

# MINISTRY & LEADERSHIP

SPRING 2020

## *Theological EDUCATION in the CITY*

Kelly Berkompas

TEACHING WOMEN TO TEACH

Lynne Wingard

IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION

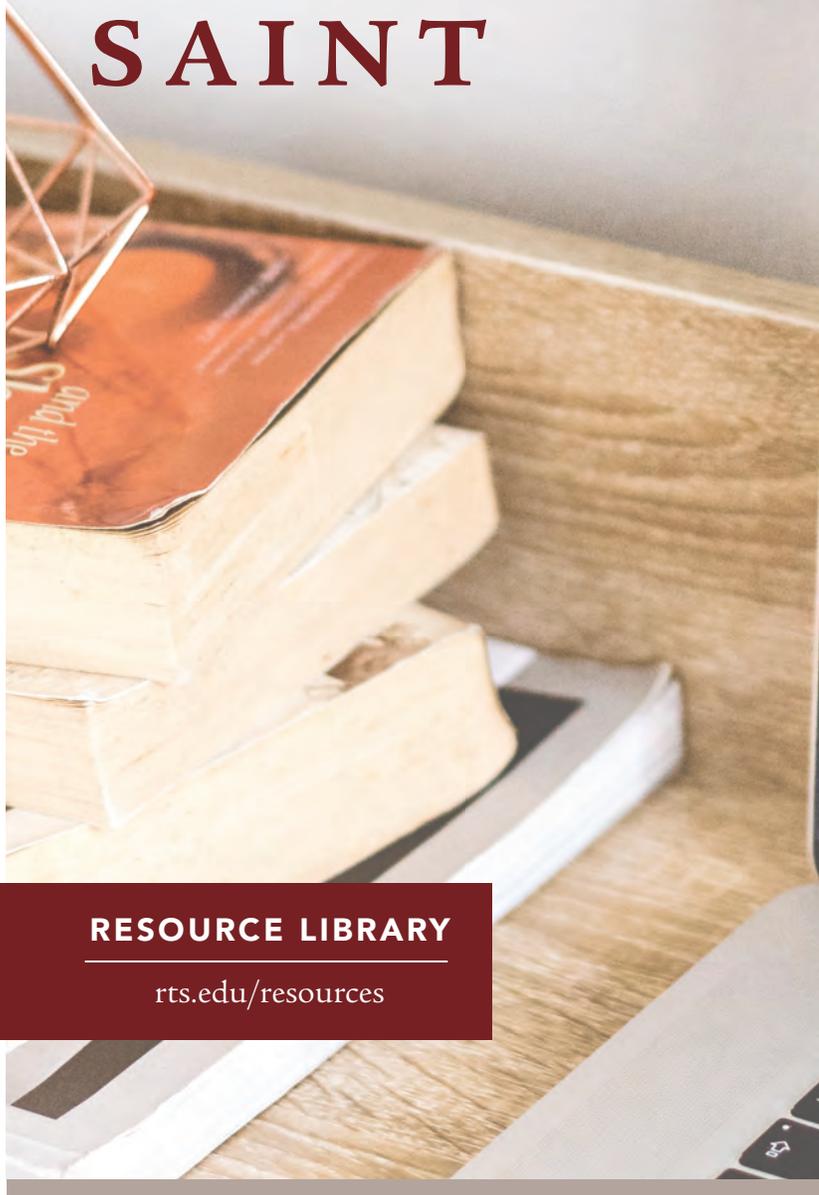
by Rev. Robert Arendale

CALLED TO PREACH

Interview with Jerry Young

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— DR. LIGON DUNCAN, Chancellor and CEO

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SPRING 2020

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## WHO WE ARE

Reformed Theological Seminary exists to glorify the Triune God and to serve His church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially Presbyterian and Reformed churches, by providing Reformed graduate theological education that is globally accessible. RTS equips its students for ministry, primarily through pastoral preparation, to be servant leaders marked by "A Mind for Truth, A Heart for God."

As such, *Ministry & Leadership* seeks to show how God is working through the ministries of RTS graduates, faculty members and students. 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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# CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

## THE PRAYER OF GOD'S BLESSING: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BENEDICTION IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

DR. LIGON DUNCAN

### ***Don't miss the benediction!***

First, don't miss the benediction included in *Ministry & Leadership*. Editor-in-Chief Phillip Holmes and his team had the idea to close our magazine with a benediction, which is why I am writing this column on the subject of 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17. These verses also serve as the benediction for this edition.

Second, don't miss the benediction at your local church. It comes at the end of the service and it is God's blessing from God's Word to you. Pay attention to it and receive it. You need it!

To appreciate benedictions better, it helps to understand them. The benediction is the prayer of God's blessing. Take for

instance 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17: "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word."

There are four things to notice about this prayer of blessing. It tells you something about Jesus, something about God the Father, something God has already given you, and something you need (which Paul is praying for God to give you).

First, notice that this benediction reminds you that it is the divine Christ ("our Lord Jesus Christ himself"), who is the bestower of blessing on you. He is the one

from whom and by whom you have received eternal comfort and good hope through grace. John Stott says:

*Paul opens his prayer with these words: May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father. We notice how once again Paul couples the Father and the Son . . . But this time he startles us by even putting the Son before the Father . . . He also goes on, in spite of the plurality of the subject (Father and Son), to use the singular reflexive who and the singular verbs loved and gave. Paul is evidently quite clear, at least in the practice of prayer if not yet in theological formulation, about the equality and the unity of the Father and the Son.<sup>1</sup>*

Hence, the prayer of blessing indicates both the full divinity

of Jesus and an important aspect of the doctrine of the Trinity: the Son's consubstantiality with the Father. The Jesus we love and worship is not merely a good man or great teacher, but the very Son of God, and God of God, of one substance with the Father. Christianity can be summarized with the truth of the Trinity: we come to the Father, through Jesus the Son, by the help of the Holy Spirit; and these three are one God. God's blessings come to us through Jesus.

Second, Paul's blessing reminds us of the loving and gracious character of our God. He is "God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace." Paul tells you three things here in particular that he wants you to remember about God: God is your Father, God loves you, and God gives to you by grace alone.

Because you trust in Jesus Christ, his Father is your Father. You have received the gift of adoption and all its benefits. God's name is given to you, you've received the spirit of adoption, and you have access to the throne of grace. You are never cast off but sealed until the day of redemption. You inherit the promises and are heirs of everlasting salvation.<sup>2</sup>

Notice that Paul also mentions that God loved us. I find that many believers can accept that Jesus loves them but struggle with the idea of the Father's love. In this passage, Paul explicitly indicates both: "our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us." God, our Father, loves us. Take that in. It's true. Paul tells us God the Father already has loved us. What we need to do is realize and receive it.

Further, Paul points to the gift of God by grace. He "loved us and gave . . . through grace." John 3:16 comes to mind: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

<sup>1</sup> John Stott, *The Message of 1 & 2 Thessalonians, The Bible Speaks Today*  
<sup>2</sup> See *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, 12.1.

John and Paul's theology of the heavenly Father are exactly the same. God -- sovereign as he is, mighty as he is, awesome as he is -- is loving and giving. He is a gracious God. All his gifts come to us by grace.

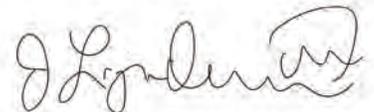
Third, note in particular what it is that God the Father and Son gave: "eternal comfort and good hope." He strengthened and encouraged you with a comfort that never goes away. It is eternal.

The Heidelberg Catechism tells us that our only comfort in life and in death is that we "belong to (our) faithful Savior Jesus Christ." It goes on to say that "he has fully paid for all (our) sins with his precious blood, and has set (us) free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves (us) so that without the will of (our) heavenly Father not a hair can fall from (our) heads, and by his Holy Spirit assures (us) of eternal life." With that kind of hope as "a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul" (Hebrews 6:19), we can face anything in life, even death.

Fourth and finally, we come to the blessing proper. Having told you about Jesus, about God your heavenly Father, and what you've already received by grace, Paul now gives you the blessing. There are two things he wants you to have. He wants God to "comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word." He wants you to be encouraged and he wants you to be equipped.

Paul prays God's blessing of heart encouragement on you. We need that encouragement for the living of the Christian life because we face hard things daily. Then he adds "establish and equip you for every good work and word." The Christian life is lived out of the blessings that God has given us, and it is living out the blessings God has given us. Paul wants us to do and be what God made us to do and be.

*What a benediction!*



# *from the* **EDITOR**

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PHILLIP HOLMES



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YOU THEN, MY CHILD, BE STRENGTHENED BY THE GRACE THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS, AND WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM ME IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY WITNESSES ENTRUST TO FAITHFUL MEN, WHO WILL BE ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO.

...  
2 Timothy 2:1-2

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One of my greatest joys in this life is being a father. I love my two sons fiercely, and I want God's best for them. I'm determined to raise my boys in a home that fears the Lord, confesses sin, and rests in God's kind providence. I want to leave a legacy of humble faithfulness — not perfection — and my prayer is

that God’s providence will steward this legacy for generations to come.

In 2 Timothy 2:1-2, Paul describes how Christians should view legacies in light of God’s providence. Paul entrusts Timothy with the gospel of Jesus Christ and charges him to entrust the same gospel to faithful men. But before Paul begins his charge, he reminds young Timothy that no one can leave a worthy legacy on his own. In short, Paul explains that human plans to leave a legacy are doomed for failure unless the legacy is established by the Lord. The best-laid plans are utterly dependent on him.

This truth is why I treasure the legacy of Reformed Theological Seminary. Through God’s faithfulness, RTS has been training men and women for lives dedicated to ministry for over 50 years. Despite our shortcomings and missteps, God continues to use RTS to serve the church by preparing the next generation of Christian leaders.

With RTS’ half-century legacy in mind, Kelly Berkompas, Managing Editor for *Ministry & Leadership*, interviewed two of our longest-serving board members, Jim Moore and Larry Edwards. In the article appropriately titled, “Not Something Man Can Do,” Moore and Edwards reflect on decades of serving as first-hand witnesses of God’s providential kindness towards RTS.

I had the pleasure of interviewing two RTS graduates for this edition – Dr. Jerry Young and Dr. Justin Taylor. Dr. Young is the pastor of New Hope M.B. Church and president of the National Baptist Convention. His story is one of sweet providence. As you read the interview, “Called to Preach,” I’m confident you will notice God’s hand guiding the way throughout his story.

Dr. Taylor is an author and executive vice president of book publishing and book publisher at Crossway. In our interview, he reflects on the lasting impact his RTS degree has had on his life and ministry.

In “Leaving a Legacy,” Matthew Bryant, RTS Senior Vice President of Development, writes about how God has worked through the faithful saints who have generously invested in the work at RTS.

Finally, our two feature articles, “Theological Education in the City” and “Teaching Women to Teach,” will give you a glimpse into the ways that the influence of RTS has traveled far beyond our original campus in Jackson, Mississippi.

We at RTS pray that *Ministry & Leadership* will be a blessing and resource for the church. May the articles in this issue edify and encourage you, wherever you are, in your service to the Lord and his church.

Sincerely,

**PHILLIP HOLMES**

*Editor in Chief, Ministry & Leadership*  
*Vice President for Institutional Communications*  
*Reformed Theological Seminary*



# THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION *IN THE CITY*

CREATIVELY ADDRESSING OPPORTUNITIES AND  
CHALLENGES IN AN URBAN CONTEXT

KELLY BERKOMPAS



Over fifty years ago, Reformed Theological Seminary first opened its doors in Jackson, Mississippi. Since then, RTS has established seven additional campuses, stretching from Dallas, Texas to New York, New York.

RTS extensions began in Orlando, Florida and Charlotte, North Carolina, both at the invitations of local pastors and churches. Florida and the Carolinas represented a significant percentage of students attending classes in Jackson at the time, so the extension campuses provided a way to serve those students closer to their churches and homes. Three more extension campuses — in Washington, Atlanta, and Houston — came about in similar, natural ways.

In 1995, RTS opened its fourth campus in Washington, D.C., marking a distinct expansion into increasingly metropolitan settings. Twenty years later, Dr. Tim Keller and Redeemer City to

City invited RTS to start a new campus in the heart of New York City.

“We were open and prayerful, but [the new campuses] were ‘unplanned,’ in a sense,” shared Chancellor Emeritus Ric Cannada.

To some, having eight campuses in addition to an online program might seem counter-intuitive. Why not just have students go to main campuses, instead of taking on the risk of starting new ventures in new cities?

But for Cannada and others in leadership, the answer is simple: RTS seeks first and foremost to have an impact for the Kingdom of God. Why not, then, go to places where RTS can increase its influence? Why not go to the students in the communities where they live, serve, and witness, instead of asking the students to come to them?

From the local youth pastor who wants to take a course, to the layperson who wants to learn more about the Bible; from the students with ministry internships to the faculty and staff who serve their local congregations, there's no denying that RTS is training and equipping faithful Christians in its many geographical locations. Cannada refers to each RTS campus as an "impact center" for the gospel.

RTS' impact centers have only continued to grow in their scope since the first expansion to Orlando in 1989. Most recently, RTS has opened campuses in three of the 10 most populous US cities — New York, Houston, and Dallas. When adding the populations of suburban areas, Washington, D.C. and Atlanta are also included on that list, according to 2018 estimates by the US Census Bureau.

In a recent interview with Dr. Ligon Duncan, Keller shared some of the benefits of having an RTS campus in New York. Outside of the vast number of people in New York and the overall lack of theological education available in the area, he points to the diversity of the city's population. "You've got people from all over the world here and people from so many different cultures."

Leaders of campuses in other cities cite similar benefits. "There are just under six million people in the Atlanta metro," shared Dr. Guy Richard,

Executive Director of RTS Atlanta, which will celebrate its 20th anniversary this year. "Being here gives us access to an incredible number of people and churches from an incredible number of backgrounds and traditions."

As of 2019, WalletHub named Houston, Texas the most diverse city in the United States, citing reports on household, religious, socioeconomic, and ethnic diversity.

Rev. Robert Arendale, Executive Director of RTS Houston, described the diversity and the large population of Houston as "both a challenge and a tremendous opportunity for the gospel" — a perspective shared by many RTS campus leaders in other major cities.

Although RTS' degree programs share a unified curriculum, each campus has the freedom and responsibility to meet the unique needs of its students creatively. For the campuses in Houston and Dallas, both founded in the last decade, that creativity looks like offering Reformed theological education to many people who attend independent or Baptist churches and may not be as familiar with Reformed theology.

RTS Washington, located just outside of the nation's capital, started the Institute for Theology and Public Life (ITPL), which offers a suite of classes applying

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Reformed theology to issues related to our lives together in community at large. Through ITPL, RTS Washington equips students to reflect biblically on questions facing citizens today and on callings in public life. The Washington campus serves members of the local church through its programs and courses, including ITPL: whether the layperson serving in a policy or public-service role, or the pastor with public servants in his congregation, or current students who want additional training before moving into vocational ministry.

For alumnus David Frerichs, the institute was impactful in his roles both as pastor and citizen. As Frerichs serves young adults in Bethesda, Maryland, his time at RTS Washington enables him to help his congregants navigate the transition from college to careers. “The ITPL courses forced me to think deeply about the relationship between Christ and culture, and have in turn helped me teach others about the relationship between work, worship, evangelism, discipleship, and service.”

Other campuses offer their own programs to meet the specific needs of their students. Through the RTS New York partnership with Redeemer City to City, students are trained for urban ministry. And RTS Atlanta has established the Edmiston Center for the Study of the Bible and Ethnicity in response to the diverse backgrounds and traditions found in their city. The Center offers courses and hosts lectures that teach students and attendees about the history and current experiences of the global church and help them apply what they’ve learned to their own ministry contexts.

“We saw the need to equip pastors and church leaders to minister to people from many different cultures and to plant churches that are intentionally multi-ethnic and to do this within the robust theological tradition that has been a hallmark of RTS from the beginning,” commented Richard. “We see this not as a luxury but as a necessity for the 21st century.”

City locations give RTS campuses access to a large number of opportunities to serve local churches.

The campuses provide courses and continued education opportunities to those in vocational ministry, and many RTS students serve the church through internships — directly applying what they’ve learned in the classroom.

Alongside the unique joys of extension campuses come particular challenges. The campuses in larger cities encounter a range of accessibility issues — whether travel, housing, or schedules.

“There’s an awful lot of people in New York that are actually in ministry that have never had theological education and would like one if it’s made accessible, if you work around people’s schedules,” Keller told Duncan.

RTS has adapted to students’ schedules since 1990. Before RTS Charlotte was officially established, RTS started offering non-traditional classes due to professors’ schedules. Professors would fly in to offer courses over the weekends. For students who couldn’t relocate to Jackson, Mississippi, having a flexible course schedule and access to courses near them allowed them to keep their jobs and other responsibilities.




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*“RTS HASN’T  
CHANGED, our  
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the SAME, but we’re  
REACHING MORE  
PEOPLE.”*

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Flexible class schedules have proven to be successful at many city campuses. Some campuses offer a mix of both traditional and non-traditional class schedules, while others provide evening, weekend, and intensive classes exclusively. RTS Washington recently started a new course module taught on Saturdays, for those who are not able to take classes during the week.

Since RTS Washington opened its doors twenty-five years ago, RTS has responded to opportunities to provide theological education in the city. By creatively meeting the needs of their individual contexts and cultures, each campus not only provides training to future generations of church leaders, but supports local churches and reaches the world with the gospel, fulfilling the mission and vision that took shape over fifty years ago in Jackson, Mississippi.

In the words of Ric Cannada, “We haven’t changed; our mission has stayed the same, but we’re reaching more people.” ♥



*Kelly Berkompas is the Communications Manager for RTS and the Managing Editor of M&L*



# DEGREE PROGRAMS

VARY BY CAMPUS

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

**MASTER OF DIVINITY**

**MASTER OF ARTS IN  
CHRISTIAN COUNSELING  
COUNSELING**

**MASTER OF ARTS  
BIBLICAL STUDIES  
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ATLANTA



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DALLAS



NEW YORK  
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GLOBAL



# LASTING IMPACT

## INTERVIEW WITH JUSTIN TAYLOR

PHILLIP HOLMES

Writer and editor Justin Taylor started at Crossway in 2006, and ten years later became the Executive Vice President of Book Publishing and Book Publisher.

Justin blogs at “Between Two Worlds” and helps to run the “Evangelical History” blog with historian Thomas Kidd at The Gospel Coalition. Along with Kelly Kapic, a fellow RTS alumnus, he co-edited two editions of the works of John Owen: *Overcoming Sin and Temptation* and *Communion with the Triune God*.

*Editor-in-Chief Phillip Holmes interviewed Justin about his time at RTS, his work, and his advice to those considering theological education.*

### **What is your connection to RTS?**

I am an RTS grad and an appreciative alum. In my current role as book publisher at Crossway, we work with several RTS professors and graduates.

### **What year did you graduate from RTS? Which degree did you earn?**

I received a MAR [Masters of Arts (Religion)] through RTS in December of 2012.

### **What influenced your decision to pursue a degree at RTS?**

I had begun my seminary education in the late 90s at a program that did not, at the time, have a completion program. I loved theology and wanted to be equipped for ministry, whether as a pastor or a professor (a third “P”—publisher—only emerged later as an option).

RTS was an amazing way for me to transfer in some credits and to complete my degree with a world-class faculty.

### **Why did you choose Global Education?**

The degree program from a Reformed confessional institution offered flexibility that wasn’t available elsewhere. I had just taken a full-time job, so I wasn’t in a position to make the move for residency. It allowed me to go at my own pace.

### **What was your experience with the Global program?**

It was a great experience. I felt personally invested in, and not just a number. I actually had a hiatus of several years between when I started the program and completed it, as I was working full time with a young family. But the program was gracious to me in so many ways.

### **What course or professor at RTS most influenced you?**

Three come to mind: John Frame (for theological breadth and depth), Sinclair Ferguson (for pastoral and historical insight), and James Anderson (for philosophical application).

### **How have you used your degree since graduation?**

I’m tempted to respond: “How have I *not* used the degree?” Theological education through RTS influences virtually everything I do. What could be more applicable to Christian ministry—especially Christian publishing—than studying the Bible, theology, and church history?

### **How has your theological education impacted your personal life?**

When I open up the Word, or when I talk about the church, or when I talk about history, it’s not as if seminary gave me all of the answers. But it did give me all of the tools I need to go deeper with the Lord and with the church in a more informed and careful way.

### **How has your theological education impacted your writing?**

What I learned is always in the background of what I write. Obviously, I don’t do it perfectly. But, hopefully, it is more careful and fair and informed because of the theological education I have received.

### Has your theological education opened doors for you vocationally?

I went on to get a Ph.D., which would not have been possible without my RTS degree. In addition, theological education is required for my job as a publisher.

### Have you used RTS' resources since graduating?

I enjoy watching the Wisdom Wednesday videos, along with various lectures. I also follow the campus presidents and many professors on Twitter.

### What are you currently studying?

Devotionally, I'm immersing myself in the book of Genesis at the beginning of the new year. Our church is preaching through Acts. And I am continuing to think about issues like Paul and the law and the imago Dei.

### Do you have any projects that you're currently working on?

One ongoing project that I am involved with is co-editing, with Steve Nichols, the "Theologians on the Christian Life" series for Crossway. We hope to help Christians today learn from the past through our theological forebears.

### What does your role at Crossway involve?

It involves many things, but at the heart of my responsibility is to bring in new books to Crossway that fit with our mission of gospel-centered publishing for the good of God's people.

### What are some of the challenges that Christian publishing companies are facing?

There are always challenges, but until Christ returns, the spirit of the age will always be our greatest

challenge. Faithful Christian publishing will, by definition, swim upstream against the current. Satan, our sin, and the world will always conspire to make us unfaithful. So the biggest challenge is perpetually to keep our eyes on Jesus and to walk in a manner worthy of his name and pleasing to him.

**"WE HOPE TO HELP CHRISTIANS TODAY LEARN FROM THE PAST THROUGH OUR THEOLOGICAL FOREBEARS."**

### What would you say to someone who does not plan to go into full-time vocational ministry and wants to study theology but is hesitant to attend seminary?

Maybe your hesitation is warranted. Don't dismiss it. Seminary is not a requirement for everyone interested in theology. But consider the possibility that God may indeed be opening doors for you to go to seminary. It is an incredible opportunity—one that many do not have. It will shape you in profound ways. It is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to spend concentrated time studying the deep things of God with some of the most godly and proven teachers in the world. ♥

# New Books from Crossway



## FINDING THE RIGHT HILLS TO DIE ON

When should doctrine divide, and when should unity prevail? Pastor Gavin Ortlund uses four basic categories of importance, to help new and seasoned church leaders alike labor to both uphold doctrine and preserve unity.

## SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

This comprehensive systematic theology by a respected theologian covers the whole field of Reformed Christian doctrine from biblical, historical, and theological angles providing a clear and concise articulation of the Reformed faith.

## GENTLE AND LOWLY

In Matthew 11, Jesus describes himself as “gentle and lowly,” longing for his people to find rest in him. Dane Ortlund takes readers into the depths of Christ’s very heart for sinners, diving deep into Bible passages that speak of who Christ is and encouraging readers with the affection of Christ for his people.

## FAITHFUL THEOLOGY

The first volume in the new Short Studies in Systematic Theology series explores what it means to do theology, why theology matters, and what it looks like to derive doctrine from God’s word—helping us understand what to believe, what to value, and how to live.

## POST-CHRISTIAN

This insightful book charts the course of how postmodernism led to our post-Christian times, exploring how Christians can combat today’s constructivism and offering solutions to those problems as a way to recover reality, rebuild culture, and revive faith.

## THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Written to make a case for the necessity of a long-term plan for preaching through the entire Bible instead of just randomly through individual books, this is not a book on how to preach, but rather on how to plan and prepare long-range preaching programs through the whole counsel of God.

# TEACHING WOMEN TO TEACH

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## RTS ORLANDO SERVES THEIR COMMUNITY BY EQUIPPING LOCAL CHURCHES

LYNNE WINGARD

Leigh Swanson had a great idea that was born from great teaching. Now the Vice President of Community Relations at RTS Orlando, her path to that idea began as a young pastor's wife in Tennessee. She sat under the teaching of Bettye Taylor, a spiritual mother in the church who provided an in-depth, expositional Bible study for the women. When Bettye's health would not permit her to continue, Leigh asked if they could study the Scriptures together. For four years, they met weekly for study and discipleship. Leigh learned to study the Bible verse-by-verse – but she also learned a way of life.

The Swansons moved to Orlando in 2004 when her husband David accepted a call to First Presbyterian Church. Leigh was excited about the move, because she knew that RTS had a campus in Oviedo. The following fall, she began her studies at RTS and spent the next seven years taking several classes a semester until she finished her Master of Arts (Theological Studies) in 2012. She served as the Associate Dean of Students until 2017, when she transitioned to her current role as Vice President of Community Relations.

Our teachers convey more than just a subject; they also teach us how to live a life that honors the Lord, and if we are paying attention, they teach us how to teach others. Leigh saw her teacher live the hope of the Scriptures. Bettye had lost a child – and when she taught about suffering, perseverance and hope, she taught her students what that looked like in the life of the believer. This confirmed an important philosophy about Bible teaching: that it is most effective in the context of a relationship.



“I know there’s a time and place for DVDs and a virtual classroom, but it’s not as effective as a live teacher,” Leigh said. “In 2016, I read an article in *Christianity Today*, and the opening line was ‘The most influential women’s leader at your church may be someone who has never stepped inside its sanctuary.’”<sup>1</sup> This article settled her idea that competent, trained, women’s Bible teachers connected to the local church were a critical need.

“When we (RTS Orlando) went through a leadership transition three years ago, our new president, Scott Swain, asked what we were doing to serve the community. We say we serve the community, but what could we do to serve in a way we haven’t before? And everything just lined up – I had just read that article that had been so eye opening.”

“The other piece of this story – that fall, prior to

the leadership transition, I had been asked to speak at four different churches’ women’s retreats. I have always done retreats – and I do them because I love teaching. But, I was moving from part-time work to full-time work, I’m getting asked to do overnight retreats, and I just can’t do them anymore. The coordinators for the retreats asked, ‘Can you point us to someone else?’”

“All of these things were happening at the same time, so when Scott asked how we could serve the community, I knew immediately that we could equip women in Central Florida to teach the Bible. It’s what we do; we teach people how to rightly handle the Word of God. We have the resources to teach the Bible to them, and we also had the resources to equip them to teach. It wasn’t complicated. We set out to train women’s ministry leaders in our community to exegete and exposit. The groundwork

is exegesis – first people have to be comfortable reading and understanding – and then they have to be comfortable teaching it.”

Swanson developed a scope and sequence for the program, Teaching Women to Teach (TWtT). Beginning in January 2018, students would meet once a month for a class. Over the summer, they would have library nights to learn theological research in lieu of regular class meetings. She reached out to area pastors for recommendations – were there women in their churches who would benefit from this kind of training? Hoping for 40 women to sign up, they welcomed more than 120 women from 21 area churches – some traveling from two hours away.

The groundwork was in place to train these women to go back to their churches and teach. In addition to learning how to study the Bible, classes were also provided to learn how to teach the Bible. “We try to give them a safe environment to practice. It was a really sweet time. In each of the small groups where the women practiced, everyone had a feedback sheet. They got immediate verbal feedback. I moderated between the women in the class and the person presenting – trying to provide gentle, constructive criticism and encouragement.

“People should be rightly terrified of communicating the Word of God. We need an attitude of awe and respect – it’s a holy privilege to stand up and say, ‘thus says the Lord.’ We need to understand the right kind of fear that’s necessary for the task. There are women who could teach, but they are intimidated by their lack of training, or maybe they’re comparing themselves to the ‘superstars’ and think they’re not good enough. When someone tells me that they don’t have the gift of teaching, I always ask: ‘Are you absolutely sure?’ If teaching doesn’t come naturally to you, that doesn’t mean you can’t teach. God is able to equip you to fulfill a need in his church. I believe if there is a persistent need

in the church, we should try to fill it, regardless of what we think our gifting is.

“My theological studies drove me to share the gift I was given at RTS – to make it accessible for women who did not have the opportunity to go to seminary. It’s essential to provide the kind of atmosphere where we can ask questions and feel safe. Questions reveal our idols, our doubts, our fears – we learn by asking questions. That is one of the gifts of a live teacher whether in Sunday school, a women’s Bible study, or a seminary classroom.”

Sarah Bruner was a student in that first class: “The description of the program was simple yet profound: invest in women for a full year of training in order that they may return to their local Central Florida churches and step out in confidence with their ‘tool belt’ filled in order to exegetically teach the Bible. For me, what happened in these monthly meetings forever changed me. Each time we met, I learned more. We dug into the realities of observation, genre, looked at cultural and historical contexts, talked about teaching Scripture from a redemptive perspective, and learned the realities of writing a Bible lesson...and all the while we were consistently reminded of the never changing Word of God.”

Leigh says that people have appreciated the fact that RTS wants to make a difference in the community. “Our seminaries are grounded in communities. Our professors and staff are grounded in local churches.” After that first course, she joined friend Nancy Guthrie for her Help Me Teach the Bible podcast to talk about the program. She received hundreds of emails from around the country (The Gospel Coalition and Phoenix Seminary partnered to provide a similar course) and around the world (a church planter’s wife was replicating the course in Southeast Asia). She is happy to see the program developing around the world. RTS Charlotte is currently providing the course and developed their own classes.

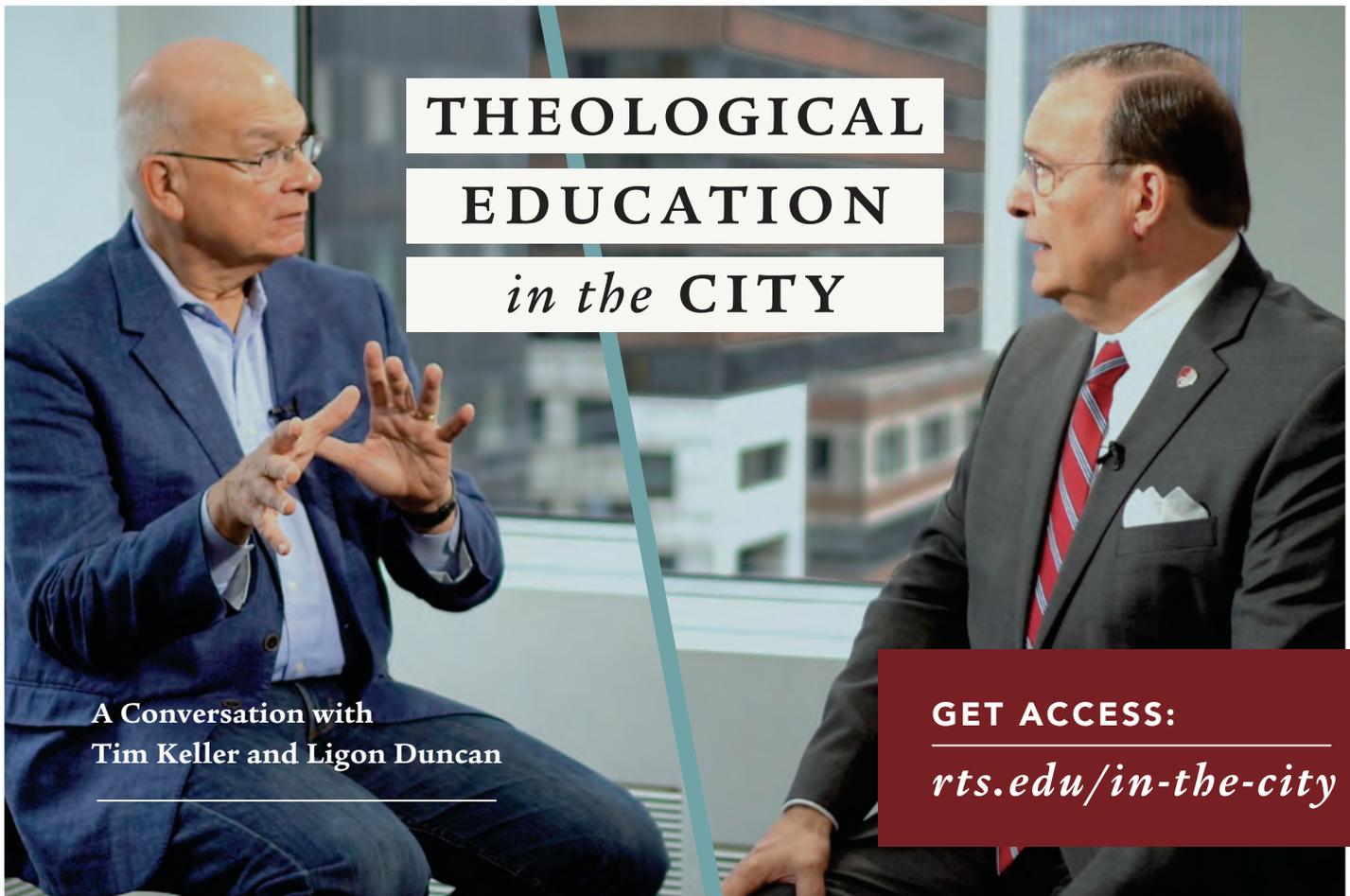
“The courses have been altered to each context; I provide a skeleton and people can flesh it out based on teachers and resources they have in their community. What’s happening in Charlotte looks different than what’s happening in Orlando, or Ireland, or Southeast Asia.

“After we did the year-long class there was so much hunger for what we would do next, so after our year long course, Scott Swain did a three-part series on covenant theology. This spring, Greg Lanier is doing a three-part series on the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament. All the audio from the first TWtT is currently in the RTS Resource Library as well as videos of the class on covenant theology. We are pleased to play the role of convener – we have the resources and can equip women in a way that’s really special. It’s a privilege for us to be a blessing to Central Florida.”

Teaching Women to Teach is a remarkable program that has equipped scores of women in churches around the world. And it all began when a mature spiritual mother – her health fading – chose to invest her time in the life of a determined young believer. A woman’s most valuable resource for learning to study and teach God’s Word may just be another woman seated in the next pew. ♥

*Lynne Wingard is a teacher and writer, and the wife of RTS Jackson Associate Professor and Dean of Students Dr. Charlie Wingard.*

<sup>1</sup>Shellnutt, Kate. *The Bigger Story Behind Jen Hatmaker: The benefits and challenges of women’s ministry in the age of bestsellers, viral blog posts, and inspirational conferences.* Christianity Today, Nov 15, 2016.

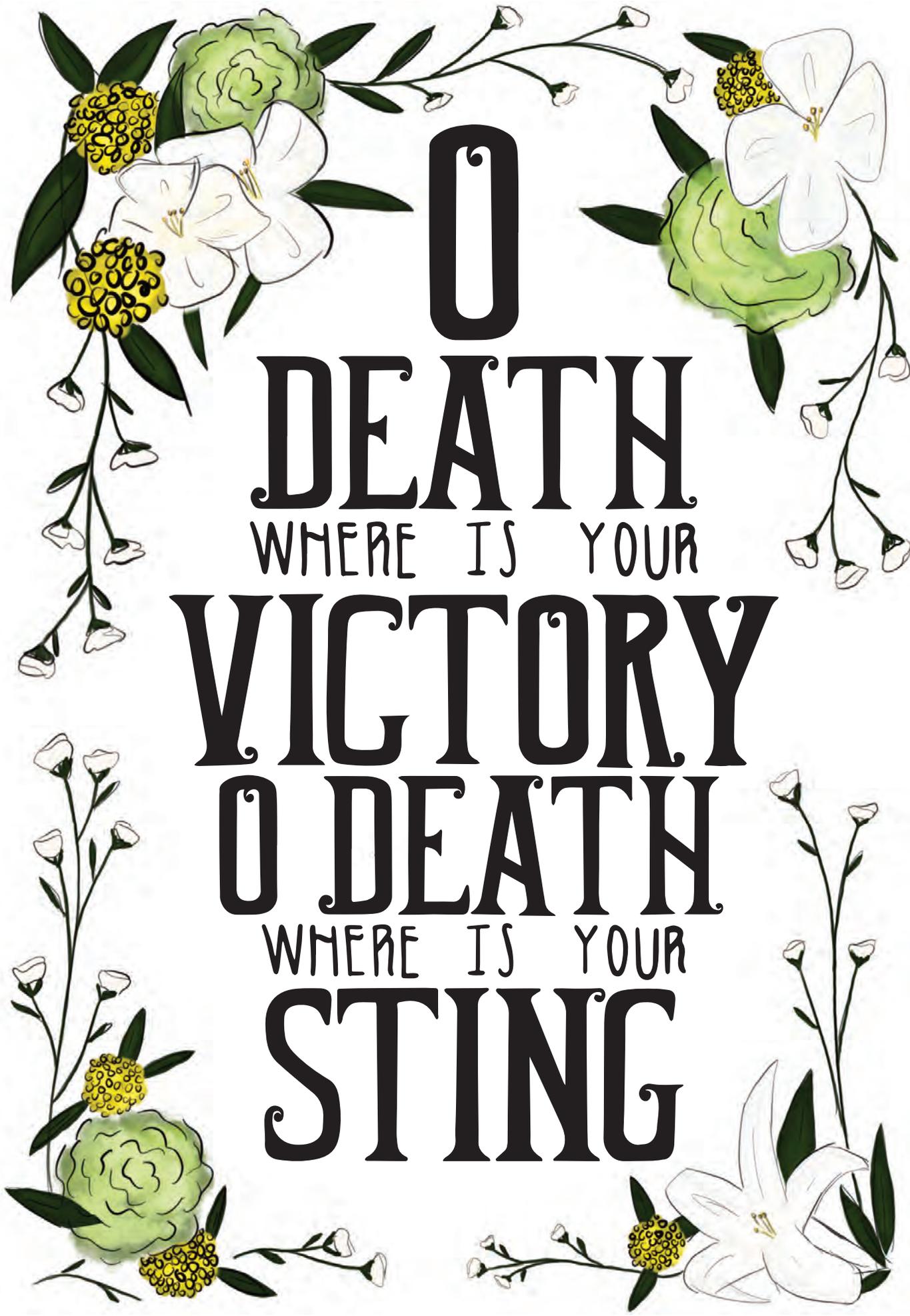


## THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION *in the CITY*

A Conversation with  
Tim Keller and Ligon Duncan

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**O**  
**DEATH**  
WHERE IS YOUR  
**VICTORY**  
**O DEATH**  
WHERE IS YOUR  
**STING**

# IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION

REV. ROBERT ARENDALE

Ministry is challenging. Whether you serve in a small town or a big city – whether you are in full-time vocational ministry or in part-time lay ministry – whether you serve in the nursery or stand in the pulpit, ministry is challenging. It is filled with peaks and valleys, ups and downs, joys and sorrows.

The Apostle Paul knew well the challenges of ministry. His letters reveal the heart of a man enflamed by the glory of God and burdened by the challenges he faced. In particular, his letters to the church at Corinth reveal a man who knew well the difficulties and hardships of serving

the Lord. At the same time, they reveal a man whose identity was found not in the things of this world, but rather in his union with the risen Christ (1 Cor 1:30).

Simply put, these epistles reveal a man who walked “by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7), who knew that “this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:17), who pressed on in service of the Lord “looking not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen” (2 Cor 4:18). The Apostle Paul knew that his identity, purpose, and his source of strength were grounded in the resurrected Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul reveals in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this chapter, he expounds both the reality and the theology of the resurrection. As Paul states, “And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain ... And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins” (vv. 14, 17). But Paul goes on to declare the reality that Christ “was buried, [and] that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures” (v. 4).

Moreover, Christ was raised as the “firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor 15: 20). His

resurrection is the guarantee of our resurrection! His resurrection is the first installment of the great resurrection harvest at the last day. As believers, we have been raised with Christ spiritually (Rom 6:5-11) and we look forward to the day when we will be raised bodily and will see our Savior face to face (1 Cor 15:35-49; 1 John 3:1-3).

Furthermore, by means of Christ's resurrection, the new creation has exploded into this present evil age in Christ (2 Cor 5:17). The age of the Spirit has come in Christ (Acts 2:33)! And it is this truth of the resurrection that strengthens Paul and enables him to persevere. Indeed, it is this truth that will enable us to persevere in service to Christ and his church. Paul closes the majestic chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 with the following words: "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (v. 58). There are a few items to note in this verse.

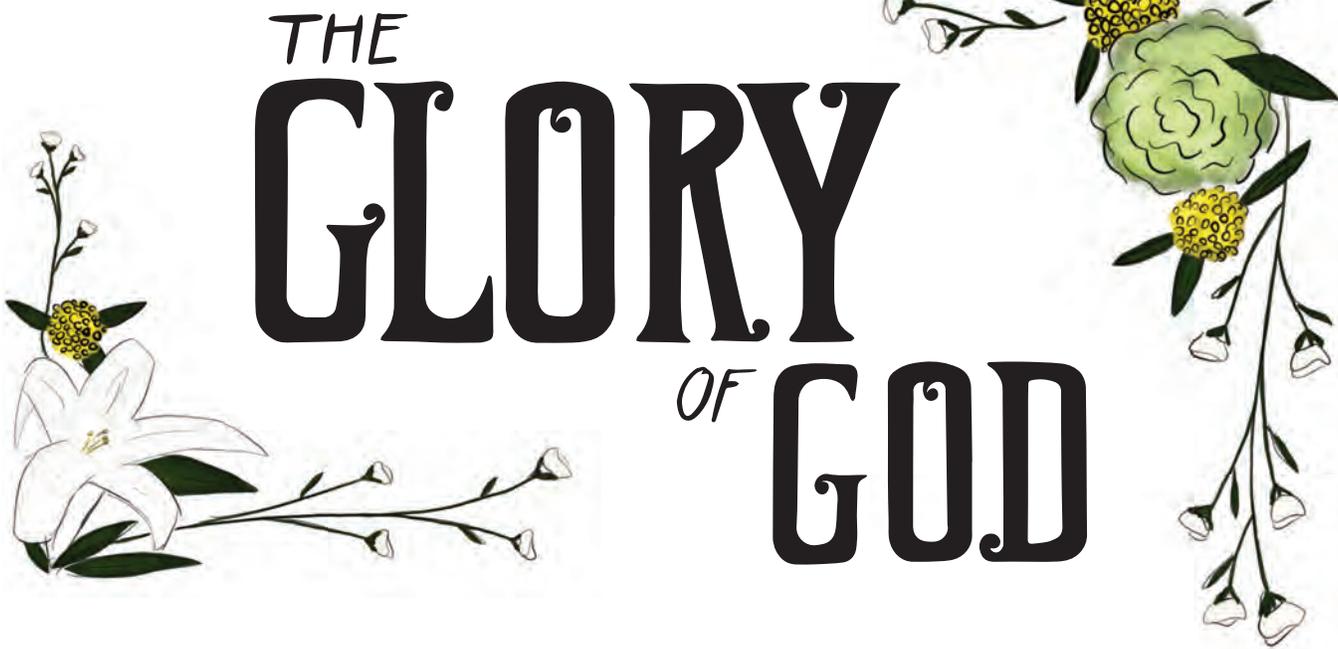
First, note the transition term, "therefore." We must read this conclusion in light of what Paul has just declared in chapter 15, specifically, in light of Christ's resurrection. In light of his victory over sin and death - "O death where is your victory, O death where is your sting" (v. 55) - we are called to do something. Christ has conquered sin and death and has given us his Spirit (Col 1:13; Heb 2:14-15; Acts 1:4-5; 2:33). Brothers and sisters, this truth must, and in fact most certainly will, impact our lives and our ministries.

Second, in light of Christ's resurrection, we are not to be moved from our hope in the gospel. We are to be "steadfast" and "immovable." In other words, we are to let nothing move us (cf. Col 1:23). While some in the Corinthian church were denying the

resurrection, Paul calls the Corinthians - and us - to take our stand on the resurrection. We stand on the gospel of Christ's life, death, and resurrection - and we must stand firm as good soldiers for Christ (2 Tim 2:3). Just as the world was seeking to move the Corinthians from the sure truth of the gospel, so the world today tries to move us from the sure foundation of the gospel. It is all too easy to give up, give in, and simply go with the flow of the world's thinking (Eph 4:14; Col 2:8).

In the counseling office, the Sunday school room, and the pulpit - in the US and around the world - it may be easier to give the world what it wants to hear. But then we would only be giving them a poison pill, a false gospel. Rather, the Apostle Paul calls us to stand firm on the gospel of Christ. Christ calls us to be "steadfast" and "immovable."

Third, we are to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord." We are to be overflowing in our service to Christ. Serving the Lord is not a part-time responsibility; it is a full-time job. As my grandfather would often tell me, "there is no day off in the Lord's army." We are to serve him and to live for his glory all the days of our lives. "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). Or as Peter puts it, "As each has received a gift use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies - in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4:10-11). Thus, not only are we to be steadfast, not only are we not to be moved from the foundational truth of the gospel of Christ, but we are to press forward on the old paths of the gospel. We are to be "always abounding" in the work of the Lord!



# THE GLORY OF GOD

Now what exactly is “the work of the Lord” in which we are to be always abounding? What or whose works of the Lord does Paul have in view? He doesn’t explicitly tell us. I would suggest, however, that the ‘brothers’ of v. 58 is the same ‘brothers’ of vv. 1 & 50. It is those who heard Paul’s preaching (vv. 1-2). Simply put, in these verses Paul is addressing the whole congregation. Thus, the ‘work of the Lord’ is our work in service of the Lord. It is the work of each child of God in service of Christ, whether seen or unseen, whether acknowledged or hidden.

This work may sound difficult. This sounds exhausting. But Paul closes this verse and this chapter with a wonderful word of assurance: “knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” What a truth! Regardless of the outcome or the results, our labor for Christ is not in vain. For those united to Christ and empowered by the Spirit, our service for the gospel is never empty. The Lord is always, *always* at work in and through the humble labors of his children. It is a wonder of wonders that the Lord would use feeble efforts in the spread of the gospel. Even the smallest

work for the Lord is not empty, but is pleasing in his eyes and used for his glory.

The faithful prayer of a grandmother, the simple faith of a five-year-old boy, the Bible reading of a tired, single mom, the leading in family worship of a busy father pulled in a hundred directions, or the humble, faithful testimony of the young professional – all are pleasing to our Lord. Our believing is not in vain (1 Cor 15:2) and our labor for the Lord is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58). Brothers and sisters, may we always abound in the work of the Lord knowing that we belong to the risen and conquering King! ♥



*Robert Arendale is the Executive Director at RTS Houston. He also serves RTS as a lecturer in pastoral theology.*

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# LEAVING A LEGACY

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**MATTHEW BRYANT**

Over the years, many of us have heard stories about long-term supporters who leave substantial gifts to colleges, universities, and non-profits through their estates. Recently, a “quiet volunteer” in Cincinnati left over \$3 million, divided among three local non-profit organizations with which she was engaged. In Arkansas, a couple ended up leaving over \$6 million to a nearby university, despite locals thinking that they “didn’t have two nickels to rub together.”

The stories of these quiet givers – and there are many more like them – represent sizable estate gifts that were surprises to their recipients. None of these individuals had ever been “major donors” to any organization, but had been faithful givers over the years of both their time and finances.

The same is true at Reformed Theological Seminary. This year alone, RTS has received three sizable estate gifts, two of which were unknown to us until the estate’s executors contacted us. We celebrate these moments of generosity, knowing they are evidence of how God delights in showing his faithfulness in provision.

Throughout my career in development, I’ve been reminded over and over again of the importance of these types of gifts – both in the lives of donors, and in the overall health of our fundraising. In that time, many



friends and colleagues have urged me to include long-term giving as part of the conversation we’re having with all of our donors, large and small. Planned giving ensures that our partnership with our supporters is not just for the here and now, but is built for a lifetime, honoring the faithful love and support given to us over many years.

I spoke recently with RTS Board member Charles Irby, who shared with me that his father, once chairman of the board at French Camp Academy in Mississippi, wore a lapel pin with the letters “IHLFCIMW” around fellow board members and supporters. While the letters are not the easiest letter combination to remember – even Charles had to write it out while telling me the story – the effect was memorable. “I Have Left French Camp In My Will” became a common theme in his relationships with donors.

Mr. Irby championed the idea that giving beyond our life on earth guarantees that the next generation will benefit from our charitable intentions. It is necessary for each of us to be thoughtful about this issue and to consider the various ways our generosi-

ty might continue, despite the discomfort that may arise when contemplating our own mortality.

One of the ways RTS has kept track of planned gifts to the seminary is through the RTS Heritage Society. The Heritage Society is a list of supporters and alumni who have indicated that they will include RTS in their long-term giving plans or in their wills.

**THE SEMINARY IS STRONG AND WELL-POSITIONED TO MEET THE NEEDS AND EQUIP THE NEXT GENERATION OF SERVANT LEADERS IN THE KINGDOM**

While stories of surprising estate gifts are fun to read about – and fun to receive! – there are plenty of stories of people who have, over the years, made their long-term gift plans known so that their



wishes are clearly communicated and appropriately designated. Also, participation in the Heritage Society allows us the opportunity to acknowledge and express our appreciation and may inspire others to do the same via example.

Since its founding in 1966, Reformed Theological Seminary has grown and flourished because of the generosity of God’s people who have invested in the future of the church by giving to RTS. There are scholarships, programs, faculty chairs, buildings, and even entire campuses across RTS that bear the name of our supporters and represent generations of ongoing generosity.

Because of these donors and countless others, and through years of honoring our mission, partnering with faithful supporters, carefully stewarding resources, and steadfastly trusting in God’s provision, the seminary is strong and well-positioned to meet the needs and equip the next generation of servant leaders in the Kingdom.

A friend once asked me, “When is the best time to plant a tree?” Before I could respond, he answered,

“30 years ago.” He then asked, “When is the second-best time to plant a tree?” Now catching on, I replied, “Right now!” In much the same way, if you have not already begun thinking about how you might wish to handle your long-term charitable giving, “now” is the best time.

*Our development staff at RTS has professional, confidential expertise to answer questions about various planned giving opportunities. We’ve made sure that we are equipped to help and offer guidance as our supporters consider their options, from naming RTS in their wills, to help with charitable gift annuities, gifts of real estate and gifts from retirement plans.*

*We also have resources available to you at [rts.plannedgiving.org](https://rts.plannedgiving.org). For more information, please call Cheryl McCulloch at 601-923-1600. To learn more about the Heritage Society, visit [rts.edu/development/heritage-society](https://rts.edu/development/heritage-society). ♥*



*Matthew Bryant is the Senior Vice President of Development at RTS.*

NOT  
SOMETHING  
MAN  
CAN DO





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## **JIM MOORE AND LARRY EDWARDS REFLECT ON DECADES OF SERVING ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**KELLY BERKOMPAS**

Since its founding, one of Reformed Theological Seminary's strengths has been its board of trustees. Over the years, there have been more than 50 members, each offering different perspectives, areas of expertise, and above all, a common desire to see the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Many of the trustees have served extensive terms, and therefore have an in-depth knowledge of the seminary's history. Two such members are Jim Moore and Larry Edwards, both of Jackson, Mississippi.

Moore joined the RTS Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee — a group of up to 12 board members — in 1980. Edwards would join the board six years later. Prior to their elections, both Moore and Edwards attended meetings as trainees.

"I used to tell people 'I'm an eating member. I can't vote, but I can eat,'" Moore joked, referring to the bi-monthly lunch meetings he attended prior to joining the board.

Moore began attending meetings as a trainee in 1976 — 4 years prior to joining the board. Bob Cannada, the chairman of the board at the time, saw the trainee role as an on-ramp to full board participation. "Bob wanted a new board member to be up to speed on all issues and opportunities on day one and able to cast their vote," Moore explained.

Spending time as trainees also allowed prospective members to determine whether they felt called to invest their time, energy, and resour-

es in the ongoing development of RTS. In addition to the practicality of getting new board members “up to speed,” starting as a trainee tested the strength of new board members’ commitment. In the late 70s and early 80s, the Executive Committee met twice a month for multiple hours at a time. Cannada wanted to make sure that serving on the board would be a top priority for each potential member.

The RTS Board of Trustees “has always been very hands-on,” Edwards explained. He said that while the Executive Committee’s meeting schedule and other duties have evolved over the years as the seminary has grown, the Executive Committee and board continue to be actively involved in the governing of RTS.

The significant level of commitment required from board members cultivates a committed group of trustees, many of whom choose to serve for long periods of time, including Moore and Edwards’ decades-long tenures.

Currently, the Executive Committee meets on a monthly basis. All board members are welcome and encouraged to attend the monthly meetings, even if they are not currently serving on the committee. Various subcommittees report to the Executive Committee, providing research, insight, and knowledge to help the Executive Committee in their decision-making processes. The committee is accountable to the larger board of trustees, which is responsible for interviewing and hiring faculty, as well as setting the seminary’s budget.

Edwards, who joined the board in 1986, encourages new board members to get involved beyond the minimum requirements. “You cannot learn the ethos, and what we do, and what we’re facing from two to three board meetings a year,” he remarked.

The trainee role no longer exists, but the board now prioritizes educating new trustees about the history of the seminary — in fact, the longer-serving board members just walked them through the seminary’s timeline at their meeting in October 2019.

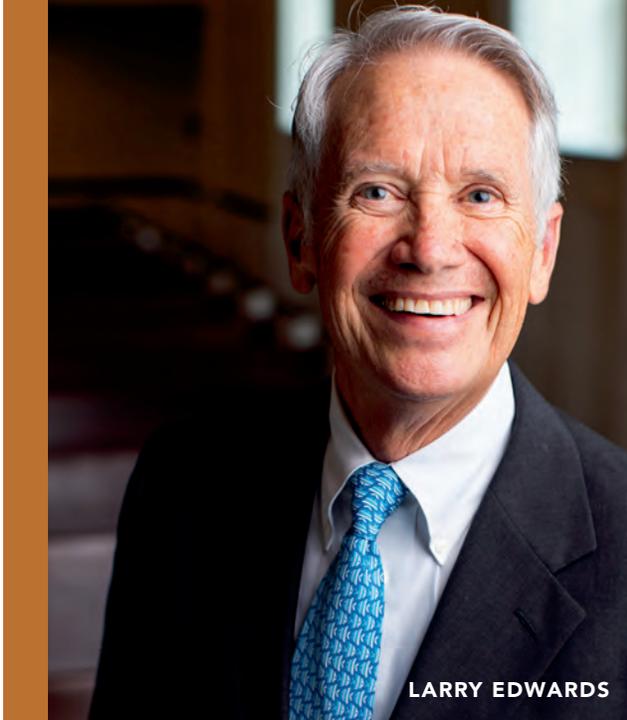
“[The history] is not like ‘A, B, C,’ Moore explained. “You have to work your way through it...We tried to let them know what we had been through and what lessons we had learned — sometimes the hard way — that they can benefit from.”

In addition to emphasizing commitment and a robust understanding of RTS’ history, the board of trustees also prioritizes a diverse vocational make-up across its members. Nearly all of the trustees since RTS’ founding have been laymen, while only a few have been pastors and theologians. At the time he started as a trainee, Moore was a vice president of communications at one of Mississippi’s largest utility companies. Edwards’ career has been in real estate.

Both Moore and Edwards’ backgrounds have served them practically during their time on the RTS Board of Trustees. Moore served as chairman of the board during the late 2000s economic recession. He remembered feeling thankful for a board made up of members who had careers in the business world as the school navigated various financial issues. As for Edwards, his real estate expertise has been invaluable as RTS has acquired property for various campuses.

Over the course of their time serving on the board of trustees, both Moore and Edwards have seen their share of changes and challenges at RTS.

“We were living hand-to-mouth for a while,” remembered Moore. “We were totally dependent, which



LARRY EDWARDS



JIM MOORE

kept us on our knees. We prayed an awful lot in the early years. But we were convinced that if we were doing the Lord's will, he would get us through. And that turned out to be the case."

As the seminary has expanded geographically, so has the board. Since RTS was founded in Jackson, Mississippi, many of the original board members were from the area. With the founding of the Orlando and Charlotte campuses, trustees from Florida and North Carolina joined the board, followed by others across the southeast as RTS has continued to add campus locations.

Despite the challenges, the changes, and the growth of RTS, some things have stayed very much the same. Edwards remarked on the fact that RTS has been and continues to be committed to "the inerrancy of Scripture" and "the raising up of pastors."

Moore believes that seminaries influence every Christian, whether directly or indirectly. Theological education, he explained, "is the basis on which everything is done, whether you're in the pulpit, teaching Sunday school, or in the pew."

The founding mission of preparing pastors, counselors, missionaries, educators, and other Christian leaders flows from the board, to the faculty, to the students. Both Moore and Edwards commented on how key the faculty are in fulfilling RTS' mission. Their pastoral and ministerial experiences provide students with a model for uniting a strong theological foundation with sincere shepherding care, which equips the student body to serve in various fields of ministry.

Moore and Edwards, along with many other trustees, initially joined the board because of what they call "the multiplying effect" — the expansion of the Kingdom through the graduates of RTS. Both are quick to clarify that RTS' growth and worldwide impact is not a product of their involvement, or of the board as a whole, or the efforts of anyone else who has been involved with RTS over the years. Instead, as Edwards put it, "This is not something man can do. It's only something that can be done because of the work of the Lord."

"God has truly blessed us," Moore said with a smile. "And it's been fun to watch." ♥



# CALLED TO PREACH

## INTERVIEW WITH JERRY YOUNG

**PHILLIP HOLMES**

*Dr. Jerry Young, 18th president of the National Baptist Convention, received both his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Reformed Theological Seminary. One of the first full-time African-American students at RTS, Dr. Young shared his story with M&L Editor-in-Chief Phillip Holmes, telling stories of his childhood, education, and experiences as a pastor.*

*This transcript has been edited for length and clarity.*

*Where are you from?*

Actually, I was born in the Mississippi Delta. In fact, I was born literally on a plantation, in Scott, Mississippi.

***Tell me a little bit about your childhood.***

When I was very young, my father moved from that particular plantation there near Scott, Mississippi, to Lamont, Mississippi. And so I grew up as a boy there in Lamont, which was still surrounded by the plantations. I grew up there surrounded by cotton fields and wheat and stuff like that.

We worked on the plantation and it was very difficult.

I had seven brothers and two sisters and most of us lived there in Lamont in a very small home. But my father managed to purchase a small home there with two bedrooms and a kitchen. Life was very difficult. I grew up during the Civil Rights Era, Jim Crow and the like. And being born there was extraordinarily challenging.

***When did you become a Christian?***

I've been around Christians all my life. My dad's a pastor. I grew up in the pastor's house. So, I was introduced to the gospel from birth.

I actually became a Christian my freshman year in college. That's when I really became a Christian. Actually, at Sophia Sutton Mission Assembly in Prentiss, Mississippi.

T. B. Brown, who was part of Mount Helm Church in town, was a guest preacher for us down there at that meeting, and we had a lot of other folks who were teaching and training. And it was there that I literally yielded myself and truly, truly accepted the Lord Jesus Christ.

***How old were you?***

I was 19 years old.

***When did you realize that the Lord was calling you to preach or to pastoral ministry?***

One night in the dormitory, I got so overwhelmed with a call to preach until I got out of bed, probably one or two o'clock in the morning, and I went down the hall in the dormitory preaching. And people were opening the doors, coming out, and they said, "Man, Jerry has had a nervous breakdown."

They took me uptown to see a psychiatrist.

And then Mrs. Barron sent for me.

She said, "Now look, Jerry, I know one thing, I know that you are not insane."

She said, "Boy, let me ask you something. Have you been called to preach?" I started crying like a baby.

That was the beginning, man.

***What was your ultimate hope for pursuing theological education in a formal setting?***

My father told me this. He said, "Jerry, I have preached all over this country. And I've preached in some of the largest pulpits in the country. And I have been invited to become pastor of some of the largest churches, but I never did take one of those churches. I didn't accept those churches because I knew I could preach to those people because God had called me to preach. But I knew I couldn't pastor those people because I was not prepared."

He said, "I think you ought to go to school. Because, son, if God opens doors and gives opportunities to you, I want you to be able to say, 'I'm going to accept that opportunity because I believe God has something for me here. This is what God wants from me.' I don't

want it to be because you're not prepared to do it." I was pastoring in two churches now in Greenville, Mississippi.

I was uncomfortable because I felt a tremendous degree of responsibility to lead these people, and I felt incompetent to really lead that church and share the gospel. And I said, "My dad told me that I needed to really make sure I was prepared."

Then the principal of Western High School came to ask me if I would teach a semester for him. I went to help him out and met a young girl. And the class ends and she told her dad that I was the best teacher she'd ever had in her life and told him I was a pastor. He showed up at the church. His name is T. J. Mercer. He had graduated from Reformed Theological Seminary. He was in Greenville, Mississippi, to start a PCA church.

And T. J. Mercer, without my knowledge, wrote Reformed Seminary. And the next thing I knew, Reformed Seminary wrote me and wanted me to come down for a weekend. Rest of it is history.

***Talk about your time at seminary. What was it like? What were some of the highlights, some of the frustrations?***

Well, to tell you the truth, I had a very good experience at Reformed.

I went to my first class in Hebrew, the professor said, "We'll have a quiz on the alphabet tomorrow." Well, everyone in the classroom had a book but me. I had no idea what he's talking about. My friend Tom carried me down to the bookstore and he helped me find my books. I went home, looked at

the book, and my wife came home. I said, "I think I made a mistake." She said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I don't think God really wants us here. I've got a quiz in the morning and I just got my book, this stuff is Hebrew and it's worse than Hebrew to me. I've never seen anything like this in my life." And I said, "I think I'll withdraw from school."

My wife looked at me and she said, "You told me that God was leading you to come to this school." She said, "We spent every dime we had to get this house. We don't have any more money. We don't have anything. And now you're going to tell me that you made a mistake? Let me tell you what I think you ought to do." I said, "Yeah?" She said, "I think you ought to pray and study because we're not leaving."

I ended up staying.

***What about peer relationships? This is only 10 years or so from the Civil Rights Movement. I've always been curious about some of the early African-American students. Were you the first?***

I was the first one to go full-time on campus. I was the very, very first one. There was another gentleman who had graduated from Reformed, but he commuted. But I was the first full-time student, African-American to be on campus.

And really, this was the moment for me: Tom Anderson and I were in the classroom studying. And two of the professors came out in the hall, and they were talking about me. And so the professor asked, "How is Jerry doing in Hebrew?" And the professor said, "He's doing well." And the professor said, "I didn't think he was going to be able to stay. I didn't think he was going to make it." And so Tom Anderson got a little angry.



"I WAS CONVINCED THAT GOD DID NOT BRING ME THERE TO LEAVE ME THERE. AND SO WE WALKED THROUGH IT."

Tom said, "I'm going to go ask them."

But I said to Tom, "I've been through so much worse than that, man. That right there is a piece of cake. I grew up on a plantation in Mississippi Delta. I've seen it all. I've heard it all." Those moments were there, and it was obvious that there were a couple of professors who had some degree of uncertainty as to how to relate to me. Tremendous discomfort and stuff like that. But I was convinced my wife was right, God had brought me there. I was convinced that God did not bring me there to leave me there. And so we walked through

it. But truthfully, most of the professors there were extraordinarily kind and generous.

*What has it been like to transition back into the National Baptist Convention after attending RTS?*

When I first was called to New Hope Church, many of the older pastors would make fun and tease me that I was a point preacher. Point one, point two, point three. And they would tease me. They would say, "How many points did you have Sunday, boy?"

I go to the minister's conference. Every week, one of the preachers had to preach. And so finally, my time came, I was going to have to preach on that Tuesday and man, every preacher in Jackson, Mississippi, came to that meeting.

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**"YOU GOT TO BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN IT. THAT'S WHY YOU GO TO SEMINARY.... THERE'S A RESPONSIBILITY ON YOUR SHOULDERS TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL OF THE LEARNING IS NOT IN THE PEWS."**

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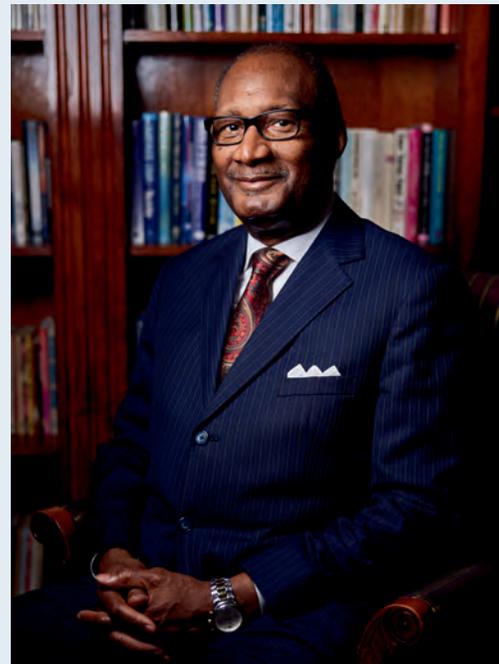
And I said, "I confess, I am a three-point preacher." They all laughed. And I said, "However, I want you fellows to know that I'm not going to hold it against you all that you all don't do three-point preaching. In fact, I have heard some sermons since I've been here that didn't even have one point." It was over.

I preached that day, and a whole bunch of fellas got converted to three-point preaching. They all start calling me and said, "Look, how do you do that? How did you get that?" I mean, it was downhill from there.

*In America, I think formal theological education is being devalued. How do you encourage brothers who are called to preach but are hesitant or feel that theological preparation is unnecessary? How do you encourage them?*

Well, let me tell you what I said to a lot of young preachers: "God is sovereign, does what he wills. But have you ever thought, 'Why is it that Peter wrote First-Second Peter? Why is it that John wrote? And why is it that Paul wrote?'" I said, "You know why? That's because God can make a mule talk, but he doesn't specialize in that."

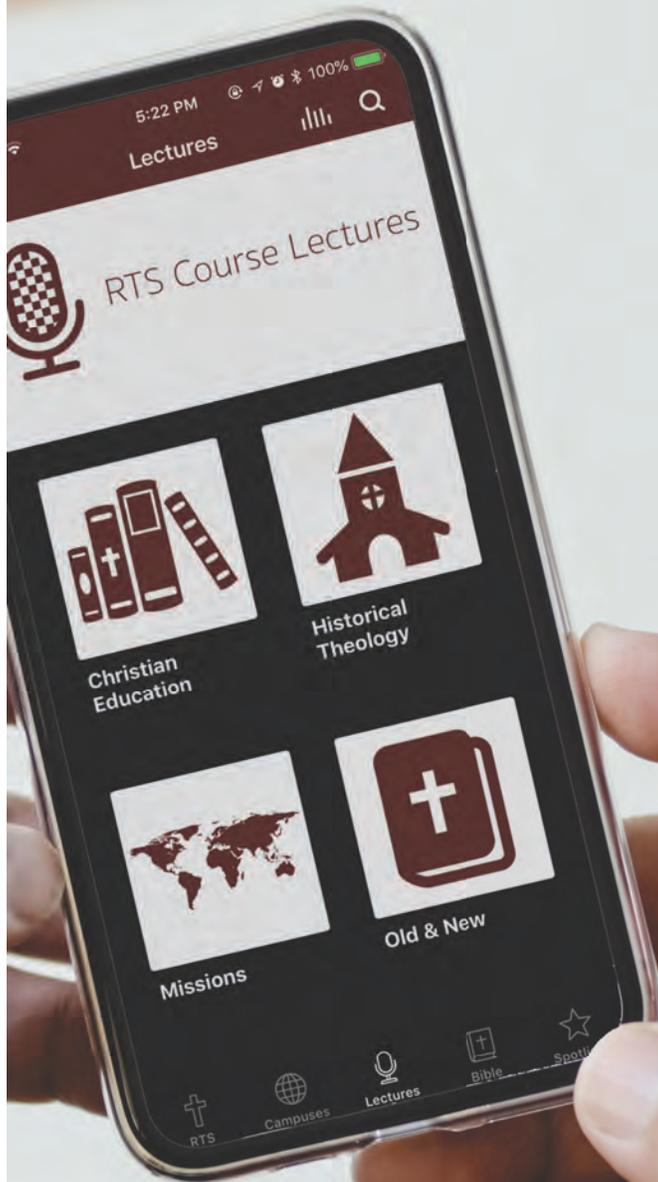
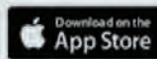
I said, "God uses us where we are with what we have. The future depends upon that preacher who can explain [the Bible]. I said, "You got to be able to explain it. That's why you go to seminary. At some point there's a responsibility on your shoulders to make sure that all of the learning is not in the pews." I said, "One of the tragedies of our church, in any church, but in our church in particular is to have intelligence in the pews and ignorance in the pulpit. That's why you need to go to school." ♥



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# NEWS

JACKSON, RICHARDSON

## TAKE ON NEW ROLES

*Bryant Jackson was promoted to Vice President for Finance in February 2020. Dr. Guy Richardson will transition to President Emeritus for RTS Jackson, while continuing to serve as the Director for the Master of Arts in Counseling program and taking on additional faculty responsibilities.*

### **BRYANT JACKSON** **VICE PRESIDENT FOR** **FINANCE**



Bryant Jackson came to RTS in July 2019 to serve as the Assistant Director of Finance. In February 2020, he was promoted to Vice President for Finance at RTS.

Jackson came to RTS from Bomgar, a \$150M tech company founded in Jackson, Mississippi, which now operates worldwide. At Bomgar, he held lead roles in accounting and finance. Jackson also has experience in software

enhancement and integration, which will be an area of focus for RTS in the coming years.

Brad Tisdale, Chief Operations and Financial Officer, commented, “Bryant has been with us for seven months and has shown the aptitude and ability to take more of a leadership role in this essential area. I look forward to working with Bryant as he leads the accounting and business office into the future.”

“I am honored that RTS has entrusted me with the role of Vice President for Finance,” shared Jackson. “The mission of RTS in preparing leaders for the church is critically important. I look forward to helping RTS continue this mission and move the seminary forward to ensure we are good stewards of the resources we have been given.”

In this new role, Jackson will be responsible for all of the accounting, finance, and related business functions of the seminary. Ken Wiandt will remain in his current position as Director of Finance, continuing to handle many important financial details of RTS and assisting with Jackson’s transition to vice president.

Tisdale also shared his appreciation that Wiandt will remain at RTS. “Ken’s historical knowledge and attention to detail are a key part of keeping this ministry moving.”

Bryant obtained an undergraduate degree in Accounting from Belmont University and an MBA from Mississippi State University. He and his wife, LeAnna, have a son named Emerson. They attend Highlands Presbyterian Church.



**DR. GUY  
RICHARDSON**  
**PRESIDENT EMERITUS //**  
**DIRECTOR OF THE MAC**  
**PROGRAM**



Dr. Guy Richardson is ready to move into his next role at RTS. Effective June 2020, he will become President Emeritus and transition to full-time faculty and director of the Masters of Arts in Counseling (MAC) Program for the Jackson and Orlando RTS campuses. He'll also continue to serve the school in advancement, strengthening our bonds with individuals and churches. Chancellor and CEO Dr. Ligon Duncan will serve as Acting President of the Jackson campus.

The world was very different in 1999 when Richardson and his wife, Denise, moved to Jackson with their two young girls. He began his career at the seminary as Senior Vice President and became

President of the Jackson campus in 2004. "I believe in and am committed to the mission of RTS, even more, today – to provide a rigorous education in God's Word and the Reformed tradition – and providing the Lord's church with strong, godly ministers and counselors."

Dr. Duncan noted: "For twenty-one of the fifty-four years of our seminary's history, Guy Richardson has been at the helm of the Jackson campus – and the hundreds of pastors, teachers, and counselors who were trained here are the fruit of his labors. We are thankful for his leadership now and in the future, as he continues to direct our MAC program."

Richardson became heavily involved with the counseling program in 2018 when he oversaw the transition from the Master of Arts in Family Therapy to the Master of Arts in Counseling. It was a significant change for the seminary, and required a large investment of his time. "It's a wonderful opportunity for our students, because the program now meets the academic and clinical requirements for the state boards overseeing Licensed Professional Counselors in most states."

Richardson is uniquely qualified to serve in his new role. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) with a Master of Education in Counseling and a Doctorate in Counselor Education. His academic preparation and experience meet the criteria needed for training counselors – an essential prerequisite for his new position. In addition to all this, Richardson brings his greatest asset: his pastor's heart.

"There are so many hurting people, and we have been entrusted to care for them. In addition to training our counseling students, our on-campus counseling centers in both Jackson and Orlando provide a quiet, behind-the-scenes ministry that faithfully serves our communities. We see hundreds of clients and hold thousands of counseling sessions every year. Our centers serve hundreds of families – many without health insurance or means to pay for counseling. I am thrilled to see this continue and expand and be part of the Lord's work."

*For more information about the MAC program, visit [rts.edu/counseling](https://rts.edu/counseling).*

## — THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE AND ETHNICITY NAMED FOR ALONZO AND ALTHEA EDMISTON

The Board of Trustees of Reformed Theological Seminary is pleased to announce that the Center for the Study of the Bible and Ethnicity at RTS Atlanta has a new name: The Edmiston Center for the Study of the Bible and Ethnicity.

Named for Alonzo and Althea Edmiston, the Edmiston Center helps students to explore the connection between the local and the global, with a focus on how God has moved, is moving, and has promised to move through His people in history and in the contemporary world.

When asked about the significance of the Edmiston Center's name, Director Karen Ellis com-

mented, "Only one generation removed from American slavery, Alonzo and Althea Edmiston felt the call to serve in the Free Congo at the very beginning of the 20th century. For more than 30 years, they wove together the Word of God, how he moved through their localized Christian experience in America, and how he expressed himself among the people of the Congo. As part of a larger PCUS African American church-planting team, God used them to raise up one of the largest Christian communities on the African continent in its day.

"Their story exemplifies the lives of many overlooked biblical saints serving faithfully among the





nations,” continued Ellis. “By renaming ourselves the Edmiston Center, we walk in the ethos of their lives of sacrificial discipleship and applied wisdom, as they uncovered God’s connections between the local and global church.”

Dr. Guy Richard, Executive Director of RTS Atlanta, shared his thoughts on this next step in the Edmiston Center’s development: “The Edmiston Center has existed at RTS Atlanta for just over a year and a half, now. In that time, we have discovered the importance of clarifying our mission in a way that is straightforward and easy to understand. We believe naming the CSBE after Alonzo and Althea Edmiston will enable us to do that. Their lives and ministries clearly embody the local and global elements that the Center is all about.

“The Edmistons’ names help to showcase the Center’s emphasis on world Christianity and on training men and women to minister in cross-cultural and multi-ethnic contexts both here and around the world. We are excited to have the Edmiston name attached to the work we are doing here at RTS Atlanta.”

Since fall 2018, the Edmiston Center has hosted the Grimké Lecture Series, where students and guests hear about ministry from multiple perspectives. Additionally, RTS Atlanta offers a certificate program with courses that explore Christianity as its own distinct and unique cultural minority at home and around the world. The certificate combines introductory theology courses with content from the Edmiston Center.



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE  
EDMISTON CENTER, PLEASE VISIT  
[EDMISTONCENTER.ORG](http://EDMISTONCENTER.ORG)**



## — DR. MICHAEL KRUGER FINISHES YEAR AS PRESIDENT OF THE EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



In 2019, Dr. Michael Kruger served as president of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS), a group of scholars, teachers, pastors and students dedicated to theological thought and research.

The ETS was founded in 1949 and is devoted to the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scriptures and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Society publishes a quarterly journal, an academic periodical, and book reviews and holds an annual meeting for its members.

Dr. Kruger has been a member of the ETS for 18 years and is on the editorial board of the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society. He is the co-founder and co-chair of the ETS study group, “NT Canon, Textual Criticism and Apocryphal Literature.” Prior to serving as president, Dr. Kruger was vice-president in 2017, and president-elect and program chair in 2018.

“It was a great privilege to serve as president of the Evangelical Theological Society, the world’s largest gathering of evangelical scholars,” Dr. Kruger said. “RTS has a rich history of involvement

with the society, with numerous professors giving papers and serving on study committees. My hope is that RTS’ involvement in the ETS will help it to remain academically rigorous, theologically aware, and biblically faithful.”

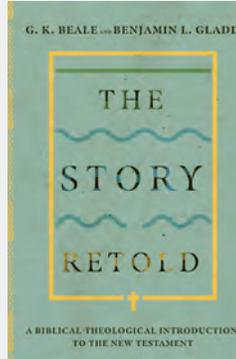
Dr. Kruger’s responsibilities as president of the ETS included leading the executive committee, chairing the annual business meeting, and giving the presidential address at the annual meeting. In addition to Dr. Kruger, two other RTS faculty members have served terms as president of the ETS: Dr. Simon Kistemaker (1976) and Dr. Roger Nicole (1956).

“I could not be prouder of Mike Kruger. His work as a scholar, apologist, theologian, and pastor is an extraordinary blessing to us at RTS, but also to the wider Christian world. His presidential address at ETS this year was met with accolades, which does not surprise me in the least! I am delighted that his contributions to theological scholarship and education were recognized and honored by his election as President of the Evangelical Theological Society, and I look forward to his leadership there in the years to come.” shared Dr. Ligon Duncan, Chancellor and CEO of RTS.



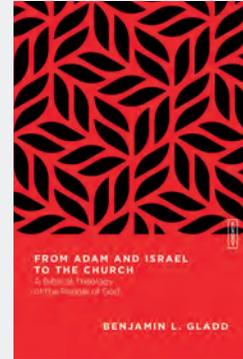
**DR. J.V. FESKO**

*The Christian and Technology* (Evangelical Press, 2020)

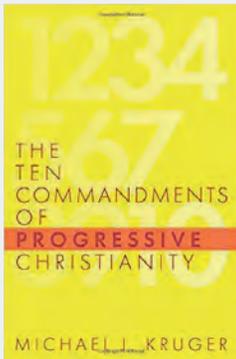


**DR. BEN GLADD**

*The Story Retold: A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament* with G.K. Beale (IVP, 2020)

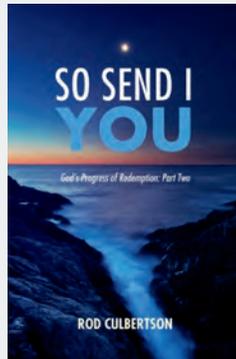


*From Adam and Israel to the Church: A Biblical Theology of the People of God* (IVP, 2019)



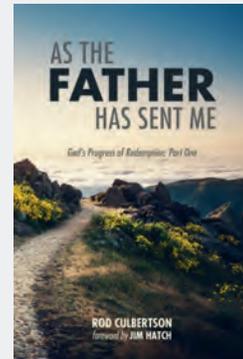
**DR. MICHAEL KRUGER**

*The Ten Commandments of Progressive Christianity* (Cruciform Press, 2019)

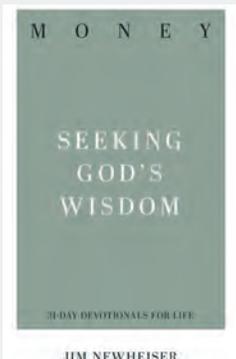


**DR. ROD CULBERTSON**

*So Send I You* (Wipf and Stock, 2019)



*As the Father Has Sent Me* (Wipf and Stock, 2018)



**DR. JAMES NEWHEISER**

*Money: Seeking God's Wisdom* (P&R, 2019)





## TRAVEL AND SPEAKING



### DR. LIGON DUNCAN

**APRIL 14-16:** Speaking at Together for the Gospel Conference, Louisville, KY.

**MAY 3:** Preaching at Friendship PCA's 200th Anniversary, Laurens, SC.

**MAY 9:** Speaking at Geneva College's Commencement, Beaver Falls, PA.

**MAY 16:** Speaking at RTS Jackson's Commencement, Jackson, MS.

**MAY 19:** Preaching at Covenant Presbytery, Memphis, TN.

**JUNE 3-5:** Speaking at Puritan Conference, Sun Valley, CA.

**JUNE 10:** Speaking at The Gospel Coalition Indianapolis Pastor's Event, Indianapolis, IN.

**JUNE 11:** Speaking at the Gospel Coalition's Women's Pre-Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

**JUNE 23-26:** Speaking at the EPC General Assembly, Memphis, TN.

**JULY 27-31:** Teaching "Systematic Theology," at RTS Atlanta, Marietta, GA.

**AUG. 31-SEPT. 2:** Speaking at Sing! Conference, Nashville, TN.

**SEPT. 25-26:** Speaking at 9Marks Conference on Church Government, SEBTS, Wake Forest, NC.



### DR. RICHARD BELCHER

**MARCH 14-15:** Speaking on "Understanding God's Law," Faith Presbyterian Church, Morganton, NC.



### DR. ROD CULBERTSON

**MARCH 7-8:** Speaking at the annual Missions Conference, Sovereign Grace PCA, Charlotte, NC.



### DR. J.V. FESKO

**MAY 11-12:** Speaking at Center for Christian Apologetics, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY.



### DR. BEN GLADD

**APRIL 14:** Co-presenting with G.K. Beale at Together for the Gospel Conference, Louisville, KY.



## TRAVEL AND SPEAKING



### DR. MICHAEL KRUGER

**APRIL 14-16:** Speaking at Together for the Gospel Conference, Louisville, KY.

**JUNE 10-13:** Speaking at The Gospel Coalition Women's Conference, Indianapolis, IN.

**SEPT. 11-13:** Speaking at the Fall Conference, Arden Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville, NC.



### DR. JAMES NEWHEISER

**APRIL 24-25:** Leading training at Faith Ministries, Minneapolis, MN.

**MAY 1-3:** Speaking at the Counseling Conference, Grace Community Church, Huntsville, AL.

**MAY 6-10:** Speaking at the Church Retreat, International Bible Church, Dusseldorf, Germany.

**MAY 11-13:** Speaking at FIRE National Conference, Seattle, WA.

**MAY 15-16:** Speaking at the Biblical Peacemaking Conference, Bend, OR.

**MAY 29-31:** Speaking at the Counseling Conference, First Baptist Church, Slidell, LA.

**JUNE 25-27:** Speaking at the IBCD Conference, San Diego, CA.

**JULY 16-19:** Speaking at the Biblical Counseling Conference, Bozeman, MT.



For up-to-date information on travel and speaking engagements, please contact the event organizers.

## PUBLICATIONS

**DR. RICHARD BELCHER**

*The Fulfillment of the Promises of God: An Explanation of Covenant Theology* (Christian Focus, forthcoming)

**DR. JOHN CURRID**

*The Case for Archaeology: Uncovering the Historical Record of God's Old Testament People* (P&R, forthcoming)

**DR. JAMES NEWHEISER**

*Opening Up Proverbs* (Day One, 2019)

"The Relationship Between Preaching and Counseling" for a *Festschrift for Jay Adams* (2019)

**DR. J.V. FESKO**

"Calvin's Doctrine of Creation and Man" for *John Calvin: For a New Reformation* (Crossway, 2019)

"Geerhardus Vos' Thomistic Doctrine of Creation" for *Reformed Faith and Practice* (2019)

"Girolamo Zanchi on Union with Christ and the Final Judgement" for *Perichoresis* (2019)

**DR. BLAIR SMITH**

"Catholicity in Presbyterian Perspective" for *Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies* (2020)

"On God" for *Early Christian Doctrine* (Lexham Press, forthcoming)

**DR. WILLIAM ROSS**

"Questioning the 'Opposition' and Interpretatio Christiana in Marcus Aurelius (Med. 11.3)" for *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* (2019)

"Some Aspects of Παιδῆριον and Νεανίσκος in Ptolemaic Egypt" for *The Legacy of Soisalon-Soiminen: Towards a Syntax of Septuagint Greek* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020.)

"Reading the Septuagint Alongside the Hebrew Bible" for *Hebrew for Life: Strategies for Learning, Retaining, and Reviving Biblical Hebrew* (Baker Academic, 2020)

In light of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak around the world and in the United States, all of our Spring 2020 courses have moved to an online format, and on-campus activities have been canceled.

Our administration will carefully consider whether or not to cancel or postpone all commencement activities.

Check [rts.edu/news/coronavirus-updates](https://rts.edu/news/coronavirus-updates) for the most recent updates.

**PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR SAFETY AND WISDOM FOR OUR STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATION.**





## JACKSON

**MAY 16:** Commencement with Dr. Ligon Duncan

**JUNE 23:** M.Div. Preview Day

**JUNE 25:** MAC Preview Day

**AUG. 26:** Convocation

*For more information, call 601-923-1600*



## ORLANDO

**MAY 22:** Commencement with Dr. Kelly Kapic

*For more information, call 407-366-9493*



## CHARLOTTE

**MAY 22:** Commencement with Dr. Derek Thomas

**AUG. 25:** Convocation */// For more information, call 704-366-5066*

**RTS CHARLOTTE IS PLEASED TO OFFER "THE EXPOSITION OF HEBREWS" WITH DR. D. A. CARSON THIS SUMMER, JUNE 15-19.**

The course will analyze the message and purpose of the book of Hebrews to show its importance for today. Special attention is given to the basic doctrines of Christ's high priesthood and the covenant and the author's admonition to be faithful to the Word of God.



## WASHINGTON

**MAY 23:** Commencement */// For more information, call (703) 448-339*



## ATLANTA

**MAY 16:** Commencement */// For more information, call 770-952-8686*



## HOUSTON

**MAY 22:** Commencement

**AUG. 26:** Convocation

*For more information, call (832) 377-1675*



## DALLAS

**MAY 16:** Commencement

**AUG. 26:** Convocation

*For more information, call (214) 295-8599*

## RTS EVENTS at GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

**JUNE 3-9:**

Details TBA: OPC GA

**JUNE 9, 12:15 PM:**

ARP Synod: RTS Alumni and Friends Luncheon */// Dining Hall, Bonclarken Conference Center, Flat Rock, NC*

**JUNE 18, 12:00 PM:**

PCA GA

**JUNE 23-26:**

Details TBA: EPC GA

*Please contact David Veldkamp with any question related to RTS General Assembly events: [dveldkamp@rts.edu](mailto:dveldkamp@rts.edu)*

*For up-to-date information about general assemblies, please contact the event organizers.*



**BENEDICTION**  
SPRING 2020

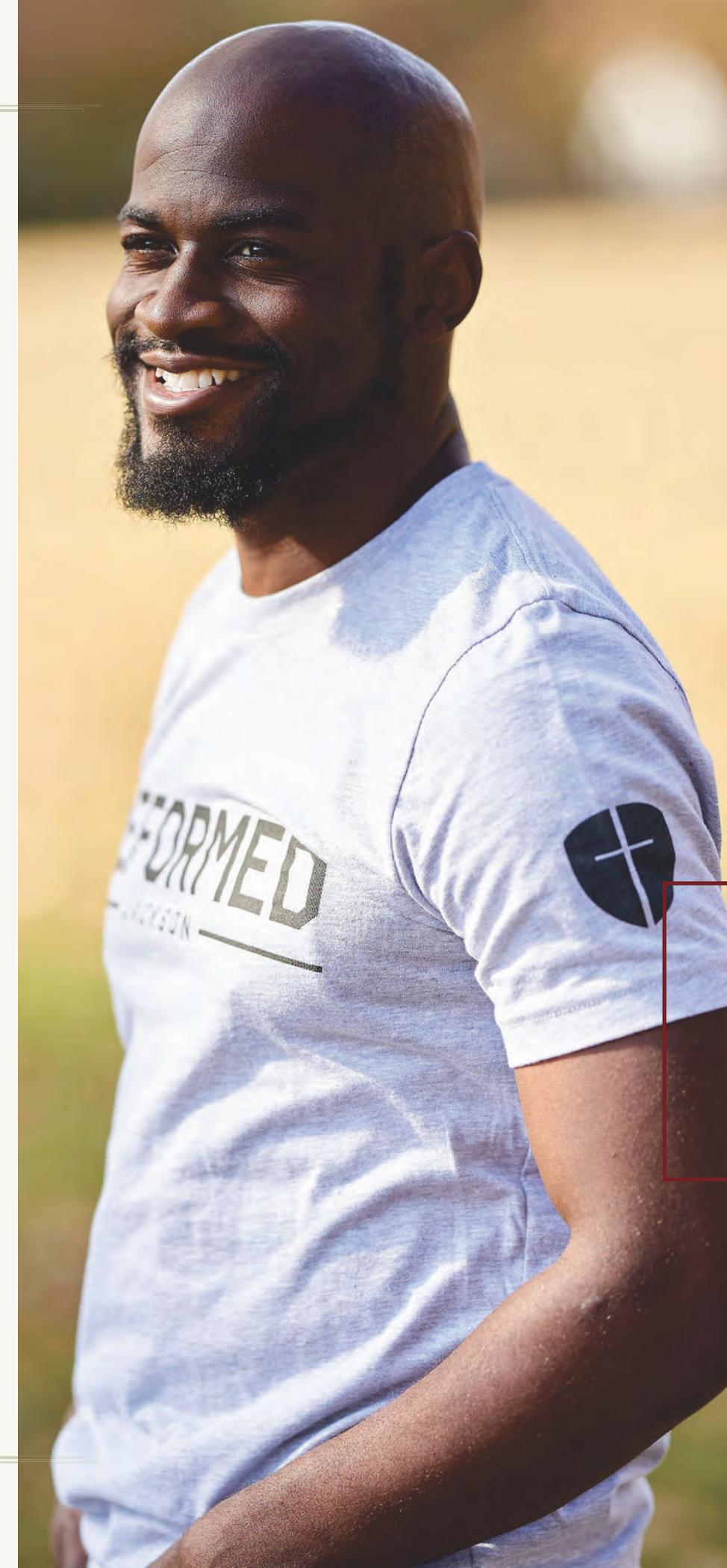
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*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself  
and God our Father, who has loved us and given us  
eternal comfort and good hope by grace,*  
**COMFORT AND STRENGTHEN  
YOUR HEARTS IN EVERY GOOD  
WORK AND WORD.**

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**2 THESSALONIANS**  
2:16-17



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THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



We exist to serve the church by preparing its pastors, counselors, educators, missionaries, and other leaders through theological education.

*We long to see the next generation persevere in the midst of a hostile culture.*

We aim to equip leaders who will provide theological ballast so that the church remains steadfast under trial.

*We pray that our children and grandchildren will never lack well-trained and caring leaders who point them to the hope laid up for us in heaven.*