Look, people are still sinners, sin manifests itself in different ways, and there are different cultural buttons to push on those matters. But people still need a Savior and to learn the Scriptures, and still need to know how to preach the gospel and how to pray and care for people.



When I read works from the Reformation, or Calvin on pastoral ministry, or John Witherspoon, I'm struck by how much is the same even in the midst of many cultural differences. So if at any point the culture so changes that we think we need to change everything we've been doing in ministry, then we either haven't been doing the right things or we're about to not do the right things.

Having said all that, we certainly don't want to be oblivious to the changes around us, so preparing people for ministry now needs to involve a significant apologetic component. I don't mean necessarily in formal apologetics, but in an understanding that the Christ we preach is not only going to be strange but will be offensive to many people. We need to make sure we still have an understanding of biblical courage, that if Christ was hated and maligned, then so will His servants be, but at the same time be winsome and not unnecessarily offensive. If everyone loves us, something's wrong, and if everyone hates us, probably something's wrong.

So how do we train ministers in our churches who are winsome, bold, courageous, compassionate and full of insight into the culture, and deeply rooted in historic theology and an understanding of the biblical text? It seems to me that's always been, or at least should be, the goal of pastoral ministry and training. It's just a matter of continuing to do that in the different contours in our own culture that will become increasingly hostile to biblical Christianity.

*Kevin's blog can be found at [www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung](http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevindeyoung).*

## Bonus Digital Content

To read more of the interview with Kevin that didn't fit in print here, check out the digital version of M&L at [rts.edu/site/resources/M-L.aspx](http://rts.edu/site/resources/M-L.aspx).

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Edwin L. Barnes Jr.** was appointed as the vice president of development at RTS-Charlotte beginning Jan. 1. He was the executive

director of Westminster Ministries Foundation, Rock Hill, S.C., and practiced corporate law with Kennedy, Covington Lobdell & Hickman, Charlotte. The member of the North Carolina Bar and the South Carolina Bar is a chartered financial analyst. A graduate of Washington and Lee University and the University of South Carolina School of Law, he and his wife, Wallace, have three children and have been longtime friends and supporters of RTS. He replaced Charlie Dunn, who retired at the end of the year.

**Greg Bledsoe**, an RTS alumnus, has been named as the new Surgeon General of the State of Arkansas.

**Dr. Reggie M. Kidd**, professor of New Testament at RTS-Orlando, will retire effective June 1. The RTS Board of Trustees

has appointed him professor of New Testament emeritus. He will continue to teach courses throughout the RTS campuses.

**Stephane Jeanrenaud** has been promoted to vice president of administration, advancement and alumni relations at RTS-Charlotte. **Dave Latham** has been appointed to replace Stephane as director of admissions and recruiting.



**Victor H. (Hu) Meena Jr.** was appointed to the RTS Board of Trustees in October 2014. He serves as president

and CEO of C Spire, (formerly Cellular South), an award-winning wireless provider to all of Mississippi and parts of four other Southeastern states, and serves as an elder at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson.

**Edward Murray** is the new director of admissions for both RTS-Global and RTS-New York City. He is currently an M.Div. student at RTS-Charlotte and is set to graduate this spring.

**Dr. Scott Swain**, Dr. James Coffield and Dr. Scott Coupland, all professors at RTS-Orlando,

have been promoted to full professorships.

**Dr. Guy Waters**, the James M. Baird Jr. professor of New Testament at RTS-Jackson, has been named the associate editor of *Reformed Theological Review* in Australia.

## ALUMNI EVENTS

RTS will host its annual alumni and friends breakfast during the ARP Synod, Wednesday, June 10, 7 a.m., at the Bonclarken Conference Center, Flat Rock, N.C.

The RTS annual alumni and friends lunch during the PCA General Assembly will be held June 11, noon, at the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Convention Center, Ballroom E&F (room subject to change).

RTS will host its annual alumni and friends breakfast during the EPC General Assembly, June 26, 7 a.m., at the exclusive Citrus Club in the Minneola Room on the 18th floor. Reserve a spot online during registration at [www.epc.org](http://www.epc.org). RTS will also host a moderated panel discussion on June 26 at noon, "Reformed and Missional? The Reformed Faith for Mission." Participants will include chancellor and CEO Ligon Duncan, RTS-Orlando president Dr. Don Sweeting, and RTS professors Dr. Michael Allen, Dr. Donald Fortson, Rev. Michael Glodo and Dr. Scott Redd.

## AUDIO/MEDIA

**Dr. Ligon Duncan's** course *Covenant Theology* is now available on iTunesU and on the RTS mobile app.

**Dr. Derek Thomas'** messages from the 2014 Appalachia Conference on Theology and the Church are now available.

**Dr. Miles Van Pelt's** lecture on "Basics of Biblical Hebrew Video Lectures, Chapter 1: The Hebrew Alphabet" is available on YouTube, with over 100,000 views.

**Dr. Guy Waters** has released *The Life and Theology of Paul*, a 12-part teaching series by Ligonier Ministries (February) that identifies key moments in Paul's life and considers the essence of Paul's theology.

For RTS alumni, a portal on the RTS website at [rts.edu/alumni](http://rts.edu/alumni) provides resources and information useful to you. There's also a place on the portal to post articles or other publications to share with others. Please send your articles, Bible studies or other materials to [alumni@rts.edu](mailto:alumni@rts.edu).

## Top Items to Give to Reformed Theological Seminary

Although more than 80% of U.S. households make charitable contributions each year, only a small fraction of those donors think to include charity in their estate plans. Here are some of the best assets to leave:

### U.S. savings bonds

— Your heirs would face income taxes and possibly state or federal estate taxes on these assets, but bonds you leave to RTS in your will would pass tax free.

### Assets not needed for heirs' future security

— This could include life insurance originally purchased when children were young. You can retain ownership of the policy and name the charity the death beneficiary, or transfer ownership of the policy now.

### Retirement accounts

— You can name us to receive part or all of an IRA or qualified retirement plan, and avoid all taxes. Just ask for a new beneficiary form. If you are married, your spouse will need to sign a waiver, except for IRAs.

### Accounts receivable of professionals and business owners

— Accounts receivable are 100% taxable to a person's estate or the beneficiary who receives the accounts, unless that beneficiary is a tax-exempt organization, such as RTS.

### Other "tax burdened assets"

— Installment sale notes, accrued royalties and renewal commissions of insurance agents also avoid tax when used for charitable bequests.

If you'd like to include RTS in your estate plan, we'd be happy to assist you or your attorney. For more information, call 866-926-4787 or email [lperez@rts.edu](mailto:lperez@rts.edu).

