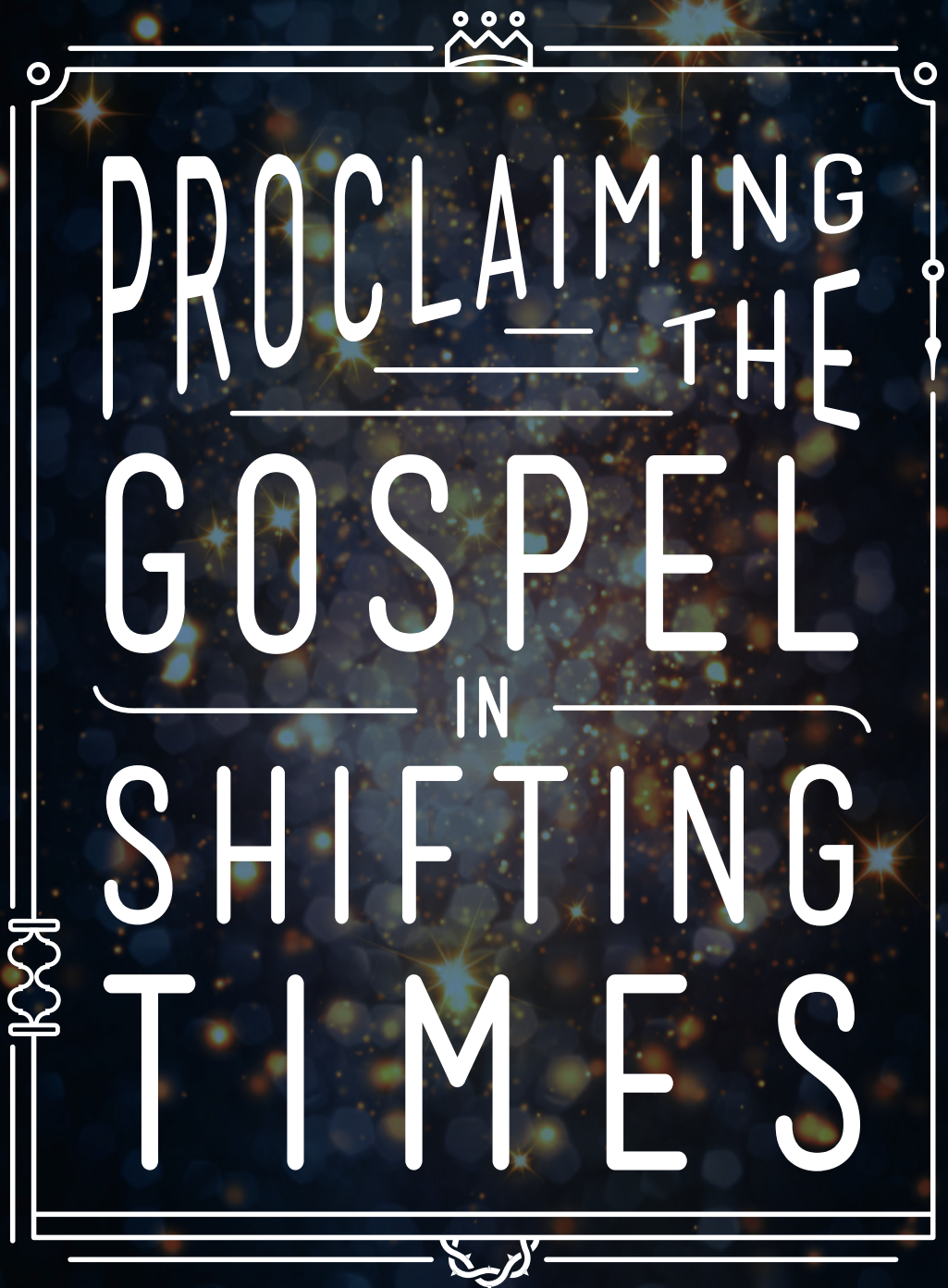


60TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

COVENANT

THE MAGAZINE OF COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

VOL. 31 NOS. 1-2



PROCLAIMING
— THE
GOSPEL
— IN —
SHIFTING
TIMES

CALLED TO

EQUIP CHRIST'S CHURCH AND KINGDOM

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20

STANDING FIRM—AND MOVING FORWARD

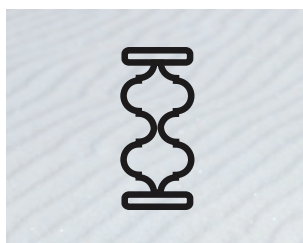
At the PCA’s 45th General Assembly in June 2017, President Dr. Mark Dalbey reflected on Covenant Seminary’s Reformation roots and the theological commitments that sustain and propel our mission even in changing times.



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SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY AT COVENANT SEMINARY IS BIBLICAL AND MISSIONAL

Dr. Dalbey and the Seminary faculty present a helpful look at the reasoning behind our recent decision to reposition our Systematic Theology Department within a larger area known as the Missional Theology Division, and why that makes sense biblically.



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PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN SHIFTING TIMES

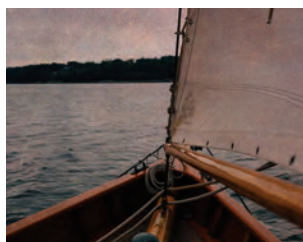
How should Christians respond to the changing culture around us, especially when it no longer seems to value—or want—the truth we have to offer? Francis A. Schaeffer Institute Director Professor Mark Ryan presents some helpful insights for those struggling with our constantly shifting cultural paradigm.

**FAITH
AND
POLITICS**

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FAITH AND POLITICS: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

What does the Bible have to say about the complex relationship between Christianity and governing authorities—and how does it apply to our increasingly turbulent political environment? Dr. Dan Doriani offers a biblical perspective on this important topic.



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REFLECTIONS ON GOD’S DELIGHT, DISCIPLINE, AND DIRECTION

On the eve of his retirement from full-time teaching in the spring of 2016, Dr. Richard Winter shared with our graduating seniors these moving reflections on his nearly 25 years at Covenant Seminary and on God’s abundant work in his life and ministry.



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CELEBRATING SIX DECADES OF GRACE AND GROWTH

The 2016–2017 academic year marked the 60th Anniversary of Covenant Seminary (and leads into the 500th of the Reformation), so we’re celebrating with reprints of writings by a few of our early faculty highlighting our commitment to Reformation principles.

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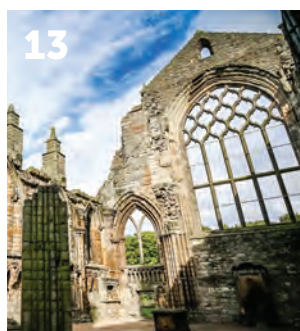
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Executive Editor :: John Ranheim
Managing Editor :: Kent Needler
Editor :: Rick Matt
Designer :: Katie Rhea Stokes
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MAIL
 Covenant Theological Seminary
 12330 Conway Road
 St. Louis, Missouri 63141

CALL
 314.434.4044 or
 1.800.264.8064

E-MAIL
 editor@covenantseminary.edu

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The purpose of Covenant Seminary is to glorify the triune God by training his servants to walk in God's grace, minister God's Word, and equip God's people—all for God's mission.



ON THE COVER

Cover image: "Fire Sparkles Bokeh," by nevarpp (iStock images).



“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Matthew 7:24–27

Dear Friends,

Amid the many rapid changes taking place in today’s culture, it’s easy to feel like we’re caught in a violent sandstorm, buffeted by pellets that sting and prick, and stumbling through mountainous dunes that continually shift and slide beneath us. Truth has become so relative that people have what 2 Timothy 4:3–4 calls “itching ears”: they “accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions” and “turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”

But as a wonderful old hymn reminds us, and as Jesus himself emphasizes in the verses from Matthew above, “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness. . . . On Christ the solid Rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.” Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ and put their faith in him have everything they need—and more!—to weather a thousand temporal storms. Yet we are called to do more than simply weather such storms: we are called to be beacons of hope amid the darkness, proclaiming and living out the Truth in love even when

others refuse to see or hear. We are the instruments God uses to bring the message of his grace to the hearts and minds of people in need of hope and healing.

This issue of *Covenant* addresses some of the ways in which we as believers can better understand and relate to the shifting times around us. I hope you will be encouraged and empowered by what you read here. And, as we recognize both Covenant Seminary’s 60th Anniversary this past academic year and the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation this fall, let us continue to trust in the One who is the Rock of our salvation and enables us to say, with Martin Luther, “Here I stand. I can do no other.”

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Dr. Mark L. Dalbey, *President*

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: EXPANDING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST'S CHURCH AND KINGDOM



Covenant alumnus Rob Wheeler assumed the role of site director for Covenant Seminary Nashville in July 2016.

Covenant Seminary Nashville: One Year Old and Counting

January 2017 marked the one-year anniversary of the launch of Covenant Seminary Nashville, the Seminary's extension site in Nashville, Tennessee. Covenant Seminary Nashville was developed over two years of extensive conversations between Seminary staff and pastors and elders in Nashville. The site is a partnership between Covenant and several Nashville-area churches that expands the Seminary's presence and theological educational resources into a strategically positioned city for the good of the church and the development of the body of Christ.

While the Seminary remains firmly committed to the residential model of theological education as our primary way to train pastors and leaders for Christ's church, we also recognize that increasing numbers of students cannot, for economic or other reasons, relocate to St. Louis for full-time seminary study as readily as in the past. Our desire is to help such students get a head start on their training through locally offered and online instruction in a city with a strong existing network of alumni and churches that can serve as infrastructural support for such a project. Thus, the goals for Covenant Seminary Nashville are to:

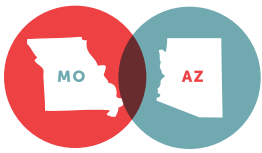
- + **Serve as an access point and on-ramp** for students who desire to begin their seminary training before moving to St. Louis.
- + **Provide on-site and hybrid online/on-site courses** for a variety of students seeking further training with our Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS) for their ministry staff positions.
- + **Further equip those in ministry or lay leadership** who seek deeper understanding of their faith and a better integration of that faith into their vocational life.

- + **Provide strategic research and insight** for the potential development of future learning sites.

Covenant alumnus **Rob Wheeler (MDiv '14, MAC '15)** was named site director for Covenant Nashville in July 2016. Rob brings to his role valuable experience in campus ministry, counseling, organizational leadership, and entrepreneurial ventures. He serves as the nexus for enrolled and prospective students, alumni, professors, and ministry leaders in the region. Rob sees his role as "creating a grace-filled environment where others can flourish." His love for the Lord, deep study of Scripture and Reformed theology, practice of hospitality, and valuing the stories and importance of every individual are a significant part of the distinctive Covenant ethos the Seminary is working to establish in Nashville.

During its first year, Covenant Nashville presented several weekend seminars, week-long courses, and semester-long weekly courses, such as Interpreting the Bible, Christian Ethics, Christian Maturity, Engaging Culture, Searching for Sexual Sanity, Spiritual and Ministry Formation, and others. All courses are taught by Covenant Seminary faculty or adjunct faculty to the same standards as our regular on-campus courses. We have also established a long-term schedule and cycle of courses to meet the planning needs of our Nashville students who are pursuing our current MATS hybrid degree.

For more information about Covenant Seminary–Nashville and upcoming course offerings, visit www.covenantseminary.edu/nashville or contact Rob Wheeler at rob.wheeler@covenantseminary.edu.



Introducing: Covenant Seminary – Missional Training Center, Phoenix

Covenant Seminary and the Missional Training Center (MTC) in Phoenix, Arizona, have reached an agreement for MTC to become a degree-granting site of Covenant beginning July 1, 2017. The agreement has been approved by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), and approval by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is pending. MTC was a site of Redeemer Seminary in Dallas until Redeemer closed at the end of the 2016 calendar year.

We are enthusiastic about this new partnership that we believe will be highly beneficial not only for both institutions, but also for the many students they will serve and for the churches within which those students will minister. MTC offers a 48-credit hour, cohort-based degree (MA in Missional Theology) for students already in ministry or serving as interns in local churches in Phoenix. MTC currently has approximately 60 students in four cohorts. **Dr. Michael Goheen** is the full-time residential faculty member and director of MTC. Many adjunct and visiting faculty members, including, among others **Dr. Christopher Wright** and our own **Dr. Mike Williams** and **Dr. Greg Perry**, also serve the institution.

Covenant President Dr. Mark Dalbey said, "We are grateful for this new partnership with MTC and for the opportunities it provides for expanded gospel impact in Phoenix and beyond."

Covenant and Christian Heritage UK Partnered for English Reformation Course

Christian Heritage Summer School of Theology and Culture and Covenant Theological Seminary partnered this year to provide a week-long course celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. Titled **Reformation500: The Lordship of Christ Over All of Life**, the course explored the impact of the Reformation for its time and ours, while looking at the interwoven reality of theology and cultural apologetics. The course took place June 26–30, 2017, at Westminster College, Cambridge, UK. Covenant Seminary professors **Dr. Dan Doriani** and **Dr. Jack Collins** were among the many speakers featured. As Cambridge is the birthplace of the English Reformation, the course also offered a tour to several significant historical locations.



Participants had the opportunity to choose one of two special study tracks: Theology or Apologetics. Each track featured speakers from a wide range of specialties. Students in both tracks also benefited from the evening plenary sessions designed to help them engage with the course as a whole and featured speakers from both complementary tracks.

New Scholarships Support DMin and RUF-related Students



In keeping with our desire to ensure that as many students and alumni as possible are able to pursue a seminary education without incurring a heavy burden of debt, Covenant Seminary was able over the last year to institute new scholarships to support these key constituencies.

- + Covenant Seminary is offering a **75% scholarship for alumni taking the first course of their doctor of ministry (DMin) program**. The number of 75% scholarships is limited each year. After the first course, Covenant will match funds that alumni students receive from their churches, up to a maximum of 25% of tuition per course (25% from church, 25% from Covenant). The student is responsible for the remaining 50% of tuition. See our website for details: www.covenantseminary.edu/academics/degrees/dmin.
- + **The Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) Scholarship** encourages and supports students who are actively involved with an RUF ministry or who are serving as RUF interns. The scholarship includes:
 - + Up to 75%-tuition awards for full-time, main-campus MDiv students.
 - + 50% awards for online or Nashville courses for interns prior to attending as full-time, main-campus MDiv students.

More specific qualifications and details for the RUF Scholarships are available on our website at www.covenantseminary.edu/admissions/tuition-financial-aid.



Expanded Field Ed Program Features New Opportunities for Students—and a Full-Time Director

Covenant Seminary is pleased to announce that its Field Education

program is in the midst of a major expansion effort that will provide new opportunities for ministry-leaders-in-training to hone their skills while studying at Covenant’s St. Louis campus. Building on the program’s existing strengths and the Seminary’s many close relationships with local churches and ministries, the expanded program will offer current and future students enhanced mentored ministry internships under the guidance of experienced practitioners. The expanded program will also provide more support for students before, during, and after the internship process, as well as upgraded training and resourcing for church and ministry leaders serving as internship site mentors and supervisors. Other significant aspects of the program include the hiring of a full-time director dedicated exclusively to Field Education and the development of a specialized learning track in church planting. Initial funding for the expansion is provided by a generous grant from the Antioch

of experience in the development of partnerships and programs, as well as in education and leadership. With three MA degrees—in urban affairs (Saint Louis University), political science (University of Missouri—St. Louis), and educational ministries (Covenant Seminary)—and teaching experience at the college and university levels, including as adjunct professor of educational ministries at Covenant since 2015, Jeremy is currently pursuing a Doctor of Transformation Leadership (DTL) from Bakke Graduate University. He also serves as a ruling elder at Midtown Church (PCA) in St. Louis. Jeremy and his wife, Trisha, have three children.

Main is excited about the expanded Field Ed program’s potential and possibilities: “Our goal is to equip current and emerging leaders for faithful ministry in God’s global Kingdom. Students can’t learn everything in seminary, but they can develop the practices necessary for continued learning and compassionate leadership in whatever contexts the Lord has for them. Field Education provides valuable ministry experiences that help them intentionally integrate all aspects of their seminary training. We’re grateful for all the ministries that have welcomed our students, and we pray

Field Education provides valuable minister experiences that help students intentionally integrate all aspects of their ministry training.

Fund for Church Multiplication, in conjunction with the Seminary’s current capital campaign.

Integral to Covenant’s educational philosophy and curriculum, the Field Education program is designed to take advantage of the Seminary’s location in St. Louis, with its wealth of PCA churches and those of many other denominations. The city offers a unique ministry training ground in which future church leaders can engage in, reflect on, and receive feedback about the practice of ministry in a variety of real-life contexts, in concert with what they learn in the classroom. Helpful as the program has been, the Seminary has long desired to provide additional resources and more structured oversight to increase its effectiveness in preparing future church and other ministry leaders. The recent hiring of the program’s first full-time director is a major step in that process.

Jeremy Main (MAEM ’15), a Covenant Seminary graduate who has served as field education mentor coordinator since 2015, assumed the duties of **director of field education** on April 1, 2017. He brings to his new role a wealth

they have benefited from the assistance of students who are eager to serve and learn. We want to be more of a resource for the mentors and supervisors who give so generously of their time and expertise. We also look forward to broadening our networks, learning more about effective ministry in various contexts, and developing a more robust and diverse collaborative effort for training leaders for God’s mission.”

President Dr. Mark Dalbey commented, “Covenant’s board, faculty, staff, and students enthusiastically welcome Jeremy to his new role as director of field education. We thank the Lord for his provision of an experienced servant-leader who can help us take the program to a new level. We are also grateful to the Antioch Fund, in partnership with Mission to North America, for the generous grant that enables us to begin making our desires for this program a reality. Our graduates—and our churches—will be stronger for it.”

For information on how your church or ministry can participate in and benefit from the Field Education program, contact Jeremy Main at 314.392.4047 or jeremy.main@covenantseminary.edu.



Dr. Collins Returns From Research Fellowship at Creation Project

The Covenant Seminary community congratulates Dr. C. John "Jack" Collins, professor of Old Testament, on being one of six inaugural Henry Resident Fellows at the Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School for the past academic year. The Henry Fellowship is the centerpiece of a \$3.4 million grant from the Templeton Religion Trust awarded to the Henry Center in 2015 for a project called Evangelical Theology and the Doctrine of Creation (known in short as the Creation Project). The fellowship is a scholar-in-residence program designed to support and stimulate evangelical scholarship that examines various biblical and theological elements in the doctrine of creation and their interaction with scientific developments. In addition to their research, Henry Fellows also participated in public lectures, events, and discussion groups. Dr. Collins's particular focus for the year was on "Genesis 1–11: Poetry, History, Science, Truth."

Read more details here:
<http://bit.ly/2dqxuVI>.

Seminary In Midst of Reaccreditation Self-Study

Every ten years, the Seminary must undergo an intensive self-evaluation process overseen by our accrediting institutions, the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The self-study process produces a report that provides a regular and valuable opportunity for in-depth analysis of our curriculum, methods, and educational outcomes, and serves as a key point of reference as we plan for the future. Our finished report was presented to ATS/HLC in July of 2017, with site visits from the evaluation committee scheduled for the fall of 2017 and the spring of 2018.



Revisions to MAC Program Will Provide More Opportunities for Graduates

Based on feedback from graduates, our own assessment of various state licensure standards, and industry accreditation standards, the Counseling Department has announced changes to its Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) program for students entering in the fall of 2017. The changes will enhance the portability of the degree, meaning that graduates will have an increased ability to pursue licensure in states other than Missouri. The changes may also enable the Seminary to pursue additional accreditations that could lead to a further increase in degree portability. Look for more information on this process in coming months.



Dr. Higgins Subject of Award-Winning Documentary by Covenant Grads

Dr. Mike Higgins, dean of students and adjunct professor of applied theology, was the subject of an award-winning 2016 video documentary titled "Profiling Race: Mike Higgins" created by Covenant Seminary graduates John Pa (MDiv '02) and Matt Seilback (MDiv '09). The film is produced by Grain, Pa and Seilback's St. Louis-based creative firm that helps clients create beauty and uproot ugliness. The film tells the story of Mike Higgins's upbringing in North St. Louis, his military service as an artillery officer and later as a chaplain (Col., U.S. Army, retired), his call to ministry and service as a church planter and pastor, his return to St. Louis to work as dean of students for the Seminary and pastor of South City Church (PCA), and his involvement in faith-based racial justice initiatives. The 35-minute film earned awards for Best Editing, Best Cinematography, and Best Director in the Documentary Shorts category at the St. Louis Filmmaker's Showcase, and was one of four short films dealing with racial issues in St. Louis to be featured at the St. Louis International Film Festival in 2016.

Ordination Rates for Recent Covenant Seminary MDiv Graduates

Ordination Process

A recent survey of **519** graduates of Covenant Seminary's Master of Divinity (MDiv) program reveals the following patterns for entering the ordination process.

36% of these graduates were ordained within 6 months of graduation.

Of those who took longer to work through the ordination process, there were a number of factors. The top reason graduates were not ordained sooner was because their first position was not considered ordainable, either by the church leadership or the denomination. These include director or support-staff positions, hospital chaplaincy, and missionary service.

46 graduates initially entered into ministry in denominations that did not have traditional ordination requirements or simply did not require ordination.

Only **7** candidates took more than four years after graduation to be ordained, compared to a median length of one year.

6 participants were excluded from the data because they were ordained as pastors in non-denominational churches prior to attending seminary, and they maintained this earlier date.

Ministry Positions

The graduates were from the **2009–2015** classes and included:

136 serving as assistant/associate pastors

31 serving as lead pastors

29 serving as campus ministers

124

serving in support ministry positions, including youth ministry, church planting residencies, counseling positions, and parachurch ministries, including overseas missions.

Of the remaining 199

6

identified themselves as homemakers.

16

pursued doctoral studies.

16

became teachers.

49

chose to move into marketplace positions after graduation

44

were placed into ministry positions, but their ordination status is unknown.

11

struggled to find ministry placement and were categorized as "not placed."

57

have a status of "unknown".

Information compiled by Joel Hathaway,
Director of Alumni and Career Services.

Faculty Involvement

Covenant Seminary's faculty instructs with **ordination in view**. This includes:



Requiring students to memorize outlines for books of the Bible and dedicating a portion of class time to discussing the questions that need to be addressed for ordination examinations.



Requiring all MDiv students (except those on the Specialized Track) to take the one-credit Preparation for Licensure and Ordination Exams (AT411) course dedicated to the ordination process.



Old Testament Overview and New Testament Overview are available online at the Seminary's Resources page at www.covenantseminary.edu/resources.

Denominational Service

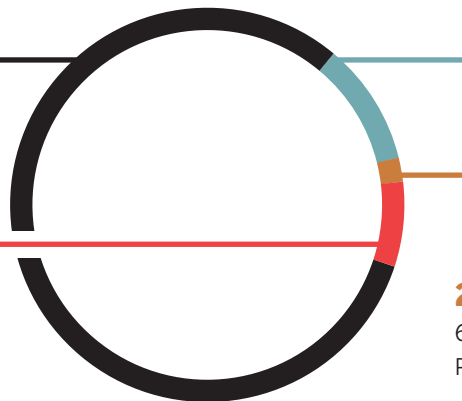
Among the **312** graduates who were identified as ordained and serving in vocational ministry positions:

81%

254 were serving with the Presbyterian Church in America

7%

19 were serving with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church



10%

The remaining 33 served in a variety of denominational and non-denominational churches.

2%

6 were serving with other Reformed Presbyterian denominations

Experience of the Ordination Process

+ Fewer than 8% indicated they had to work through one or more sections of the ordination process more than once. Most of those who struggled indicated that they felt supported in and through the process.

+ Those who struggled through the ordination process the first time also shared that they found great encouragement from others who had similar experiences.

Engaging Our Culture for Christ with Conferences, Seminars, and Special Classes

Part of helping our students understand and interact biblically with our culture and its challenges requires that we as an institution model such interaction for them. Here are some of the ways we've been doing that through conferences, seminars, weekend classes, and other events that address the various issues of our day.

Annual Francis Schaeffer Lecture Series



Os Guinness



William Edgar

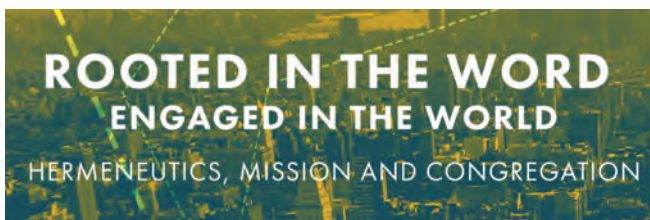


Andrew Fellows

Stand Firm: Christian Courage and the Struggle for Civilization (2016). This edition of the Schaeffer Lectures brought together three outstanding Christian thinkers and practitioners to help us think about the witness we are called to bear and the current cultural crisis in which we are caught. Author and social critic **Os Guinness**, Westminster Seminary professor and apologist **William Edgar**, and director of Christian Heritage in Cambridge, England, **Andrew Fellows** addressed the ways in which the church in North America has entered into a changed cultural landscape and is wrestling at all levels with foundational concerns: can we witness to our Lord and live out our faith in such a way as to prevail—with our integrity intact—over the corrosive forces of the current cultural climate?



The Fall 2017 Schaeffer Lectures will take place **September 29–30**. Titled **Before the Watching World: Identity and Legacy After 500 Years of Reform**, the lectures will focus on the legacy of the Protestant Reformation. (See ad inside our back cover for more information.)



The Spring 2017 CMI/FSI Conference, titled *Rooted in the Word, Engaged in the World: Hermeneutics, Mission, and Congregation*, focused on the idea that, if we pay close

attention to Scripture, we soon realize that the theme of mission is as central to the Bible's narrative as it is to the church's identity and task in the world. Learning to read the Bible missionally not only yields fresh insight into the familiar content of Scripture, but also illuminates ways to engage the changed contexts we are part of, including our calling as seminaries and local congregations to minister to and within the challenges of our time and place. The Seminary's City Ministry Initiative and Francis A. Schaeffer Institute welcomed leading biblical and missiological

scholars and practitioners to help explore these themes.

Keynote speakers were:

- + **Dr. Michael Goheen**, theological director and scholar in residence, Missional Training Center, Phoenix, Arizona;
- + **Dr. Christopher J. H. Wright**, international ministries director, Langham Partnership; and
- + **Dr. Michael Williams**, professor of systematic theology, Covenant Seminary.

They were accompanied by a host of workshop speakers that included:

- + **Dr. Luke Bobo**, director of resource and curriculum development, Made to Flourish
- + **Dr. Erin Glanville**, independent researcher and visiting

scholar in the School of Communication, Simon Fraser University

- + **Rev. Chris Gonzalez**, lead pastor, Missio Dei Communities, Phoenix
- + **Cindy and Joel Hylton**, area directors for Missionary Apprenticeship Program, Serge: Grace at the Fray
- + **Rev. Eric Larsen**, founder and executive director of NEXT (formerly GYFM)
- + **Rev. Jim Mullins**, pastor of theological formation and cultural engagement, Redemption Church, Phoenix
- + **Mr. James Schaefer**, design facilitator, OneHope: God's Word for Every Child
- + **Rev. Riccardo Stewart**, lead pastor of Redemption Church, Phoenix.

St. Louis L'Abri Conferences



The Fifth Annual St. Louis L'Abri Conference took place at the Seminary in October 2016 and focused on the theme **Finding Truth: Apologetics in a Secular Age**. Plenary speakers included **Prof. Jerram Barrs**, professor of Christian studies and contemporary culture at Covenant Seminary; **Dick Keyes**, director of the Southborough L'Abri; and **Dr. Greg Jesson**, assistant professor of philosophy at Luther College, Iowa, and director of the Center for Ethics and Public Life. Other speakers included former Rochester L'Abri director **Larry Snyder**; and the Francis Schaeffer Institute's **Prof. Mark Ryan**. The event also featured a concert by classical guitarist **Alyssa Catlin**.

Leadership Development and Resource Weekend Conferences

The Leadership Development Resource (LDR) Weekend is part of a movement for men and women, ministry leaders, volunteers, pastors, and church families of all ethnicities and denominations who desire to engage in genuine conversation about core concerns in black communities. Churches and ministries in St. Louis host this annual gathering under the oversight of Mission to North America's African American Ministries, coordinated by Covenant Seminary Board/Advisory Board member Rev. Wy Plummer. The conference takes place in part on the Seminary campus over the Labor Day weekend.


The 2017 edition takes place September 1–3 around the theme **Speaking the Truth in Love**. For more information or to register, visit ldrweekend.com.




1


Save the Date!
September 1-3, 2017
St. Louis, Missouri

Other Events and Activities


 The Faithful Shepherd Pastors' Conference, sponsored by the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals and P&R Publishing and held in Long Beach, New Jersey, in May 2016, featured **Dr. Dan Doriani**, vice president for strategic academic initiatives and professor of theology. **Dr. David Powlison**, faculty member of the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation (CCEF) and author of *Seeing with New Eyes*, also participated. Open to men who are ministers, missionaries, chaplains, elders, deacons, and seminary students (and their wives), the conference covered important issues that every pastor and elder should consider in his labors, including the personal reading of Scripture, self-care, the practice of Christ-like leadership, and the task of reaching the community with the gospel, among other topics.

 The PCA Directors of Women's Ministry Gathering, held in October 2016 on the Seminary campus, addressed the theme of **Ministry That Lasts: Equip, Empower, and Endure**. Women serving in local churches bring many blessings and encouragements, but they may also sometimes feel overwhelmed or isolated. The gathering was an opportunity for women's ministry leaders to learn together what it means to better equip and empower the women who serve and are served by our churches. Featured speakers for the event were Covenant's own **Dr. Tasha Chapman**, dean of educational studies and adjunct professor of educational ministries; **Prof. Suzanne Bates**, associate dean of Student Life and adjunct professor of applied theology (counseling); and **Prof. Jessie Swigart**, dean of academic administration and adjunct professor of educational ministries.

 The Covenant Seminary Preaching Lectures, held annually in October, feature prominent evangelical preachers who speak on topics and issues related to the field of homiletics. The speaker for the 2016 lectures was **Rev. Kevin DeYoung**, author, speaker, Gospel Coalition blogger, and senior pastor of University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Michigan, whose theme was **How Can a Biblical Sermon Be So Boring?** He made a case for veracity, clarity, specificity, ingenuity, authenticity, spontaneity, and authority in preaching so that the preacher becomes a vehicle for God's Word rather than an obstacle to it. **The speaker for the 2017 edition** of the Preaching Lectures will be **Rev. Mark Meynell**, associate director (Europe and Caribbean) at Langham Partnership International.

 The Austin Harrington Counseling Lectures, held in February 2017, featured noted psychologist and author **Diane Langberg**. The lectures focused on the theme **Culture, Christendom, and Christ**, addressing the ways in which our Christian teachings, rituals, and beliefs distinguish us from the general culture and often even from one another, and how the changing culture around us also vies for our attention and seeks to influence us in other ways. Dr. Langberg asked listeners to consider those temporal things which subtly mold us in the light of the written Word and the Word made flesh, with the hope of seeing him who is invisible more clearly so that his likeness in us is witnessed by the watching world. Listen to the lectures online for free at www.covenantseminary.edu/resources.

 The Fifth Annual Theology Conference, sponsored by the student-led Theological Fellowship at Covenant Seminary in January 2016, featured the presentation of student and faculty papers on a variety of topics such as: "The Theology of Food," "Zeal, Despair, and Future Hope," "Ethical Apparel," "Vinciculture and Wine Consumption in the Iron Age," and more. **The Sixth Annual Conference**, held in January 2017, featured plenary speaker **Dr. Michael Bates**, assistant professor of theology at Quincy University, on the topic "Toward a Christology of Divine Persons." In addition to the conference, the Theological Fellowship hosts occasional **Bantam Lectures** throughout the school year. The **fall 2016 Bantam Lecture** featured **Dr. Mark A. Seifrid**, professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, on the topic "Particularity and Universalism in Romans." The **spring 2017 lecture** featured **Dr. Andreas J. Köstenberger**, senior research professor of New Testament and biblical theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, on the topic "The Promise of Biblical Theology: Expectations in John's Gospel." **Dr. Robert Yarbrough**, professor of New Testament, serves as faculty advisor for the Theological Fellowship.

 **The Men's Leadership Breakfast**, our long-running Bible study for men in our community, continued to meet this year with a well-received in-depth study of the biblical understanding of manhood as presented by **Dr. Dan Doriani**, vice president of strategic academic initiatives and professor of theology, in his recent book *The New Man: Becoming a Man After God's Heart* (P&R, 2015). Listen to the presentations online for free at www.covenantseminary.edu/resources.

Study Tour Highlights Reformation History

The Reformation Study Tour, led by Dr. Dan Doriani, Dr. Mark Dalbey in September 2016, offered an opportunity for donors and friends of the Seminary to visit historic sites important in the events of the Reformation in Europe and Scotland. The trip was a wonderful reminder of the rich historical and theological heritage of which we are part, and served as a helpful prelude to the larger world-wide celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation to come in 2017. For info on future tours, contact Deena Stuart, director of legacy gifts, at deena.stuart@covenantseminary.edu.



Above: The Reformation Study Tour visited historic sites in Europe and Scotland. Below: The Israel Study Tour visited many places where biblical events occurred.

Israel Study Tour Brings Biblical Sites to Life

In January 2017, a group of students, alumni, family, and friends, joined Covenant Seminary professors Drs. David and Tasha Chapman and Dr. Greg Perry and his wife, Darlene, for a two-week study tour of Israel.

The group of 44, plus their Israeli tour guide, enjoyed a full itinerary that took them through several drastic changes of altitude and weather to many sites associated with important events and people in the Bible. Key stops included Jerusalem, the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Beer-sheba, the Elah Valley (near where David slew Goliath), Masada above the Dead Sea, the caves where David

hid from King Saul, Qumran (site of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery), the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, and other biblical cities such as Hazor, Dan, Caesarea Philippi, Sepphoris, Beth Shean, and Caesarea Maritima (where Peter first met Cornelius and where Paul was imprisoned). A highlight of the trip was visiting the newly opened excavation of the town of Magdala on the Sea of Galilee.

The tour focused on how archaeology furthers our understanding of the cultures of the Old and New Testaments, with the goal of better interpreting and applying the Scriptures. Group members frequently

commented that being in these biblical places "made the Bible come alive" and "gave me a third dimension to the life of Jesus."

This was the fourth trip to Israel sponsored over the last six years by the W. Harold Mare Institute for Biblical and Archaeological Studies at Covenant. Dr. David Chapman, professor of New Testament and archaeology, who oversees the Institute, said he plans to host the trip every two years.

For information on future tours, contact the Archaeology Institute at archinstitute@covenantseminary.edu.



Seminary Welcomes New Faculty Members

Please join us in welcoming three new professors, who joined our faculty at the beginning of the 2016–2017 academic year:



Dr. Vince L. Bantu, full-time visiting professor of missiology, holds a PhD in Semitic and Egyptian languages from the Catholic

University of America, a ThM in church history from Princeton Seminary, an MDiv from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston, and a BA in theology from Wheaton College. He serves as co-chair of the Theology Committee of the Christian Community Development Association, was a church-planting apprentice at the Cambridge Community Fellowship Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was a program coordinator for the Emmanuel Gospel Center, and has served as an adjunct faculty member for Nyack College, New York Theological Seminary, North Park Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, the Center for Early African Christianity, and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Dr. Bantu's primary interests include racial reconciliation, non-Western Christianity, and theological education in under-resourced communities. He is happy to be back in his native St. Louis, where he, his wife, Diana, and their two daughters enjoy traveling, parks, games, and are huge movie fans.



Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter, assistant professor of applied theology and counseling, holds a PhD in counseling education and

supervision from Regent University, an MAC (2011) and MDiv (2012) from Covenant Seminary, and a BS in music education from the University of Georgia. Dr. Ruckstaetter has worked as a licensed professional counselor in a variety of settings, including Central Christian School and Crossroads Counseling Centers in St. Louis, Missouri; Trinity Presbyterian Church in Norfolk, Virginia; and in private

practice. He has taught counseling courses as an assistant professor of counseling and in other roles at various institutions. His recent research is focused on parenting issues. He has extensive counseling experience working with individuals, families, and groups; those navigating various mental health issues, parenting and marriage issues, career issues, and grief and loss; those healing from various types of abuse; and those facing difficulty in ministry settings. Dr. Ruckstaetter also served as a musician in the U.S. Navy and as a music director at Christ Presbyterian Academy in Nashville, Tennessee. He has recorded with Indelible Grace and other artists. Dr. Ruckstaetter and his wife, Kacey, have a daughter and two sons.



Dr. Robbie Griggs, who joined us last fall for a one-year appointment as full-time adjunct professor of theology, was recently named

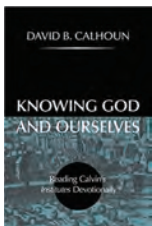
assistant professor of systematic theology, effective July 1, 2017. In his new role he will continue to teach many of the Seminary's systematic theology courses while also serving as a full voting member of the faculty. Dr. Griggs holds a PhD in New Testament from Durham University and has served as a tutor in biblical studies for the Lindisfarne Regional Training Partnership. He also has an MDiv (2004) from Covenant Seminary, and a BA in philosophy and a BS in finance from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Specializing in New Testament theology and early Jewish theology, his research focuses on Paul's theology of grace in Galatians in comparison with contemporary Jewish theologies of God as "giver." Dr. Griggs previously served as a pastor in St. Louis for eight years. He is a life-long Missouri resident, a St. Louis Cardinals baseball fan, and an avid supporter of Mizzou football and basketball. He and his wife, Jane-Ellis, have three boys.

"The Thistle" is your all-encompassing resource for news and information about Covenant Seminary. Read updates in each issue of *Covenant* magazine, or check out "The Thistle" online for the most recent posts at www.covenantseminary.edu/the-thistle/.

Faculty Publications and Other Kingdom Service



Dr. Hans Bayer, professor of New Testament, published his long-awaited *Apostolic Bedrock: Christology, Identity, and Character-Formation According to Peter's Canonical Testimony* (Paternoster, 2016), and a Russian translation of his earlier *Das Evangelium des Markus* (Saint Andrews, 2016).



Dr. David Calhoun, professor emeritus of church history, published *Knowing God and Ourselves: Reading Calvin's Institutes Devotionally* (Banner of Truth, 2016).

Dr. David Chapman, professor of New Testament and archaeology, is the editor of and a contributor to the *ESV Archaeology Bible* (Crossway, forthcoming).

Dr. Tasha Chapman, director of educational studies and adjunct associate professor of educational ministries, is working on *Intersecting*

Leadership in Marketplace and Ministry (IVP, forthcoming) with *Resilient Ministry* co-authors Dr. Bob Burns and Dr. Donald Guthrie.

Dr. C. John "Jack" Collins, professor of Old Testament, co-authored (with Arend J. Poelarends) "The Origin of the Universe" for a revised edition of Walter Elwell's *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, edited by Daniel Treier (Baker, forthcoming in 2017), and published "Psalms 111–112: Big Story, Little Story" in the open-access online theology journal *Religions* (September 2016).



Dr. Dan Doriani, vice president of strategic academic initiatives and professor of theology, published "Take, Read," as part of *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*, edited by D. A. Carson (Eerdmans, 2016); several blog posts on a variety of topics for The Gospel Coalition; and several lead articles for *Table Talk* magazine. Forthcoming works include *Theology and Ethics of Work* (P&R, 2017) and *Matthew* in the *ESV Commentary on the Whole*

Bible (Crossway, 2019).



Dr. Zack Eswine, director of homiletics and adjunct professor of applied theology, published Spanish, Portuguese, and French translations of *Spurgeon's Sorrows: Realistic Hope for Those Who Suffer From Depression* (Christian Focus, 2015).

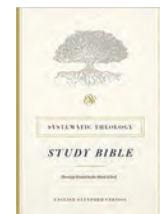
Dr. Robbie Griggs, adjunct professor of theology, published "Apocalyptic Experience in the Theodicy of 4 Ezra," in *Evil in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*, edited by C. Keith and L. T. Stuckenbruck (Mohr Siebeck, 2016).

Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter, assistant professor of applied theology and counseling, co-authored (with J. Sells, J. Newmeyer, and D. Zink) "Parental Apologies, Empathy, Shame, Guilt, and Attachment: A Path Analysis" (*Journal of Counseling and Development*, forthcoming, 2017).

Dr. Jay Sklar, professor of Old Testament and newly appointed VP of academics, published "Pentateuch" in *T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin*, edited

by Keith L. Johnson and David Lauber (T&T Clark, 2016), and edited commentaries on six of the Minor Prophets for the *ESV Bible Expository Commentary* series.

Dr. Michael Williams, professor of systematic theology, co-authored with Dr. Michael Goheen of the Missional Training Center–Phoenix "The Doctrine of Scripture and Theological Interpretation," in *A Manifesto for Theological Interpretation*, edited by Craig G. Bartholomew and Heath A. Thomas (Baker Academic, 2016).



Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough, professor of New Testament, wrote theological introductions to all 27 books of the New Testament for *The ESV Systematic Theology Study Bible* (Crossway, 2017) and is editing commentaries on several Bible books for two different series for Baker: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament and the Exegetical Guidebook to the Greek New Testament. He also edits *Presbyterion*, Covenant Seminary's academic journal.

Faculty/Staff Updates



Dr. Tasha Chapman, who had been serving as dean of academic services and adjunct professor of educational ministries, is now **director of educational studies and full-time adjunct associate professor of educational ministries**. Her new role enables Dr. Chapman to have more time for teaching and interacting with students in the classroom. Dr. Chapman started teaching education courses and mentoring women at Covenant in 2002. Since then she has served with staff teams for Distance Education, Student Life, international students, the Doctor of Ministry program, the Center for Ministry Leadership, and Academic Administration. Prior to coming to Covenant, Dr. Chapman worked in campus ministry and then directed women's ministry in a local church. She views educational ministry as the life-long process of growing toward maturity in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit with the body of Christ. Her courses study relevant applications of current educational research, learning theories, and methods that can strengthen our ministries. Dr. Chapman's current consulting and research focuses on leadership and self-stewardship in ministry, cross-cultural learning, and instructional and curriculum design. She is the co-author, with Bob Burns and Donald Guthrie, of *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving* and a contributor to the *ESV Women's Devotional Bible*.



Dr. Phil Douglass, professor of applied theology and a seasoned church planter, will soon be expanding his involvement in church planting: he has agreed to assume the newly created role of **director of church planting for the Missouri Presbytery of the PCA** in July 2018. In that role, he will help oversee the Presbytery's church planting activities and provide ongoing support and encouragement for its church planters. Dr. Douglass will continue to teach full-time at Covenant through the 2017–2018 academic year before transitioning into his role with the Presbytery. Before coming to Covenant Seminary in 1986, Douglass planted three churches over 14 years in Washington, DC. He planted another two after his arrival in St. Louis and has since supervised, assisted with, or consulted on the planting of many more. He has served as chairman of the PCA's National MNA Committee and, until recently, as chairman of the Missouri MNA Committee. He was instrumental in establishing MNA's Church Planting

Assessment Center in Atlanta, Georgia, and has been a key player in evaluating and preparing dozens of church planters in the last few decades. Douglass, a beloved mentor of many Covenant students and alumni, has, with his wife Rebecca, for many years hosted an annual church planting field trip for students interested in church planting. The Douglasses also annually coordinated special sections of two MDiv courses focused specifically on wives of MDiv students and other women who will be involved in various ministry roles. Douglass's book *What is Your Church's Personality? Discovering and Developing the Ministry Style of Your Church* has helped many pastors and pulpit committees understand their churches' unique ministry styles. Douglass is currently director of Covenant Seminary's Doctor of Ministry program and is a past president of the Association of Doctor of Ministry Directors. We are grateful for the benefit of his expertise during his 30 years at Covenant and look forward to seeking ways in which he can continue to be a blessing to the Seminary community even after he takes on his new responsibilities with Missouri Presbytery.



Ms. Sabrina Hickel, who has served the Seminary's Counseling Department as an assistant, administrator, and counselor since 2007, was recently named **associate dean of counseling**. In this role, she oversees all administrative aspects of the counseling program; assists and advises counseling students with internship, licensure, and career matters; supervises Counseling Department staff; and maintains relationships with MAC alumni to provide ongoing assistance and resources. Ms. Hickel is a 2007 MAC graduate of Covenant and a licensed professional counselor with a private practice in addition to her work with the Seminary. She also has worked as a public relations professional, including as deputy press secretary for a U.S. senator, and as a freelance public relations consultant. She enjoys pondering the essentials of life while navigating her roles as wife, mother, friend, counselor, wounded healer, and recovering perfectionist.



Dr. Greg Perry, associate professor of New Testament and director of the City Ministry Initiative (CMI), has accepted the post of **vice president for strategic projects with Third**

Millennium Ministries, based in Orlando, Florida, effective July 1, 2017. In his new role, Dr. Perry will seek creative ways to help Third Millennium develop, produce, and distribute free theological training resources for Christian leaders around the world. Dr. Perry has long been a faculty advisor for Third Millennium and has served on the organization's board since 1998. His heart for creative cultural applications of the gospel has marked his years at Covenant, especially his oversight in the early 2000s of the Seminary's online resources and distance education programs; his involvement with Presbyterian Mission International (PMI), which provides guidance and support to 20 international graduates of Covenant who serve as missionaries in their home countries; and his leadership of CMI, which, through courses, seminars, strategic partnerships with area churches and organizations, and hands-on ministry opportunities for students, has been instrumental in shaping how students reflect on and engage in ministry in today's multi-ethnic and multicultural city contexts. The valuable work Dr. Perry has started will continue as we seek a new director to help us expand the role of CMI in the near future, and as we fill the teaching position Dr. Perry leaves behind.



Dr. Jay Sklar, professor of Old Testament and dean of faculty, was named **vice president of academics**, effective July 1, 2017.

Dr. Sklar will continue to fulfill the responsibilities of dean of faculty as he steps into the expanded role of chief academic officer for the Seminary. He will teach a reduced course load in Old Testament to make room for his new responsibilities, which involve overseeing all areas of academic administration for the Seminary, taking the lead in evaluating and guiding the search for new faculty, developing the redesigned Field Education program and the relaunch of the Center for Ministry Leadership Formation, and shepherding the Seminary's growing academic partnerships. A native of Canada, he holds a BA in philosophy from the University of Waterloo (Canada), an MDiv from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and a PhD in Old Testament Studies from the University of Gloucestershire (England). Dr. Sklar has led youth and children's ministries in both church and camp settings and is a frequent speaker at church and college events. His keen interest in developing theological education overseas is evidenced by his frequent teaching trips abroad and by his service on the Seminary's International Partnerships Committee. He is the author of *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions* and the

well-received *Leviticus* in the Tyndale Old Testament Commentary Series. Dr. Sklar also contributed to and edited notes on *Leviticus* for the *ESV Study Bible*.



Prof. Jessie Swigart was named **dean of academic administration and adjunct professor of educational ministries**. She replaces Dr. Bruce McRae, who left in 2016 to take a call in pastoral ministry. Prof. Swigart joined the

Academics department at Covenant Seminary after completing her MAEM in 2008. She served for four years as the academics coordinator before transitioning to the role of associate dean of academics (2013–2016), then associate dean of academics and online learning (2015–2016), and now to her current position. She has served as an adjunct professor since 2013. In her new role, Prof. Swigart develops, manages, and oversees the academic goals of the Seminary, including the teaching and learning experience for the Seminary's online education students. Prof. Swigart teaches the Teaching and Learning course in the Educational Ministries department as well as a Capstone course for Master of Arts students. She is passionate about creating safe, challenging, and compassionate spaces in which learners can grow together in the knowledge of our savior Jesus Christ. She is currently pursuing a PhD in educational studies through Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.



Dr. Richard Winter, formerly professor of applied theology and counseling, and the founder of Covenant Seminary's Counseling Department, stepped down from full-time teaching at the end of the 2015–2016 academic

year after 24 years at the Seminary. Dr. Winter grew up in England and trained in medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and then in psychiatry in Bristol. He was also a counselor, teacher, and leader at the English L'Abri and associate pastor of a church in Hampshire for some years before moving to the United States in 1992 to head the counseling program at Covenant. Fortunately, we haven't seen the last of Dr. Winter as he continues to teach several courses for the Seminary as **professor emeritus of applied theology and counseling** and remains a popular conference and seminar speaker. He is the author of several books, including *When the World Goes Dark, Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment*, and *Perfecting Ourselves to Death*. In addition to his scholarly and ministerial pursuits, Dr. Winter is an avid sailor and enthusiastic grandfather, and has a remarkable talent for playing the handsaw as a musical instrument.

Dr. David Clyde Jones (1937–2017): Celebrating a Life of Service to the Lord



The Seminary said a bittersweet farewell to one of our dear friends and beloved teachers, Dr. David Clyde Jones, professor emeritus of systematic theology and ethics, who went to be with the Lord on Sunday, March 5, 2017, after a battle with recurring cancer. He was 79

years old. Though we miss him greatly, we rejoice that he is now in glory in the presence of his Lord.

Dr. Jones was a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary and a former student of renowned scholar and theologian John Murray, whose classic *Principles of Conduct* left an indelible mark on him. Widely recognized in the PCA as an expert in ethical matters, Jones served on or chaired several denominational committees that prepared official position papers on such thorny topics as divorce and remarriage, abortion, women in the church, end-of-life issues, and nuclear weapons. He constantly received phone calls asking for his advice on various ethical dilemmas. In 1994, he published the highly praised textbook *Biblical Christian Ethics*, which has since been translated into Spanish and Korean.

Jones began his ministry by serving two years as pastor of a mission church on Grand Cayman Island in the West Indies, following future Covenant Seminary colleague Dr. David Calhoun, who also had pastored the church. He came to teach part-time at Covenant in 1967 when Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr., one of the Seminary's founding professors, suffered a stroke. He became a full-time assistant professor in 1968 and later a full professor. Jones also served as academic vice president from 1977 to 1988,

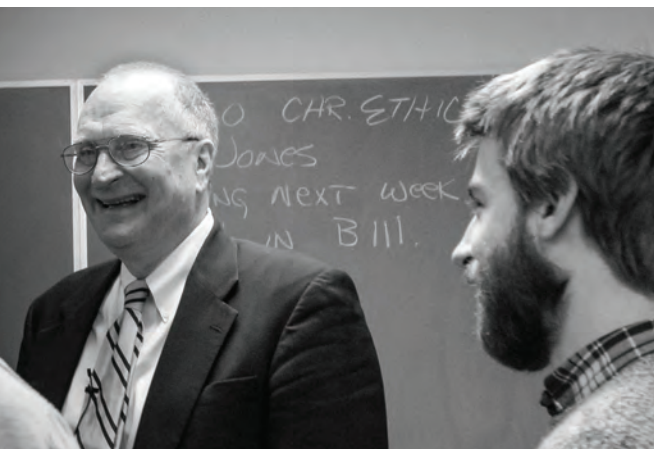
helped lead the Seminary into full accreditation regionally with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) and nationally with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), and was instrumental in bringing Prof. Jeram Barrs, his former student and good friend, to Covenant to teach and later establish the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute. Barrs said of Jones, "David's humility, modesty, and meekness, his graciousness and kindness drew me to him immediately. He was a wonderful teacher and a great friend. I've said many times that David Jones is my hero and I want to be like him when I grow up. He is the reason I came to teach at Covenant."

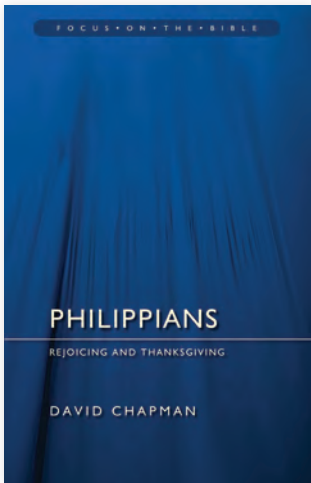
Known for his great love of music, especially for playing the tuba and bluegrass guitar, Dr. Jones would occasionally recruit student musicians to join him as part of a brass quintet during campus chapel services and school picnics. Over the course of forty years, his teaching on systematic theology and ethics, and his personal charm and humility, had a profound influence on generations of students. When he retired in 2007, he was granted the title professor emeritus. Even in retirement, though, he continued to write, teach, and preach. His many research interests included the history of the French Huguenots and, most recently, an investigation into the influence of spirituals on early gospel and jazz music.

Dr. Mark Dalbey, president of Covenant Seminary, commented, "Dr. Jones was a wonderful example to generations of students of a grace-filled pastor-scholar whose love for the Lord and principled approach to life and faith showed through in all that he did. We will miss his gentle nature and his great wisdom, but we rejoice that so many of us—and the church—are better for having known him."

“

We will miss his gentle nature and his great wisdom, but we rejoice that so many of us—and the church—are better for having known him.





BOOK

Philippians: Rejoicing and Thanksgiving
Focus on the Bible Series
(Christian Focus, 2012)

AUTHOR

David Chapman
Professor of New Testament and Archaeology, Covenant Seminary

REVIEWER

Dr. Jay Sklar
Professor of Old Testament, Covenant Seminary

David Chapman is a world-class scholar. His works on crucifixion are some of the best published today—see, for example, *Ancient Jewish and Christian Perceptions of Crucifixion* (Baker Academic, 2010) and *The Trial and Crucifixion of Jesus: Texts and Commentary*, the latter co-authored with Eckhard J. Schabel (Mohr-Siebeck, 2015). In this commentary on Philippians, his skills as a scholar and his ability to communicate in a non-scholarly way are both on clear display. The result is a superb commentary with numerous strengths.

- + **It is written very clearly.** There is a minimum of technical jargon, and the prose is lucid and easy to follow.
- + **It is well-researched and yet non-technical.** It is clear that Chapman has interacted deeply with the Greek text, yet he explains things in such a way that those who do not know Greek are able to follow along and understand. He also provides “Additional Notes” at times that go into further discussion on debated issues present in the secondary literature.
- + **It is concise.** It does not get bogged down in discussion of the

secondary literature. It is certainly aware of the discussion (see previous point), and those familiar with the debates will see Chapman providing support for where he lands on various issues, but he focuses on the text itself and how it should be understood.

- + **It is pastorally sensitive.** The commentary series he is writing for does not intend for commentators to have in-depth discussion of matters of application, but Chapman provides guidance in such matters all along the way. The commentary does not go more than a page or two without pausing in some way to help the reader think of what the implications of the letter are for Christians living today.

In short, this is a well-researched commentary that will give you a clear explanation of the text in a pastorally sensitive way. It will provide guidance in terms of debates in the secondary literature without getting bogged down in the details. In terms of a concise and lucid explanation of Philippians, it will be hard to do better than this.



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LOOKING BACK + LOOKING AHEAD

*Standing Firm—
and Moving Forward*

by dr. mark dalbey

BUILDING
on OUR
FOUNDATION
for GREATER
KINGDOM IMPACT

This article is adapted from a transcript of Covenant Seminary President

Dr. Mark Dalbey's report to the 45th General Assembly of the Presbyterian

Church in America in Greensboro, North Carolina, in June 2017.

The year 2017 marks the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. It also coincides with the close of Covenant Seminary's 60th Anniversary as a theological school and with the 45th gathering of our denomination's General Assembly. These significant anniversaries have provided many opportunities for reflection as we carry out our mission of training pastors and leaders for God's church and Kingdom today, while also planning for future growth and expanded Kingdom impact.

ROOTED FIRMLY IN THE REFORMATION

I am in my eighteenth year at Covenant Seminary, having served in various roles during that time, the last five of them (counting an interim year) as president. I have done a lot of reflecting recently on our rich history and our heritage, and the foundation upon which the Seminary is built. I've been thinking a lot about the question,

"How are we doing in being faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission?" That phrase should be familiar to all of us as the tagline at the bottom of the original stationery of the Presbyterian Church in America, and is perhaps a very unifying phrase to remind ourselves of at this denominational moment.

We have unwavering commitments that tie us to our Reformation heritage but must also engage our present realities and prepare us for faithful gospel witness into the future. I think this is the genius of another phrase that we often use as Reformed believers: "Reformed and always reforming." God has uniquely given us an unchanging foundation in his uniquely inspired Scriptures, and we are to be anchored to those Scriptures as we seek the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit to give us deep insights and fresh applications in our present context. At Covenant Seminary, we seek to faithfully steward our task of equipping pastors and leaders for God's church and Kingdom—both for the present realities we face in the church, the culture, and the world, and for those that are to come as we imagine together with our students what those realities might be five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years out.

There are two dangers, however, in the phrase "Reformed and always reforming." The first danger is that of turning a valid application of a biblical principle into a new universal principle that all must follow. The second danger is that of compromising biblical principles by conforming to cultural pressures that are contrary to the Scriptures. We pray for deep wisdom as we prepare the next generation of pastors and leaders to go forward faithfully holding onto these deep truths, and to engage in biblical and gospel-centered ways with the pressing issues of our time.

At Covenant Seminary, we are committed to deep-rooted training in God's Word and in historic Reformation theology, not for its own sake, but for the purpose of our students being formed and transformed into greater Christlikeness in order to join God in his mission of reaching the nations, the generations, and the whole of life, with a passion to then equip God's people into this

Kingdom vision. We seek to do this through our curricular, co-curricular, and field education experiences.

Last year, we had some conversation at the General Assembly about Covenant Seminary's commitment to missional theology in our curriculum. That discussion was helpful, and the Seminary followed up General Assembly with a faculty retreat in which we considered together our commitment to these things and how we could best articulate them. And so, to build on and clarify what we said last year, we've established three curricular divisions into which the various academic departments fit. We have the Biblical Studies Division, which includes the Old Testament Department and the New Testament Department. We have the Applied Theology Division, which includes the Homiletics and Liturgics Department, the Educational Ministries Department, the Counseling Department, the Church Planting Department, and the Formational Leadership Department, as well as courses on evangelism and discipleship. And we have a Missional Theology Division, which includes the same Systematic Theology Department as before, the Church History Department, the Apologetics Department, and the World Mission Department. (See article on page 24 for more details, or read about it online at <http://bit.ly/2tK7HOe>.)

BUILDING ON OUR REFORMED HERITAGE

Over the past two years, the Seminary faculty, board, and staff, with input from alumni and other, have spent a lot of time in diligent, collaborative work thinking through our vision for the future of the Seminary, and in developing a strategic plan for making that vision a reality. We've also been working on developing financial models that will strengthen our fiscal health and resource that strategic plan.

To this end, we recently launched a \$40 million capital campaign called *Hope for the Future: Strengthening the Foundation to Impact the World*. We've organized the campaign and the strategic plan around four major pillars:

1. Equipping **students** for future generations,
2. through a **faculty** of pastor/practitioner-scholars,
3. for **leadership** in God's church and Kingdom,
4. in the context of **community**.

I'm happy to report that at this point we're over halfway to our campaign goal, even though we're not yet halfway through the time frame approved for the campaign last September. We praise the Lord for his provision in this, and look forward to seeing how he will work through the campaign going forward.

As we rejoice in God's provision, and as we celebrate our heritage and look with excitement to the future, I want to reflect a bit on how we at the Seminary see our role with regard to that PCA tagline I mentioned earlier.

- **FAITHFUL TO THE SCRIPTURES.** We believe that the Bible is God's inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word, **and** that it is given as the primary means for God's people to be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We hold that Scripture itself is the only infallible interpreter of Scripture, **and** that it must be understood through its own given framework of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation.

We affirm that God created all things out of nothing, including the special creation of Adam and Eve uniquely and in his image, **and** that there is room for different views on the length of days in the space-time-historical creation account.

- **TRUE TO THE REFORMED FAITH.** We subscribe to the Westminster Standards as containing the system of doctrine presented in the Bible, requiring faculty and board members to reaffirm this annually in writing, **and** we believe that deep theological reflection is for the sake of the church and its mission in God's world.

We affirm the doctrine of forensic justification by faith alone based on the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the elect in Christ, **and** that this doctrine is foundational and vital, yet not the exclusive or comprehensive biblical teaching on salvation, which is rooted in our union with Christ.

We believe that sanctification is by the grace of the gospel working deeply and progressively in our lives through the Holy Spirit's presence and power, **and** that believers are to participate in and embody that sanctifying work in response to the constant question, "How then should we live?"

We embrace the biblical teaching on two kingdoms—those two being the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of God's beloved Son—and our primary loyalty is to Christ and his Kingdom. That Kingdom includes our life and mission in the church, of which Christ is the head, **and** our life and mission throughout every area of life in the creation over which Christ rules as Lord.

We affirm God's unchanging moral law expressed in biblical ethics, including the sinfulness of homosexual behavior and abortion, **and** accept the call to love our neighbors, who are made in God's image, and to treat all people with gospel love and respect.

We believe that only qualified men should be

elders in the church, *and* that those qualified men must create an environment in which both non-elder men and women are encouraged to grow into Christlikeness, and to discover and utilize their gifts for the building up of the body and the church's mission in God's world.

We affirm the unique calling of those set apart by ordination for the ministry of Word and sacrament, *and* that the purpose of ordained pastors is to equip the whole people of God into their high Kingdom callings in every area of life.

• **OBEDIENT TO THE GREAT COMMISSION.**

We understand the Great Commission to be about evangelistic outreach to those in the kingdom of darkness throughout the world, *and* a call to comprehensive discipleship reaching nations, generations, and all areas of life in God's creation.

We believe that the task of apologetics must faithfully and uncompromisingly hold to God's unchanging truth, *which includes* an ethos of grace and love that is inseparably connected as a vital part of that unchanging truth.

We affirm that there is but one true and comprehensive gospel of grace and truth, *and* that faithfully loving God and neighbor is essential to that true gospel, which has many implications reaching into all kinds of issues related to moral righteousness and social justice, including care for the unborn and the victims of human trafficking, and extending to additional matters of moral righteousness and social justice in areas of race, economics, government, education, medicine, etc.

We believe our students should be trained to walk in God's grace, minister God's Word, and equip God's people—all for God's mission.

**TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS FOR
GREATER KINGDOM IMPACT**

One of my favorite responses to the question "What do you teach?" comes from Covenant systematic theology professor Dr. Mike Williams. I've heard him say on several occasions, "I teach students."

This is what we do at Covenant Seminary. We teach students to experience and embrace their theological training years as a time to be formed and transformed within a pervasive community ethos that expresses the heart of the gospel of grace and truth, and that sees this theological task as being done in a way that is doxo-

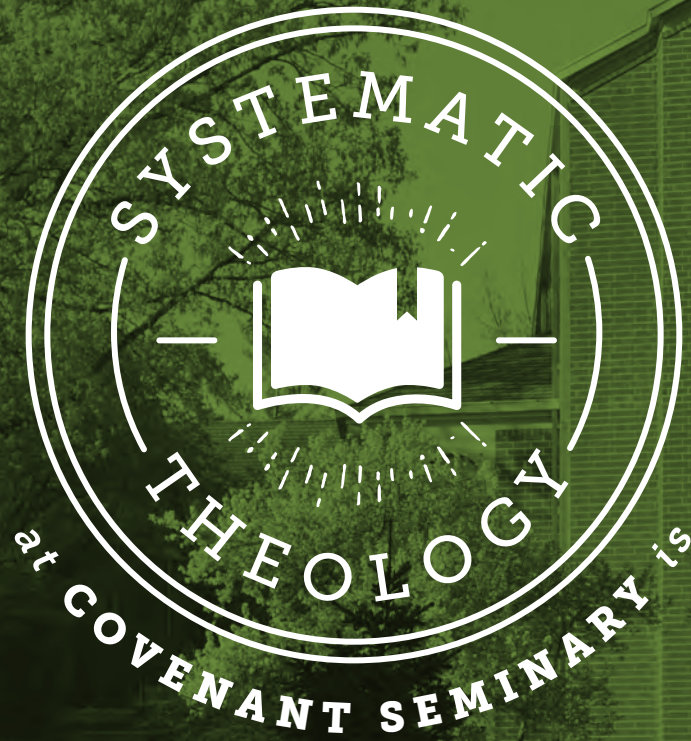
logical, transformational, and Kingdom-missional. We want to instill in our students a passion for impacting the world with the gospel, doing so in ways that reflect the mind, the heart, and the methods of the Savior into whose image they are being conformed more and more as they live out their faith before a watching world.

We are thankful to be at Covenant Seminary in this exciting season, and we appreciate greatly the accountability of this Assembly. Please pray that we would equip our students well so that they too may equip others to live out their callings for the honor and glory of Christ. And please join us in this 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation as we declare, "All of life is all for Jesus."



**WE HAVE UNWAVERING
COMMITMENTS THAT TIE
US TO OUR REFORMATION
HERITAGE BUT MUST ALSO
ENGAGE OUR PRESENT
REALITIES AND PREPARE
US FOR FAITHFUL GOSPEL
WITNESS INTO THE FUTURE.**

Dr. Mark Dalbey is president and associate professor of applied theology at Covenant Seminary. He brings many years of pastoral and leadership experience to his role at the Seminary, where, in addition to his many responsibilities as president, he also teaches courses on Christian Worship, Gospel-Centered Leadership, and Gospel-Centered Parenting. Mark and his wife, Beth, have been married for 40 years and enjoy spending time with their three grown children and their spouses, and an increasing number of grandchildren (currently 10).



BIBLICAL + "MISSIONAL"

by President Mark Dalbey *and the Faculty of Covenant Seminary*

At the 44th PCA General Assembly in June 2016, Dr. Mark Dalbey, president of Covenant Seminary, announced that the Seminary had strengthened its Systematic Theology Department by positioning it within a larger division called Missional Theology. The change was made to better reflect the Bible's own emphasis on the essentially missional nature of our Christian calling and the Seminary's conviction that all true theological study ultimately leads us to live in an other-centered and mission-minded way. Dr. Dalbey and the Seminary faculty later offered a further elaboration of the rationale for the change. The following is a slightly revised version of that document.



The purpose of Covenant Theological Seminary is to glorify the Triune God by training his servants to *WALK* in God's grace, *MINISTER* God's Word, and *EQUIP* God's people—*ALL for God's MISSION.*

Covenant Seminary recently strengthened its systematic theology department by positioning it in a larger newly named division called "missional" theology. This change has prompted some questions from friends and others as to whether Covenant, as an historic Reformed seminary and the denominational seminary of the Presbyterian Church in America, has in some way altered or diminished its commitment to systematic theology. The answer is not at all. In light of such questions and concerns, we present the following for consideration.

First, a bit of history. In 2010 the board of trustees of Covenant Seminary (whose voting membership is composed of PCA ruling and teaching elders elected by the General Assembly) adopted a revised purpose statement with the primary adaptation being the inclusion of the clause "*all for God's mission*" at the end. This was the culmination of a yearlong discussion among the faculty, administration, and the board, resulting in a deep desire to place seminary education into the Bible's larger unfolding mission of God to reach the nations, the generations, the people in our churches, and to restore all things in and through Jesus Christ.

Second, a definition of "missional." Missional at its core means to be characterized by mission. God has a mission to unify all creation under Christ (Eph. 1:9–10) and to reconcile all of creation through the cross and resurrection of Christ (Col. 1:15–20). God invites his redeemed people into this mission, commissioned by him as ambassadors of our Savior-King Jesus Christ. The ascended Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower his people to respond to his call to go forth into the world proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. This means our Savior-King sends us out with a message for sinners to trust in the finished work of Christ and be reconciled to God and neighbor. Our theological heritage from Calvin onwards motivates us to connect the theological task of the seminary to the missionary impulse of the church. Theology is for the sake of the church and its mission in God's world. This is what we mean by *missional theology*.

BIBLICAL RATIONALE FOR THE CHANGE

It is our commitment to God and his Word that has strengthened our passion for doing "*all for God's mission.*"

- + In Genesis 1, God creates man as male and female in his image and likeness with a purpose and mission to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and extend God's glory over it as they reflect his good and gracious rule over all living things.
- + In Genesis 2, God places Adam and Eve in Eden with a calling to work and keep the garden to the glory of God.
- + In Genesis 3, the very agents of that mission of God become the obstacles to its accomplishment by their rebellion. They stand in need of God's gracious provision of a promised rescuer who would be like them, yet without sin — in order to overcome their rebellion, reconcile them to God, neighbor, and creation, and empower them once again to fulfill God's call on their lives.

God's call now necessitates the proclamation of a both present and coming Kingdom of God's beloved Son into which sinners are being transferred (Col. 1:13–14).

- + In Genesis 12, God calls and blesses Abraham into his covenant Kingdom mission so that all the families of the earth might be blessed through his offspring.
- + In Exodus 19, God calls his rescued people from slavery in Egypt to be a holy nation and kingdom of priests on behalf of their God as a light to the nations.
- + In Galatians 4:4–7, we see the sending mission of God himself on display when in the fullness of time God *sent* his Son to redeem his people and also sent the Spirit of the Son into the hearts of believers.
- + In Luke 8:1–2, Jesus's mission consists of his proclaiming and bringing the good news of the Kingdom of God through his preaching, teaching, and healing ministry.

- + In Matthew 28:16–20, Luke 10:1–9, and Acts 1:8, Jesus sends his people out on a mission that will reach nations and generations and one day reconcile and restore all things, making peace by the blood of Christ’s cross (Col. 1:20). We are now privileged to be part of this comprehensive missionary movement.
- + In Revelation 21–22, we see this grand missional story of Scripture fulfilled in the new heaven, new earth, and New Jerusalem where all things in heaven and earth are reconciled in Christ.

A DEEPER, RICHER COMMITMENT TO SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

We believe that all aspects of the seminary curriculum as well as its co-curricular activities must constantly answer the following two questions: (1) *“How is this rooted in and faithful to God’s inerrant Word?”* and (2) *“What does this mean for life and ministry today?”* We strive to be uncompromisingly faithful to God’s Word and its historic and confessional Reformed theological expressions while at the same time faithful to equip our students to apply God’s Word and our theological commitments to real people in real places today.

At Covenant Seminary our faculty, board, and president annually sign a pledge of subscription to the Westminster Standards. We highly value the place of systematic theology and the Reformed tradition in the seminary curriculum. We are more committed than ever to taking our students deep into the Bible and its theology in order to have a strong and solid foundation from which to proclaim courageously and bring the good news of the Kingdom of God to his people and the world amidst the challenging issues of our day. This foundation is essential in order to resist being conformed to the world while at the same time serving as effective ambassadors of God’s transforming grace in the world.

I [Dr. Dalbey] grew up in a denomination that has now lost its commitment to the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures and historic Reformed confessions. I have seen firsthand how a loss of this commitment begins to erode the firm foundation of what it means to study the Scriptures, and watched with great sadness as the transforming power of God’s holy Word gets replaced with therapeutic sentimentalism.

At Covenant Seminary we continue to uphold our historic practice of placing systematic theology firmly on the foundation of solid exegesis and within the unfolding narrative of biblical theology. We love God, his Word, and our theological heritage. In the placing of our systematic theology courses within this larger and focused missional

theology division, we are seeking to go deeper into what we believe the Bible teaches while constantly desiring to be transformed based upon the unchanging truth of God’s Word.

Turning to the specifics of our curriculum, we strive to keep *“all for God’s mission”* in view throughout the entire curriculum. The area we have historically called systematic theology is uniquely situated in an area between exegetical theology (with its study of the original languages of the Bible combined with Old and New Testament classes) and applied theology (with its preparation for preaching, worship, educational ministries, evangelism, counseling, Christian formation, ministry leadership, etc.). In addition to systematic theology classes, this missional theology division of the curriculum also includes classes in church history, apologetics, Christian ethics, and world missions. Bringing all ten required courses of the MDIV curriculum in this area together under the general heading of *“Missional Theology,”* will, we believe, give better intentionality, cohesion, and integration that will deepen and strengthen systematic theology. This reflects the missional orientation of the biblical narrative out of which they emerge while serving the goal of theological reflection for the sake of the church and its mission in God’s world.

These ten classes — six of which are systematic theology courses — make up nearly one-third of our total curriculum hours for the MDIV degree. That will not change. We are keeping the same classes and same course headings for our systematic theology classes while situating them in this larger area of missional theology. The change is not substantive but the nomenclature describes the teleological end of theological reflection. Mission is always the forward movement that results from deep biblical and theological study.

EDUCATION FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHURCH

One of our deeply-held beliefs at Covenant Seminary is that theological education is not an end in itself but a means toward the greater end of equipping and preparing our students to have a missionary-minded passion for God’s glory and his unfolding redemptive and restorative plan. We tell all of our new students at orientation *“You are not the end of your education. Christ’s church and Kingdom are. You are here to serve the good of others.”*

In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus taught us to pray for God’s kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This model prayer reflects the very heart of the mission of God: that his people—in union with Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit—be empowered by his grace to bring glory to God by embracing, embodying, and living out God’s Kingdom mission as co-laborers with him. We

long to see biblical theology take deep root in the lives of our students and to bear much fruit in the ministries and callings of those who train at Covenant Seminary as they go forth from this place to equip others to fulfill their manifold callings before God in his unfolding gospel mission.

Our sovereign God will accomplish his mission to redeem nations, generations, the people in our churches, and reconcile all things in heaven and earth. He calls his people to co-labor with him as redeemed people through whom he does this. His sovereign call and provision of

salvation in union with Christ is never at odds with nor threatened by our participation with him in his grand and glorious mission to establish his eternal kingdom. His sovereign grace in Christ actually establishes our work as we strive by all his energy in us to learn, love, and live — *“all for God’s mission!”*

Dr. Mark Dalbey is president and associate professor of applied theology at Covenant Seminary.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CHANGE

Q1 Is Covenant Seminary displacing systematic theology in the curriculum in any way?

A: No. We are deeply committed to systematic theology and are keeping all of our current courses while increasing integration and application of theology across the curriculum to enhance student comprehension, connections, and contextual application of theology for the whole of life. Nothing is being lost here and much is being gained.

Q2 Is Covenant Seminary jumping on a fad by emphasizing the term “missional” so much?

A: No. We do not agree with those who in recent years have taken the word *missional* and put it in opposition to confessional systematic theology. Our use of the term has grown from our desire to do just the opposite by connecting often divided subjects across the curriculum in a more cohesive and holistic way. We see the mission of God as an organizing biblical principle to help make profound theological connections from the Bible into theologically grounded applications and implications for God’s call to his people today.

Q3 Why then the word “missional?”

A: *Missional* at its core means characterized by mission. God has a mission to unify all creation under Christ (Eph. 1:9–10) and reconcile all of creation through the cross and resurrection of Christ (Col. 1:15–20). God invites his redeemed people into this mission, commissioned by him as ambassadors of our Savior-King Jesus Christ. The ascended Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and empower his people to respond to his call to go forth into the world proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. This means our Savior-King sends us out with a message for sinners to trust in the finished work of Christ and be reconciled to God and neighbor. Our theological

heritage from Calvin onwards motivates us to connect the theological task of the seminary to the missionary impulse of the church. Theology is for the sake of the church and its mission.

Q4 So how exactly does the Systematic Theology Department fit into this larger area of Missional Theology?

A: To reiterate and build on what we said above, we are *not changing the content of our courses, nor are we eliminating any of the standard departments* into which those courses usually fall. Rather, we have *revised the way our courses and departments are categorized academically*. What that means is that the Seminary now has **three major academic divisions** into which all the various departments fit in the following ways.

1. **THE BIBLICAL STUDIES DIVISION** consists of the Old Testament Department and the New Testament Department. This division includes all the Greek and Hebrew language courses, hermeneutics courses, courses focused on the study of specific books or themes of the Bible, etc.
2. **THE MISSIONAL THEOLOGY DIVISION** consists of the Systematic Theology Department, the Church History Department, the Christianity and Contemporary Culture (Apologetics) Department, and the World Mission Department. This division includes all the usual courses in systematic theology, as well as courses in church history, apologetics and cultural engagement, missiology, etc.
3. **THE APPLIED THEOLOGY DIVISION** consists of the Homiletics and Liturgics Department, the Educational Ministries Department, the Counseling Department, the Church Planting Department, and the Formational Leadership Department. This division includes all the courses focused on preaching and worship, Christian education, counseling, church planting and renewal, and courses such as Spiritual and Ministry Formation, Ministry Leadership, etc.



PROCLAIMING
— THE

GOSPEL

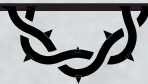
IN

SHIFTING

TIMES



BY PROF. MARK RYAN



How are Christians to respond to the changing nature of the culture around us? How are we to live in a world that no longer seems to value—or want—the truth we have to offer? The Francis A. Schaeffer Institute is helping future pastors, church leaders, and our community understand and engage with our shifting cultural paradigm.

EVANGELISM TODAY

The word *evangelism* pertains to offering “good news.” In Christian circles, that good news is about salvation and peace with God through the coming of Jesus Christ. More robustly, evangelism, as described by Harvie M. Conn in his book *Evangelism: Doing Justice and Preaching Grace*, is a call to reconciliation with God and to incorporation into the Kingdom of God embodied in the community of salvation. It is also an announcement of our liberation from sin and our enlistment into a “gospel show and tell”—our living a joyous life, marked by showing mercy and preaching grace to all.

As evangelism is and has been so basic to Christianity across time and place, it can often serve as an indicator of Christian health and vitality in relation to the wider culture. The practice of and attitudes toward evangelism make it something like “a canary in a coal mine” that gives advance warning of danger. In that sense, anyone who has been navigating the twenty-first century even half-awake will likely realize that today, evangelism is in trouble. The canary is struggling to sing as the cultural air changes. In our uncertain and rapidly changing time, evangelism is often not received as, or even linked with, “good news.” Rather, it often comes as unwarranted and unwanted news.

Outside the church, Christian evangelism is often perceived as something fearful or disrespectful. It is often connected in people’s minds with intolerant attitudes and narrow-mindedness, with bogus TV preachers and shameful acts of coercion. Today’s world sees evangelism not so much as good news, but a dirty word. When you and I bear witness to Christ and to our faith in him, we are often viewed as patronizing or needlessly provocative. In either case, the culture at large finds our practice of evangelism objectionable. Some even find it repulsive and even immoral (see E. Thiessen, *The Ethics of Evangelism*, 3–8).

Interestingly, evangelism also gets a mixed reaction inside the church. Some sectors of the Christian church to-

day are embarrassed about evangelism. They have read the cultural press and are loathe to openly call anyone to God’s way of seeing things—to salvation centered upon Jesus and no one and nothing else. Other sectors, chiefly the evangelical branch, press on announcing peace with God through Jesus Christ, but do so with an increasing, even foreboding, sense that the culture has changed and that the good news is considered, at best, an imposition, at worst, a mere invention. Too often this leads us to intensify our proclamation and excuse lapses in relational tone, unwittingly reinforcing the very perceptions that already work against us.

L. Frank Baum’s beloved fictional character Dorothy—herself in awe at awaking to the new and unfamiliar world of Oz—once quipped to her dog Toto, “I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore.” That same sense that we are not in “Christian America” anymore, and that the good news is not heard as good news anymore, informs much of our effort at the Francis Schaeffer Institute (FSI). Our desire is to emphasize the gospel of Jesus Christ as “true truth,” and therefore as always culturally relevant and personally engaging. We aim to help seminary students and the broader church better understand and speak back that truth to the culture in which they live and minister—while being mindful of and sensitive to the changed arrangement and shifting sensibilities of our time.

Before I discuss the ways FSI serves others in their efforts to announce and apply the gospel of Christ, allow me to paint in broad strokes a picture of how I see our current cultural moment and the challenges it raises to Christian evangelism.

UNDERSTANDING A SHIFTING CULTURE

Taking as our starting point the increased anxiety so many of God’s people feel about evangelism, we must ask: What is affecting our ability to feel confident in our calling to be salt and light to the world? What is it that seems to undercut our efforts to communicate the gospel compellingly into our present unsettled moment? We can answer these

questions in many ways, but I'd like to suggest two broad cultural factors that appear to lie at the root of things: what I call "the overhang of modernity" and "the overbite of post-modernity."

The Overhang of Modernity (Marginalization). By modernity, I have in mind that roughly 350-year period from the mid-seventeenth century through the late-twentieth century that generally embraced the concept of "progress" and was profoundly influenced by the Enlightenment and the industrial, scientific, and sexual revolutions. As we are still very much grappling with the implications of this post-medieval epoch, I speak of the "overhang" of modernity—for despite all that we may hear or read about our post-modern society, significant elements of modernity continue to intrude into or hang over our twenty-first century world. We are mistaken if we think that modernity has simply ceased to operate and has gone away.

For example, the spirit of modern life continues in at least the following ways (see J. R. Middleton and B. Walsh, *Truth is Stranger Than it Used to Be*, 14–15):

1. The eclipse or obscuring of the supernatural in favor of the natural, the this-worldly, and the secular.
2. The casting off of submission to church authority/tradition in the quest for personal truth and in preference of knowledge derived by observation, experience, and reflection.
3. The continued ideal of a "better future" (rather than the past) dominating our imagination and requiring our present attention and effort.

For our purposes, however, the feature of modernity I most want to highlight is *the redefining of religion in relation to western culture*. Whereas Christianity was a powerful cultural and social force from the fourth century onward, modern culture became highly critical of Christianity and, over time, effectively banished it to the margins of cultural life. Thus, to compress a great deal, *modernity has led to marginalization*. The posture and process of the modern period was to marginalize the church—and marginalized is exactly what many of us truly feel as we wrestle with disclosing the good news in our current culture.

Canadian theologian Douglas John Hall offers this trenchant sketch:

The extremity within which the disciple community in North America finds itself today is not only the end of an age, it is also the end of a long and deeply entrenched form of the church. The single most far-reaching ecclesiastical factor conditioning theological reflection in our time is the effective disestablishment of the Christian religion in the Western world by secular, political, and alternative religious forces (D. Hall,

Thinking the Faith, 200–01).

Hall's words alert us to at least two basic facts:

1. *Christianity no longer holds the "center ground" it once did*—including the surrounding culture's assistance with the task of evangelism. As Bryan Stone writes in *Evangelism after Christendom* (10ff.): "The church can no longer assume as it once did that the surrounding culture will assist in the task of producing Christians. The home base from which Christians thought to Christianize the rest of the world feels less and less like 'home.'"
2. *This dislocation or disestablishment has been very effective* in that Christianity has been relegated to the margins and reduced to the private sphere, and many of us are only now waking up to the fact the marginalization has become a defining reality.

The gradual switch modernity has foisted upon us has displaced God, discredited faith, and dispossessed the church of its "settled" place in Western culture. And while some pushed back on the downplaying of God and faith, many Christians made peace with modernity's maneuvering of the church to the margin. Indeed, many churches seemingly flourished in this context—at least until the period of the two World Wars with the Great Depression in between.

The Overbite of Postmodernity (Decentering). Here we have the second half of the cultural equation. Most readers are probably familiar with the concept of postmodernity, so I won't go into great detail on its elements. The basic period I have in mind is roughly the last fifty to sixty years in which the cultural outlook has shifted markedly away from the idea of optimistic "progress" to near pessimism, and from certainty of truth claims to ridiculing any notion of such claims (see Middleton and Walsh, *Truth is Stranger Than It Used to Be*, 25–27). Again, I'd like to draw out one particular feature of postmodernity for a closer look, namely, the loss of a center.

If the first defining characteristic of our moment of time is awakening to our place on the margins of culture, then the second can be described as discovering the breakdown of any meaningful center and the rush of pluralism to fill the gap. Modernity successfully shifted Christianity from the center, but it had nothing of lasting substance that could hold the center in place of Christianity. (I find it almost impossible not to recall here the words of W. B. Yeats's poem "The Second Coming": "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.")

Reflecting on this lack of a center, author Alan Roxburgh notes how the various centers of Western culture—

the moral, political, and religious centers—were carried over into the modern period. Although these cultural fruits were largely a byproduct of Christianity and continued to function in some form despite modernity’s revisions and its pushing of the church to the periphery, over time the notion of a stable social center floundered. If we put this in the customary language of postmodernity, there are no longer any grand theories of the whole. If we put this in the language of broader public discourse, there is no longer a consensus about meaning and purpose, values and directions. In either case, we are left without a center.

What is absent is *any* sacred or secular center, and without such we are faced with a veritable onslaught of values and ends competing with each other in a free market of beliefs (see A. Roxburgh, *The Missionary Congregation, Leadership, and Liminality*, 11–12). Is this not the widely acknowledged condition of our time?

As with Hall previously, so Roxburgh alerts us to at least two basic facts:

1. *Postmodernity suffers from a nasty “overbite.”*

Modernity’s failure to hold the center has produced a postmodern misalignment. Stated differently, the Christian church at this time of her existence faces a “double shift.” The first shift was from center to periphery. The second shift renders “center/periphery language” obsolete, leaving us to navigate the complex reality of a collapsed center filled in by a cacophony of confusing, relativizing, sometimes spirituality-friendly and sometimes not, choices. To be clear, we experience the double shift through which we are moving as a further dislocation and drowning out of the unique Christian contribution. We are not, strictly speaking, on the margins, but in a new, still developing social location—we are in a transitional moment, a flux.

2. *We as the people of God are not the only ones negotiating a path through this double shift.* Rather, both the Christian church and modern culture are experiencing crisis! Both are being forced to navigate the changed cultural arrangement. Because postmodernity calls into question the universal claims of all other stories and all traditions, it cannot sustain hope or empower any of us—the center fails to hold for all of us.

NAVIGATING A SHIFTING CULTURE WITH GOSPEL OPTIMISM

For some of us, negotiating the double shift looks like decline and feels like profound loss. The apparent rapid rate of change in cultural norms and a felt decline in Christian liberty are sources of deep anxiety for many believers. Cor-



**ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN
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CANARY IS STRUGGLING TO SING AS
THE CULTURAL AIR CHANGES.**



respondingly, we resent the change. Sometimes we resist it with a fierceness that impinges upon our evangelism. We may even resort to rhetoric that declares our intention to “take the culture back” or to further withdraw from it so as not to be “polluted” by the culture. In such cases, we risk sounding shrill in the ears of non-Christians, if not naïve and insensitive to their deeply ingrained suspicions.

For others of us, negotiating the double shift is no less easy and not without some feelings of loss, but our response is to see the silver lining, not just the dark cloud. As you might guess, I count myself in this latter category. With others, I see a potential leveling of the modernist playing field and a missional moment unfolding. As much as I feel dislocated and marginalized, as much as I think we have entered a new and difficult moment in which to be Christian and to engage in evangelism, it also seems to me that we may have entered a moment of great opportunity.

Once again, let me lean on the words of Douglas John Hall:

The opportunity that comes to serious Christians at the very point where Christianity seems to be in decline is an opportunity that has seldom presented itself in Christian history: namely, the opportunity to actually become the salt, yeast, and light that the newer testament speaks of as the character of Christ’s disciple community. To grasp this opportunity, however, we must relinquish our centuries old ambition to

be the official religion, the dominant religion, of the dominant culture. Ideally, we must disengage ourselves from our society if we are to reengage our society [and, I would add, become what all along we have been called to be]—the cruciform body of Jesus Christ, a priestly, prophetic community of “the Way” (D. Hall, *The End of Christendom and the Future of Christianity*, 49).

This is where the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute at Covenant Seminary comes in. By hosting periodic events, lectures, and other opportunities, FSI seeks to help Covenant students and our larger community learn both to acknowledge the cultural changes afoot in our time and to navigate those changes in compassionate, compelling, and biblical ways.

For example, our Fall 2016 Special Lecture Series focused on the topic *Stand Firm: Christian Courage and*

pluralism brought many visitors not only from Covenant, but from several other St. Louis universities as well.

But recognizing that we are settling into a “new norm” of Christian realignment and more difficult evangelism in light of shifting social mores is about far more than simply regaining our confidence. Our imagination needs to be nurtured, and some practical retooling must take place as well.

To that end, this spring, in partnership with Covenant Seminary’s City Ministry Initiative, FSI co-hosted a further special lecture series: *Rooted in the Word, Engaged in the World*, featuring **Dr. Michael Goheen**, theological director and scholar in residence at the Missional Training Center, Phoenix, Arizona; **Dr. Christopher J. H. Wright**, international ministries director for Langham Partnership; and Covenant’s own **Dr. Michael Williams**, professor of systematic theology. This series provided fresh insight into how we might read the Bible missionally, and offered a rich variety of workshops led by accomplished ministry practitioners

AS MUCH AS I FEEL DISLOCATED AND MARGINALIZED, AS MUCH AS I THINK WE HAVE ENTERED A NEW AND DIFFICULT MOMENT IN WHICH TO BE CHRISTIAN AND TO ENGAGE IN EVANGELISM, IT ALSO SEEMS TO ME THAT WE MAY HAVE ENTERED A MOMENT OF GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

the Struggle for Civilization. Through their lectures and more personal interactions, our guest speakers helped us to think about the witness we are called to bear and the crisis in which we are caught. Noted social critic and author **Os Guinness** spoke to us about the power of the gospel however dark the times and about our facing up to the challenges we currently face. Westminster Seminary (Philadelphia) Professor of Apologetics **Dr. William Edgar** examined the question “Are We Secular?” and helped us wrestle with the apparent silence of God. Former Director of the English L’Abri and now Director of Christian Heritage Cambridge **Andrew Fellows** provided insightful analysis and practical apologetic postures.

Later in the fall, and in light of our increasingly pluralistic moment, FSI was pleased to host an evening event with Washington University in St. Louis’s Distinguished Professor of Law and Religion **Dr. John Inazu**. Dr. Inazu’s widely praised second book, *Confident Pluralism: Surviving and Thriving Through Deep Difference* (Chicago, 2016), was the focus of discussion. The opportunity to hear Dr. Inazu talk on the profoundly relevant topic of

that engaged challenging topics like preaching God’s missional purposes, working with refugees and the urban poor, viewing Western culture through a missiological lens, learning about God’s mission from emerging generations, acting as salt and light in our workplaces, sustaining our commitment to Christ and to serving others, and developing hospitable practices that will connect our congregations to their local contexts.

We are planning other similar programs for the coming year and look forward to seeing how the Lord will use them to equip and encourage his people. Our fall 2017 lecture series, for example, will take place **September 29–30** and, in keeping with the wider church and other on-campus events, will focus on the legacy of the Protestant Reformation. (See our ad elsewhere in this issue and look for more details soon.)

Beyond FSI, Covenant Seminary is working in other ways to promote and develop this gospel-focused, culture-engaging mindset among those we train for Kingdom service. The Counseling Department, for example, recently sponsored a series of lectures by noted psychologist and

author **Diane Langberg** on the theme of *Culture, Christendom, and Christ*. Dr. Langberg offered a helpful look at how our culture and its systems can shape the words we use, the ways we think, and the ways in which we do things, and how the power of the gospel in us is meant to bring us beyond mere cultures and systems to Christlike living in all times and all places. The Seminary is also exploring potential partnerships with other gospel-centered educational organizations, such as Christian Heritage in Cambridge, England, and others for the purpose of expanding our ability to provide God's people with culturally relevant, biblically sound training for today's world.

We at FSI and the Seminary are under no illusions as to our ability to improve Christian health and vitality in relation to the wider culture. We don't pretend that our work alone can shift attitudes toward evangelism in our twenty-first century situation. Even so, we are committed to communicating the claims of Christ upon the whole of life, and to providing Christian believers both at Covenant Seminary and from the wider Christian community with models, resources, and encouragement as they seek to announce to our changing world the good news as it is found in Jesus Christ.

Prof. Mark Ryan is director of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute and adjunct professor of religion and culture at Covenant Seminary. While a student at Covenant in the late 1990s, he was as an FSI Intern and later served with L'Abri Fellowship in Boston and Vancouver. Prof. Ryan has also pastored congregations in Australia and the USA. His work with FSI allows him to pursue his passion for engaging our culture courageously but compassionately with the gospel.



Listen to lectures from FSI events online at www.covenantseminary.edu/resources.

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FAITH AND POLITICS

— A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE —

by Dr. Dan Doriani



What does the Bible have to say about the complex relationship between Christianity and governing authorities—and how does it apply to our increasingly turbulent political environment?

Like most Americans, I found the recent presidential election cycle to be particularly contentious and combative. We went from an initial field of multiple qualified candidates from both parties to having to choose between the two least popular candidates we've ever had. Many people on both sides cast votes not so much *for* one candidate as *against* the other. For Christians, the situation was even starker: neither candidate could obviously claim what pastors like to call "a credible profession of faith." But whether one is a professing Christian or not, whichever candidate you voted for or didn't vote for, this election cycle left large numbers of Americans asking, "How did we get here, and what do we do now?"

In answer to this, I want to focus on the words of the apostle Peter as he explains to the early Christians how to live in a challenging socio-political environment that was, at best, indifferent to, and, at worst, hostile to the things they believed. He also offers a proposal for action that applies in our time just as much as it did for Peter's day. He says:

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. (1 Peter 2:11–17)

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

Peter makes a striking statement here: "I urge you as *sojourners* and *exiles*." Other translations render these words as "aliens and strangers." The original Greek words have meanings that range from "someone who has been in a place for a little while," perhaps a few weeks, to "someone who's been there a long time," which could be a few years or longer. Either way, Peter is describing people who don't quite belong in the land where they live.

Some time ago, I was in Singapore to speak to Christian leaders. Even though I've been there twice now, I'm aware of how out of place I am there. I'm grateful they speak English, but they have many customs that are different from ours. For example, they rarely take a guest to a nearby restaurant. Instead, in this small island country that's only about 25 miles wide, they'll drive at length to a fine, distant restaurant because, to them, that shows respect to the guest. It's a nice gesture, but for me it points out how different our cultures are. I don't quite fit in.

Now, it's one thing to feel out of place in a foreign culture. We expect that. But it's quite another thing to feel out of place in our own culture. But that is exactly what Peter is describing here. He says it's the *universal Christian condition*. Whatever country or time we live in, we're *aliens* here. We're *exiles*. We will never perfectly fit into our culture or age.

Christians often debate how they should relate to the culture in which they live. Some say the best way to live faithfully to the Lord is to withdraw from the culture as much as possible—we shouldn't run for political office, enlist in the military, or even vote. Some say we should form a Christian enclave somewhere and let the rest of America take care of itself. Many in my own tradition prefer to say that we should engage with our culture in order to critique

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it, reclaim it, and transform it. We Calvinists tend to be optimistic about the value of interacting with the culture.

While that's a healthy attitude to have, it doesn't cohere with the entire testimony of Scripture. There are certainly many texts in the Bible that tell us that we should engage in this world, that we should be in the world but not of it, and so on. But Peter here says essentially, "You are aliens and exiles. You're never going to be viewed as full participants in a fundamentally secular culture."

Another way to look at it is through the lens of what Peter says in chapter 4 of this epistle.

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you. (1 Peter 4:1–4)

We might summarize this as, "You're done living the way the Gentiles do, and now they are surprised when you don't join them in their ways." But here's the interesting thing: Peter is writing this to Gentiles. He's not writing to Jews. At the beginning of the epistle, in 1 Peter 1:1, he addresses the "elect exiles" of "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." Those are all Gentile places. He's telling these Gentile believers that "the Gentiles are surprised when you don't join them in their ways" and that they will oppose or malign you. He's saying that when we become Christians, we are going to be viewed as strange by the people around us.

Think about our own lives. People in our culture tell certain kinds of jokes that we as Christians can't laugh at. We don't find them funny. Many people are amused by movies or television shows that involve crude sexual humor that degrades people. But a believer will more likely wonder, "Why is my sense of humor so different from everyone else's?"

Peter tells us that's the way it's always going to be while we're on this earth. We feel alienated because we are aliens and exiles and strangers in this age. We shouldn't despair about that; we simply need to be realists and recognize that we are not going to fit in fully.

LIVING FAITHFULLY AS ALIENS AND EXILES

How, then are Christians to live as aliens and strangers in this age? Peter gives us four basic principles.

1 Live a Beautiful Life.

Peter tells us, “Keep your conduct honorable . . . so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12). Notice, he says *when* people speak against us, not *if*. Secular society *will* speak against Christians, and the best bulwark against this is a beautiful life. That doesn’t guarantee that people will stop speaking against us, but integrity will be visible. It will, at the very least, glorify God, and may actually make a difference to others. But whether others recognize that truth in this age or not, they certainly will on “the day of visitation” when Christ comes to judge all things.

If we think it’s difficult to live a beautiful life in our time, let’s look at what Christians faced in Peter’s day. The Roman emperor at the time was Nero, one of the cruelest men ever to hold that title. He wanted to rebuild Rome to fit his grandiose ideas of himself, but he needed to clear a lot of ground in order to do it. Conveniently, a huge fire broke out around this time that burned large swaths of the city. Many people accused Nero of having the fire started. Whether that was true or not, Nero hated the rumor, so he blamed the fire on the Christians. Everyone hated the Christians, so why not? The great historian Tacitus, writing a few years later, said that even though it was unjust and cruel to blame the Christians, it worked because they were “loathed for their vices and hated for their abominations of superstition.” They were arrested and slain, he says, not so much on account of arson as for their “hatred of the human race.” What did Tacitus mean by that?

In those days, if you were a shoemaker or a barrel maker or a farmer, you belonged to a guild for your particular field. Each guild had a patron deity. Once a year you and others of your guild had to worship that patron deity together. Christian converts, of course, would not do that. And non-Christians would interpret that as hatred toward their guild – the group of people who honored that deity. People were also supposed to worship the emperor once a year. There was a festival where everyone offered incense to the emperor and bowed down and prayed to him or for him. Christians would certainly pray *for* the emperor, but they refused to pray *to* him. And the non-Christian response was, “Why do you hate everybody? Why won’t you participate?” For hundreds of years, Christians were accused of hatred of the human race because they wouldn’t participate in pagan idolatry. They were also called cannibals by some because of communion, which was garbled as the literal eating of flesh and blood. That contributed further to the general hatred of Christians.

We in America today have not experienced anything like that kind of persecution, but we’re beginning to get a taste of what it’s like to be on the receiving end of such animosity. The most obvious example is the current debate over homosexual ethics. When the Supreme Court reached

its decision a couple of years ago allowing gay marriage, the majority opinion stated that “the only reason to oppose gay marriage is hate.” Therefore, if we oppose gay marriage because we think God has a different plan for men and women, we are considered hateful and bigoted. Slander has always been a favorite weapon of persecutors. What Peter is saying in our passage is that even when the world calls us haters or bigots or worse, we are called to live beautiful lives of faithful witness to God and his ways. That may dispel the slander or it may not. But even if it does not, we should be faithful to the God whose name we bear.

That doesn’t mean we should be fearful. Peter wants us to be forewarned. We can expect to be vilified for our beliefs. We can expect to be treated unfairly by a culture that does not share those beliefs. Knowing that doesn’t necessarily make it easier to be faithful in challenging times, but we can be encouraged by knowing that our lives will glorify God and that some who now persecute us may, because of how they see us living, praise God on the day of visitation.

2 Submit to your governors.

The second principle Peter gives us for living faithfully as aliens and exiles is to submit to our governors. Whether we like our leaders or not, that can sometimes be very tough to do. But, again, remember that when Peter wrote this, the leader in charge was Nero. No matter what we may think of our current or potential leaders, Nero was worse than any of them. And yet, Peter says, we should submit to our governors.

We like Peter’s teaching about living a beautiful life. We get that. And it really is beautiful when Christians do things that make a difference in our world. For example, statisticians and demographers have discovered that one group of people tends to keep Down’s Syndrome babies instead of aborting them: evangelical Christians. Hospital staffs know this. In ancient Cairo and Alexandria, many newborn babies were abandoned by families that couldn’t take care of them. Usually those babies would either starve to death or be taken by others to be raised as slaves. Christians would often send out groups of women to the places where these babies were left, and they’d rescue them. They’d have nursing mothers waiting to take care of them. Everyone knew the Christians did this. That was the beauty of it. Everyone saw how Christians loved one another and loved others—and it eventually won a lot of people over.

We love that kind of story, but we’re not as fond of submitting to the governor. Why? Partly because in our culture “submit” is seen as a dirty word. Think of it in terms of a wrestling match—to submit means that someone has you in a hold that could break your neck and kill you. So, you submit. We don’t like to “give in” in that way. The Bible uses the word “submit” many times. It can simply mean that we are to do what we are told, but it can also mean

that we are to respect and order our lives under the authorities God has put over us, whether we like them or not.

3 Live as free servants of God.

We are to submit to our governors, but that doesn't mean that we can't hold them accountable for their actions. The biblical standards for a governor are quite clear. Romans 13 says that the primary purpose of the governor is to "punish those who do evil and praise those who do good." Other passages add tasks like protecting the borders; defending the people from assault; and promoting laws that advance justice and defend the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. But the most basic requirement is clear: the governor is to promote justice. In a democracy like ours, it's one of the great benefits that we have the ability to call or write our governing authorities and say to them, "You're not promoting justice."

Here's one example of how this works. A club I belong to is right near a local police station. There's a little road where the police cars come out from the station, then go onto the main road. Sometimes, the police come whipping out of that first road, ignoring the stop sign. I've almost been hit by police officers at that intersection twice. The last time it happened, I called the police chief and told him about it. I talked with him for about 20 minutes. He listened patiently to my concerns, then said, "This is intolerable, sir. It will not happen again. I'll have a serious talk with all the officers."

In our culture, all of us are free to do this. Of course, we're called to exercise Christian charity in how we go about it, and there's no guarantee that our leaders will change something we're unhappy about. But they will usually listen to us if we approach the situation charitably—and, of course, they want to get reelected. They know that

if you're active enough to be calling or writing them, you probably represent ten or twenty or more other voters who haven't called or written. So, they listen.

We can and should be active in this way. Peter and the early Christians didn't have that privilege, yet Peter still told his readers to "live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God."

4 Honor everyone, including the emperor.

The final principle Peter gives us is to honor all, including the emperor—which means that, whoever is elected as president or governor or senator in any election cycle, we are to honor them. Peter doesn't say we should just tolerate them. He says, "Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor." That's a pretty clear command. Even if we're not excited about who our leaders are, we should honor them, not disparage them. Need I say again that the emperor referred to here was Nero?

Why do we honor our leaders? We do so because God the Father alone enthrones and dethrones all powers and rulers and authorities, and God has chosen them. We may not understand why God allows certain people to have power. Those in power may not understand God's plan, either. We know that many of them are not believers at all. But in God's divine wisdom, which is beyond our knowing, he enthrones rulers and casts them down according to his own purposes. Whether we agree with his choices or not doesn't matter. As Paul tells us in Romans 13:1–2, "There is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment."

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THE NEED FOR CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE

If you look at the history of Christianity in Asia and Africa, you discover that in the years between AD 700 and AD 1000, there were approximately 22 to 25 million Christians in those areas. By the end of the fifteenth century, there were only about 2 million. What happened? Muslims enslaved many of those Christians. Others they conscripted into the military where they died in battle. Still others were forcibly converted to Islam. Those who would not convert went underground. Living in secret that way makes it harder to pass on one's faith to children and grandchildren. And some were slain.

Muslims also destroyed or leveled Christian churches, or, in some cases, simply put a mosque on top of them. They also double-taxed Christians. They wouldn't let Christians hold certain public offices. In different places at different times, Muslims wouldn't let Christians wear nice clothes or ride horses. Christians were considered inferior, and a Muslim who was poor might feel worse if he looked shabbier than a Christian or had to walk while a Christian rode.

Through these and other ways, Christianity was essentially wiped out of Asia and Northern Africa. If we ask, "How could that happen?" one important answer comes to mind: there were no Christian magistrates or Christian governors to help protect them.

As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, it's good to remember that the Reformers faced some pretty big challenges too, many of which were as much political as they were theological. Martin Luther, for example, lived most of his life under a death sentence. He certainly would have been killed if his elector—the governor of his region—hadn't stood up to the emperor and refused to let outside forces come into his territory to take Luther. John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli also lived in politically precarious situations. They knew perfectly well that their location in Switzerland—between the two Catholic nations of France and Italy—was vulnerable. They knew that they would be killed, as so many other Reformers had been killed, if they didn't have some military protection. So, while they did all their theological work, they were also doing political work to ensure that the civil authorities would be inclined to protect them if the Catholics wanted to invade and kill them. John Knox, whom some call the fourth great leader of the Reformation, experienced similar troubles. When he and the early Scottish reformers began preaching, they knew there was a good chance they'd go to jail or be slain, hung, or burned. Knox had to flee for his life several times. He was imprisoned and even taken as a slave to row on a galley ship at one point.

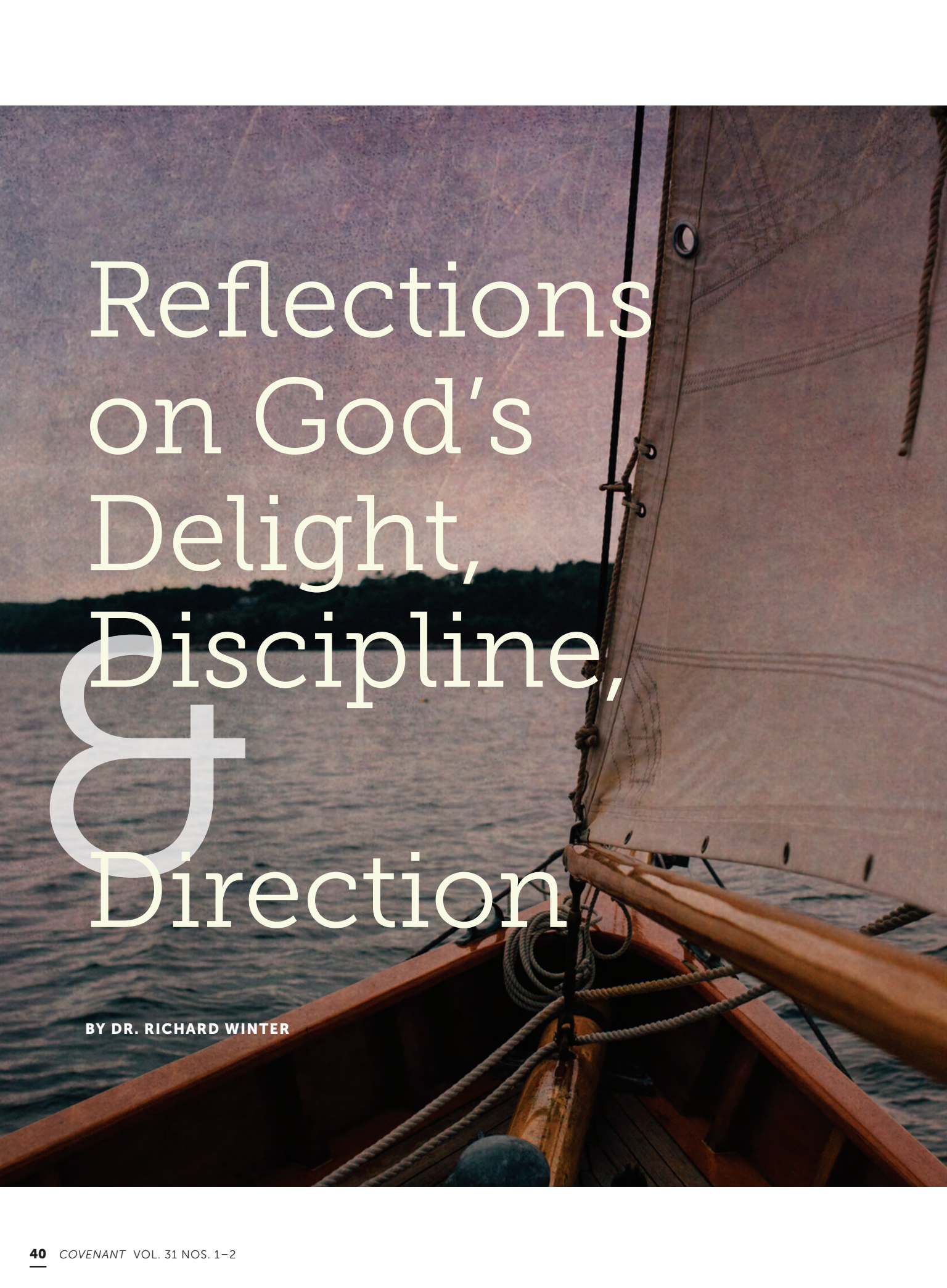
But the Reformers were protected by politically and

spiritually motivated Christian leaders. There was then, and there is now, a great need for Christian magistrates who are willing to stand up and protect not only the Christian church but also those of other faiths as well. Christians by nature create spaces where everybody can thrive. The ideal is not freedom *from* religion, as some today would have us believe, but freedom *for* religion and religious expression. That idea is also part of our U.S. Constitution. But it means more than simply freedom of worship. It means that we are free to express our faith *all through life*, not just for an hour a day on Sunday, or in private when we're praying. What we need are Christian magistrates who are willing to protect the church and also willing to protect the rights of others who disagree with us—that is, people of other faiths. Without that freedom for *all*, we can easily end up with freedom for *none*.

Some Christians are in places of considerable influence, whether in government or business or other spheres of life. They can use that influence to promote freedom of religious expression for all. Some of us are not in places of authority, but all of us can make an impact in the areas where we do have influence. And all of us can at least pray that the next time a major election comes around we will actually have one or more Christian candidates who are qualified to lead and willing to run. We can pray for and support those candidates. If they are nominated, we can vote for them. That doesn't mean we want to establish a theocracy. But we can vote for candidates whose values most closely reflect what we as Christians hold dear, and we can vote for the protection of the church—and of other people of faith—because Christians protect other people, not just themselves.

When it comes to matters of faith and politics, then, we do well to heed Peter's advice. While we live as sojourners and exiles, let us keep our conduct honorable, living beautiful lives that speak of the glory of God. Let us submit to the authorities over us for the sake of the God who put them there, while also living as free servants of that God for the sake of those around us. And let us honor all people—including the emperor—for whether we agree with them on every issue or not, they are human beings made in the image of the God we love and serve, and whose name we humbly bear.

Dr. Dan Doriani serves as vice president of strategic academic initiatives and professor of theology at Covenant Seminary. Among his many books are *Getting the Message*, *Putting the Truth to Work*, *The Sermon on the Mount*, several volumes in the *Reformed Expository Commentaries* series; and *The New Man*. He is also a contributing blogger for *The Gospel Coalition*. This article is adapted from a presentation he made at the Seminary's Men's Leadership Breakfast in November 2016.



Reflections on God's Delight, Discipline, & Direction

BY DR. RICHARD WINTER



Dr. Richard Winter, formerly professor of applied theology and counseling and now professor emeritus of applied theology and counseling, stepped down from full-time teaching in 2016 after nearly 25 years at Covenant Seminary. A trained medical doctor, he is a former member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and has also served as an associate pastor, the director of the English L'Abri, and a counselor/psychotherapist. Dr. Winter came to Covenant in 1992 to start the MAC program. He reflected on his time at the Seminary and on God's abundant work in his life with a devotion given during the Seminary's 2016 baccalaureate ceremony, from which this article is adapted.

In Genesis 48 we read of Jacob, a fallen and fallible man, who, in his old age, claims that his years have been few and difficult. Some of that difficulty was of his own making, of course. But even so, he was still able to bless his sons and his grandsons with this wonderful blessing as he lay dying: "The God before whom my fathers walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from evil, bless you." Now, I am not dying, but I do face a kind of ending as I step down from being a full-time professor here, and this blessing is my prayer for all of you as you go out from this place.

But in reflecting on this passage, I ask: How has God been my shepherd? How have I been a sheep? Let me trace the outline of the story for you. We all know how important story is here at Covenant Seminary, especially in the counseling program. Connecting your sheepish story and my sheepish story with God's story is what we are about. And, by the way, contrary to popular belief, sheep are in fact remarkably intelligent. They recognize faces, they learn quickly, and they follow voices. So, I'm going to share a bird's-eye view of one sheep's story with a few lessons that undergird it. The three lessons are these: "Learning to Rest in His Delight," "Being Responsive to His Discipline," and "Reaching for His Direction." My counseling students know that I am fond of the key of D, and so we have these three recurring biblical melodies or life keys: delight, discipline, and direction. But first, the story.

THE STORY

To set the scene for my rather inauspicious and painful arrival at Covenant Seminary twenty-four years ago: I grew up as the third child of four in a very safe, loving, medical family in the south of England with a typical British emotional reserve. We had been Christians for many generations—my father, my grandfather, and my great-grandfather, like Jacob, had served this God. I never knew a day when I did not have a sense of the existence of God as my Heavenly Father. As Jacob said, "all my life long." During medical school years in London, from the age of about 18 to 23, each Sunday I sat at the feet of the great London preachers John Stott and Martyn Lloyd-Jones, one in the morning, one in the evening, for five years.

As one does in medical school, I encountered a lot of suffering there, and it began to raise questions for me about the existence of God. I began questioning if Christianity could be true. I began to devour Francis Schaeffer's recently published books *Escape From Reason* and *The God Who Is There*, and these helped me to see that it is reasonable to believe in God. It's not an irrational leap of

faith in the dark. Christianity makes sense of the big questions of life. In fact, it answers the big questions in a more satisfying and reasonable way than humanism, Buddhism, or any other belief system. It rings true to the way things really are.

I also learned at that time that if Christianity is really true, then the whole of life is spiritual. All of life is to be lived under the Lordship of Christ, whether it's washing the dishes or changing my baby's diaper or going to church or praying or counseling someone who's deeply depressed. All of those are spiritual activities. That was incredibly freeing to me.

Soon after graduating, I went to Canada to do a flying doctor residency in a hospital working amongst the Eskimos and Indians on the Newfoundland and Labrador coast. There I was enchanted by a beautiful young woman who six months later became my wife. And I have to rather sheepishly admit

And [Jacob] blessed Joseph and said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys; and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

Genesis 48:15–16

that we were engaged three weeks after meeting. She was a very mature 17-year-old and I was probably a very immature 25-year-old, but I am thankful that 45 years later she is still the love of my life and the prime instrument that God has used for my growth and sanctification.

When we first met, she was and had been searching for truth and soon became a Christian. After we were married near Boston, we set off on a year-long honeymoon around the world with packs on our backs, joining the hippie trail and exploring Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam at the source, to see if all religions really lead to the same God, as I was beginning to wonder. We bussed and we hitched and we traveled on third-class trains, and we drove an old Land Rover from Panama to San Francisco and a Volkswagen van from Afghanistan to London, and came back even more convinced of the truth of Christianity.

Then I began studying psychiatry. My Christian friends and family were afraid that this would kill my belief in God. But as I studied Freud, Jung, Skinner, and Rogers, rather than persuading me that Christianity wasn't true, it only convinced me more that it really answered the big questions of life more profoundly than anything else.

I studied psychiatry for eight years, then we were invited to work and live at the L'Abri Study Center and Community in England. I also became an associate pastor

in a church there. We were at L'Abri for 14 years, teaching, working as a family, learning, directing—it was a very fulfilling and happy time. And then, toward the end of that time, my life fell apart.

Well, not completely. But here is the sad and complex context of my most sheepish and shameful moment. My sister died tragically in childbirth, and on the anniversary of her death three years later, my brother-in-law took his own life. We had to make a very difficult decision about my sister's children. Also around that time, my father-in-law died, and my wife got cancer. We were thrust into some very difficult relationships and leadership issues at work and church. And we were caring for a houseful of students at L'Abri. Then I was invited to come to Covenant Theological Seminary to teach on the recommendation of my friend and colleague from L'Abri, Jerram Barrs.

I resisted that request for about two years. In that con-

text, with all that was happening, I slid into burnout and depression. I felt confused, indecisive, depressed, anxious, and exceedingly ashamed. I'd never dealt with failure like this. That's why Psalm 73 is so special to me. Augustine called it "medicine for madness." In the middle of it the psalmist, out of a place of great confusion, confesses, "When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant. I was a brute beast before you." And a frightened, silly, stubborn sheep I was.

In my crisis over the decision whether to come to Covenant, there were four options: I could have gone back into psychiatry, I could have stayed working at L'Abri, I was invited to pastor the local church, and then there was this distant call from Covenant Seminary. I wanted a Gideon fleece or a sign in the sky to tell me what to do. Then I sensed God's voice as I wandered the fields and lanes of England in agony. I heard him saying to me, "I have made you a choice-maker. You're made in my image, and I will go with you whichever choice you make." So, trembling, we made that choice.

By the end of Psalm 73, looking back, the psalmist is in the grip of a new perspective, a new confidence, that I also feel as I come to this particular ending today. He says, "Yet, I am always with you. You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take

me into glory.” Here’s a change to the key of G: gripped, guided, and glorified.

With my incredibly courageous and supportive wife, we ended up in St. Louis twenty-four years ago with our four brave children, three of them in their teens. It was August 1992. It was 105 degrees. It was horribly humid. And I was sanding the floors on the top floor of our old house in the Central West End that had no air conditioning. I thought we had been cast out of the Garden of Eden, out of England’s green and pleasant land, and that we had arrived in hell. It was a slow and painful adjustment for us all. We had been uprooted and transplanted. We were grieving, we were sad, we were angry, and we were all rather frightened sheep and lambs. We wondered if this was a gigantic, transatlantic step of faith or a step of folly. Whichever it was, God has used it in wonderful ways. He kept us and our children in his grip through all that.

To make a long story short, I have come to love working at Covenant Seminary. My wife has flourished in her amazing floral design business. It’s been an extraordinary privilege to work with such gifted faculty, staff, and students, and especially my wonderful counseling team. Yes, we’ve had our ups and downs, but the sense of rich community and care for one another is powerful. I look forward to our faculty meetings. We have a lot of fun. We do a lot of serious business. And I’m often awed by the great minds in the room and wonder why I am there with them. It’s really an honor.

At graduation, we’re often reminded of this amazing ripple effect of the Seminary that Dr. Dalbey often refers to. Each of you will touch many lives and hand on what you have learned here to others. Today and tomorrow there are many achievements to be celebrated—the work, the time, the sacrifices of friends and family, and now the rightful honor and glory of reaching your goal. And there are losses to celebrate too. You no longer have certain professors making your life miserable. You have no more reading of 30 or so books a year. No more papers to write. No more reflecting yourself to death. And no more 8:30 a.m. classes. But there are painful losses to be grieved too—deep friendships, homes, communities, churches, schools that have to be left behind as you move on. It is indeed a bittersweet moment.

And for me there are real losses that come with retiring from full-time teaching. I will miss the counseling student intern group family that I adopted each year. I will miss the intellectual jousting, the friendly teasing, and the serious discussions of our weekly faculty meetings. But I celebrate you all, inevitably especially the counseling graduates, as you join the more than 500 counselors who have graduated from Covenant in the last 23 years and who are now serving all over this country and in 14 other countries. Like a proud father, I hope that I will be able to keep in touch with you in the years to come. And as we



Though now retired from full-time teaching, Dr. Richard Winter continues to guide and inspire a new generation of Covenant’s counseling students.

celebrate by honoring you all, and also rightfully grieving, I hope the dean will allow loud cheers and maybe even raucous cheers tomorrow evening at graduation.

LEARNING TO REST IN HIS DELIGHT

Before I finish, I’d like to return for a moment to the key of D and the lessons of delight, discipline, and direction I mentioned earlier. You may have heard these themes coming through in my story. I have learned in these last 30 years, firstly, the power of delight in relationships. I have learned the language and reality of delight—God’s delight in us as he says, “I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine. You are precious in my eyes and honored, and I love you.” I delight in my wife and children, and now my grandchildren, my friends, my students, my clients—not just loving them, but actively affirming and drawing out their dignity and their beauty. And if this is the way that God has made us, it is not surprising that contemporary neuroscience focuses on the importance and the power of attachments to bestow security and resilience in life. We are made for deep relationships with God and each other, and that is the context of growth and healing.

I think that in the church we have sometimes focused so much on depravity that we have neglected dignity and delight. I have seen how deeply God delights in us, even at our most messy, confused, and stubborn. I have also seen how difficult it is for those who have not been loved well to understand and to know this. I think of Elsa, so used and abused by her father, unable to believe in grace and goodness when she came to us at L’Abri more than 30 years ago depressed and wanting to die. But she hung on, and through the power of relationships, a verse that was anathema to her at that time has slowly but surely over the years become her reality as she rests in God’s grace: “He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will quiet you by his love. He will exult over you with loud singing” (Zeph. 3:17). And as she has learned God’s delight in her, slowly but

surely like a butterfly emerging from a caterpillar, she has been set free to be the creative and caring person that God made her to be.

BEING RESPONSIVE TO HIS DISCIPLINE

Second, I have come to understand more deeply, and, I confess, somewhat reluctantly, the need for God's discipline because of my depravity and my sin. God delights in us, but I cannot escape his pure holiness, his hatred of evil, and that he intends to shape me into a better person more like him, to pry me free from my idols. But I am often stubborn, and I think I know best.

Hebrews 12 tells us to "not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him, for the Lord disciplines the one he loves. . . . For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruits of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb. 12:5–6, 11). With hindsight, I identified that brute beast of Psalm 73, that silly, frightened-sheep experience that I had, with the desert experience of the Israelites in Deuteronomy: "Remember who the Lord your God has led you all the way in the desert to humble you, to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments" (Deut. 8:2). Isaac Watts' old hymn reminds us of the Shepherd: "He brings my wandering spirit back when I forsake his ways, and leads me for his mercy's sake in paths of truth and grace." And the apostle Peter writes, "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you" (1 Peter 5:10).

Not only is God's discipline of me important, but also as I choose a more disciplined life, my brain is retrained to walk in his ways. Again, we're learning much about brain science, and what we know confirms the way God works in changing and sanctifying us. We've learned that "what fires together wires together." The more you practice how to think, feel, and behave, the more it becomes a new pattern of life, putting off the old nature and putting on the new. You can literally change your brain by living in the light of his Word and in cooperation with his Spirit. "If you continue in my Word," Jesus said, "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31, 32). Good science only confirms the truth of Christianity.

And I have learned more deeply that Christianity is not just about a cozy relationship between me and God and going to heaven when I die. We are part of a flock, a family, a community, a church that God is using to transform us to be more like him. And not only that—to redeem his whole creation. It is a discipline that I choose to live and be involved in a costly sacrificial community rather than to give in to the culturally more popular self-focused, self-indulgent life. We Christians stand before the watching

world as an alternative community that demonstrates the mystery of the gospel, as Paul calls it, as it breaks down the barriers of color, race, class, gender, wealth, political party, and power that divide us from each other. For this, we will be both praised and persecuted.

REACHING FOR HIS DIRECTION

Finally, direction. I'm learning that following him and knowing his voice, in the confusing medley of anxious voices that often wake me at 2 a.m., is not easy. How do I know his direction? Jesus said, "My sheep know my voice" (John 10:27). In my own stubborn, half-dead, too busy, and distracted brute-beast way, I'm learning to recognize his voice and follow him. Sometimes he has to use discipline to direct me. Often he uses his most precious gift, my wife, Jane, as we navigate our way together through the tranquil oceans and the stormy trials of life. He has given us direction in Scripture, and sometimes he gives a more specific direction through circumstances. But ultimately, he is drawing and directing us to that final destination of being completely transformed into his image, one day perfectly in glory. I have to sheepishly admit that I am slow to learn and that it has taken these 71 years to more deeply trust that God is good, to trust the biblical images of God as the Good Shepherd, a Good Father, a Good Mother. He is the God who loves, protects, and wants the best for his sheep, his child—for me.

We saw earlier how in Psalm 73 the psalmist comes through his confusing crisis of faith to renewed confidence in the goodness and faithfulness of God: "Yet, I am always with you," he says, "God my Shepherd. You hold me by my right hand, you guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory." He is gripped, guided, and glorified—as are we.

I want my story not so much to speak about me and my achievements, but about "the God before whom my fathers walked, who has been my Shepherd all my life long to this day." And let this be your confidence as you leave this place. As you follow the Shepherd, you can be sure that he delights in you. He will discipline you for your good. And he will direct you.

May the God before whom my fathers walked, the God who has been my Shepherd all my life long to this day, the Angel who has redeemed me from evil, bless you. Amen.

Dr. Richard Winter is professor emeritus of applied theology and counseling at Covenant Seminary. Though he retired from full-time teaching in 2016, he continues to teach several courses for the Seminary and is a popular conference and seminar speaker. Dr. Winter is the author of the books *When Life Goes Dark*, *Perfecting Ourselves to Death*, *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment*, and *The Roots of Sorrow*. He and his wife, Jane, have four children and eight grandchildren.

THE SEMINARY
at

60

Celebrating
SIX DECADES

of

GRACE AND
GROWTH

COMPILED + EDITED BY RICK MATT





TIMELESS TRUTHS FOR THEN AND NOW

The 2016–17 academic year marked the 60th anniversary of Covenant Seminary, which, in God’s providence, happens to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017. We are grateful to the Lord for his faithfulness in providing for the Seminary and growing us from the small school we were at the beginning (with only 11 students) to the institution we are today—with hundreds of current students and more than 3,000 alumni serving in all 50 states and 40 nations, an expanding online presence, an extension site in Nashville, Tennessee, and strategic partnerships with many churches and organizations that help us carry out our mission of training pastors and leaders for Christ’s church and Kingdom.

In celebration of our Reformation heritage, of our role as the seminary of the Presbyterian Church in America, and of God’s continuing grace in guiding and growing Covenant both physically and spiritually, we offer this special section of writings from some of our founders and early professors. The pieces are drawn from the rich treasure trove of the PCA Historical Center, housed in the J. Oliver Buswell Jr. Library on the Seminary campus, and are used by permission of the Center.

These reflections on our commitment to Scripture as the Word of God, the importance of a seminary education, the transformative nature of life in a grace-filled community, and the power of the gospel to reshape every area of our lives are just as relevant today as when they were written.

Mark Dalbey
President



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (1958)

by Dr. Robert G. Rayburn



Dr. Robert G. Rayburn served as an Army chaplain during World War II and with paratroop units during the Korean War. He pastored the College Church of Christ in Wheaton, Illinois, and later was president of Highland College in California until 1955, when his denomination, then known as the Bible Presbyterian Church (Columbus Synod), asked him to be the founding president of Covenant College, and, in 1956, of the college's sister institution, Covenant Theological Seminary. When the college moved to Lookout Mountain, Georgia, in 1964, Dr. Rayburn stayed in St. Louis to run the Seminary until his retirement in 1977. After a year-long sabbatical during which he taught at the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in India, he returned to Covenant, where he chaired the Practical Theology Department, taught homiletics, and directed the Doctor of Ministry program until cancer claimed his life in 1990. The following statement

by Dr. Rayburn clearly articulates the school's commitment to the Word of God, the solid foundation on which we still stand, by which we live, and according to which we pursue the purpose the Lord has given us to train his servants to walk in God's grace, minister God's Word, and equip God's people—all for God's mission. This article originally appeared in the college and seminary's newsletter The Bagpipe in April 1958 (vol. 3, no. 4).

I have just returned to the campus after more than five weeks away. It has been a real joy to visit a number of our Bible Presbyterian churches as well as some churches of other denominational groups. I've been greatly encouraged to find that many of God's people throughout the land are vitally interested in what the Lord is doing here on the campus of Covenant College and Seminary.

Again and again, however, I have talked with people who do not realize that there is a great difference between some Christian schools and others, especially with respect to the matter of absolute loyalty to the Word of God. These are days in which so many are using the terminology of orthodox Christianity without meaning the same thing that the Christians down through the ages have meant by the use of the same terms.

Thank God for the fact that Covenant stands solidly upon the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and prepares young men and women to defend this Word of God against all of the attacks of unbelief, no matter how insidious they may be. Without the absolutely authoritative Book we have nothing but a human religion based upon frail human authority. This country, yes, and the world, needs wide-awake intelligent young Christians who know the Book and are committed to its proclamation and its defense. I hope that all the readers of these brief words will resolve to pray faithfully each day for Covenant College and Theological Seminary, that it may stand strongly through the years for absolute faithfulness to the Word of God. ●

BRETHREN, PRAY FOR US (1958)

by Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr.

Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr., one of the founding fathers of Covenant Seminary, was a chaplain in the 140th Infantry during World War I. After pastorates in a Presbyterian church in Milwaukee (1919–1922) and a Reformed church in Brooklyn (1922–26), Dr. Buswell served as president of Wheaton College from 1926 to 1940. He then served as president of the National Bible Institute of New York City

and its successor, Shelton College, in Ringwood, New Jersey, from 1941 to 1955. In 1956, he became dean of Covenant College (1956–1964) and Covenant Seminary (1956–1970). The libraries at both Wheaton College and Covenant Seminary bear his name. Following is a printed version of a homily Dr. Buswell preached on Ephesians 6:10–20 that originally appeared in The Bagpipe, Vol. 3,

No. 4 (April 1958). It is also a prayer for God's blessing on Covenant, that his Word would go forth boldly from this place for the sake of the world.

Why does the great apostle [Paul] ask prayer for himself and for his fellow workers? After describing the armor of the Christian, concluding with the injunction to maintain liaison, that is, to pray "always," Paul adds (Eph. 6:19–20), "and pray for me." This was written during his first Roman imprisonment. Paul was a mature Christian leader with vast experience behind him. Why did he need the prayers of God's people?

The items for which Paul asks prayer are quite surprising. He says, "[Pray] for me, that utterance may be given me." The word "utterance" is really the best translation for the Greek word *logos* in this context. But what does Paul mean? Did he ever lack for a message? Or for words to express himself? No.

Did he then refer to opportunity for utterance? The time in Paul's life when these words were written is described in the last verses of Acts (28:30–31): "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." Evidently Paul did not entirely lack hearers.

Probably Paul's prayer for "utterance" was stimulated by relative lack of opportunity. He keenly felt his restrictions as "an ambassador in bonds." His missionary commission impelled him to go out to the lost, not to wait for those who "came in unto him."

Knowing the epistles of the first Roman imprisonment, we today regard this period of Paul's life as richly fruitful. Paul may not have realized the "utterance" which he had. Yet Paul would not have been Paul if he had not strained at the bonds which kept him from his missionary journeys.



But the remaining specification in Paul's request for prayer is still more amazing: "that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds—that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." Did Paul need prayer for boldness? Was he ever timid? He was about the most courageous man we can think of. In the passage at the end of Acts from which we quoted above, we read further: "Preaching . . . and teaching . . . with all confidence [the same word translated "boldness" in Eph. 6:19–20] no man forbidding him."

This proves that Paul's request was answered. He did speak boldly during this time of imprisonment.

Why then did he ask his friends to pray that he might be bold?

Analyze the situation in which Paul was placed. He had been imprisoned because of the very fact that he had preached boldly. He had appealed to Caesar, and hoped to be set free. Suppose that during the long period of his awaiting a hearing in Rome his boldness should stir up the intense hostility of an important element of the Roman populace, as it had done in Jerusalem and in numerous cities in Asia Minor and Greece. What effect would this have upon Paul's case when it finally came to a hearing? Not only his life, but his liberty to go about and preach the gospel was at stake.

How often must Paul have trembled as he prayed, "Lord, do not let me grow timid. Lord, keep me bold, as I ought to be."

There is a kind of boldness which is rash, and ignorant of dangers and issues—the crude boldness of a bully. Paul's boldness was not of that order. His was the intelligent, prayerful courage of the man who knows the dangers, and goes forward. It was like the boldness of the Lord himself as he "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51). Now obviously this little homily has a moral. We at Covenant need the prayers of God's people. The opportunity for "utterance" which we need is an increasing number of new students from year to year, together with the facilities for instruction and the financial support to make the instruction effective. The "boldness" for which we pray is the boldness to go forward—not merely to go on from day to day—but the boldness to do our task with contagious spirit and enthusiasm, so that the very glory of Christ may shine forth from this campus to the uttermost parts of the earth. ●

CULTIVATION OF DOCTRINAL DISCERNMENT (1970S)

This anonymously written article comes from an undated edition of Concepts of Theological Education, a periodic newsletter published by Covenant Seminary in the early to mid-1970s, it remains a concise statement of the Seminary's position on biblical truth and the importance of theological education for the building up of the body of Christ.

So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

CS. Lewis, as he was preparing his famous series of broadcast talks given on the BBC toward the end of World War II, was advised that the "ordinary listener" was not interested in theology, and that he had best lecture on something more "practical." The Oxford don, happily, ignored that advice, and told his listeners on the opening broadcast that he did not for a moment believe they were so dull as to have no interest in theology. "Theology," he explained "means 'the science of God,' and I think any man who wants to think about God at all would like to have the clearest and most accurate ideas about him which are available."

Lewis was simply analyzing the term "theology" as a compound of the Greek words *theos* and *logia*, which together mean "reasoned, or carefully disciplined, discourse about God." Such discourse is possible because God has given in the holy Scriptures that knowledge of himself and of his will which is necessary for salvation; it is mandatory because God requires that his truth be communicated to all nations in all generations. Christian theology is rooted in obedience to the great commission and is most viable where it continues to serve the church in mission. Its task is to set forth the truth God has revealed concerning himself and his relation to the world; fulfillment requires the combined insights of biblical, historical, and systematic theology.

Biblical theology searches the Scriptures as an unfolding revelation and history of salvation culminating in Jesus Christ. Systematic theology seeks to understand the message of the Bible as a whole, and to articulate the system of saving truth taught in the Scriptures. Its order is logical, rather than chronological, and follows basically the outline of Paul's letter to the Romans. Taking Scripture as its infallible source and norm, it sees the doctrines of God, man, Christ, salvation, church, and Kingdom as integral parts of a body of sacred doctrine. Following the statement of Christian truth (dogmatics), systematic theology is concerned with its practice by Christian people (ethics) and its communication to the non-Christian world (apologetics).

Although the message communicated to the church does not change, particular historical circumstances can be the occasion for an enlarged appreciation of its mean-

ing. Historical theology seeks the accumulation of understanding which the Holy Spirit gives to the church as she is driven to define the faith clearly in the face of adulteration and distortion. The Reformation marked an epochal advance in understanding salvation by grace alone, and systematic theology in the Reformed tradition can gratefully and gladly build on the labors of Calvin and the Westminster Assembly of Divines for whom the glory of God was the paramount concern in faith and life.

The truth God has revealed is a permanent deposit committed to the church, applicable to all people in all places at all times. This idea is denied by much of modern theology, which rises and falls with increasing rapidity. The problem is that modern theology is determined in essence by the cultural situation so that it becomes merely a reflection of the times. The deposit of faith in the prophetic and apostolic writings, on

Covenant Theological Seminary strives to educate its students to stand firm on the Word of God. We were founded on the Rock, . . . and we've never moved from it.

the other hand, gives orthodox theology its stability.

A distinction should be made, however, between a theology that is stable and one that is merely static. The latter reflects not so much the conscious appropriation of the biblical tradition as it does a spiritual inertia. As [church historian Jaroslav Pelikan] has noted, the difference between tradition and traditionalism is the difference between the living faith of the dead and the dead faith of the living. Between liberalism's repudiation of the past and traditionalism's evasion of the present stands a vibrant, progressive orthodoxy which searches the Scriptures afresh in order to pointedly proclaim the unfathomable riches of Christ to its own generation.

Covenant Theological Seminary strives to educate its students to stand firm on the Word of God. If your spiritual feet need an unwavering foundation, come to Covenant. We were founded on the Rock over twenty years ago, and we've never moved from it. ●

COMMITMENT TO CHURCH RENEWAL AND GROWTH (1970S)

This anonymously written article comes from an undated edition of Concepts of Theological Education, a periodic newsletter published by Covenant Seminary in the early to mid-1970s. It serves as a timely reminder that the challenges brought on by rapid cultural change are not unique to our generation. Though some of the specifics referred to in the article have since changed, the piece is a still-relevant summary of the Seminary's philosophy of ministry education focused on equipping those who will in turn equip God's people for living out the gospel-shaped life in the contemporary church, community, and world situation.

We have in our time released a totally new social force—a stream of change so accelerated that influences our sense of time, revolutionizes the tempo of daily life, and affects the very way we “feel” the world around us. We no longer “feel” life as men did in the past. And this is the ultimate difference, the distinction that separates the truly contemporary man from all others. For this acceleration lies behind the impermanence—the transience—that penetrates and tinctures our consciousness, radically affecting the way we relate to other people, to things, to the entire universe of ideas, art and values.

Alvin Toffler, Future Shock

Acceleration—impermanence—transience: new words for the church. How do we communicate eternal truths to a generation where everything is temporary? What kind of church organization can best serve this kind of generation? Covenant Theological Seminary recognizes the validity of the questions, and seeks to provide answers.

The seminary that is to be a catalyst for renewal must be biblical in the sense that it is concerned about applying the infallible Word to our changing world. The seminary must train pastors who will resist becoming locked into a “cultural moment”—pastors who will be able to live out biblical principles with creativity, enthusiasm, and maturity. Opportunity is provided at Covenant for the development of these qualities through actual practice on the campus and in many churches in the St. Louis area which seek student help.

Because Covenant Seminary believes that the chief task of the church is to make Jesus Christ known, loved, and obeyed in all the world, courses are offered in the principles and procedures of church growth, church planting, and evangelism.

Under the direction of the student council, an Evangelism Day is held in the fall. The entire student body engages in various types of evangelism using techniques gained in practice sessions conducted on campus. Local churches

The shock of the future isn't so far away any more. The time for church renewal is now. The future of the present offers its challenge. Meet it with us.

cooperate with the seminary by providing names of people to be visited and encouraging follow-up.

Of course, biblical evangelism involves a great deal more than simply bringing men to Christ.

It also involves a commitment to the total impact of building the convert up in Christ and equipping him to go forth and witness for Christ. Obviously, therefore, a vital aspect of the nurturing ministry is to be certain that the new disciple is related to a local congregation of believers. The person who has recently been born again of the Spirit of God has a new relationship with God and also a new relation to his brothers and sisters in Christ within the church. They may be pressured

from without, but they are held together in a living fellowship within the community of God's redeemed people. Christians are . . . "members of one another," and as such it is vital to their growth in grace that they learn to live together, to serve one another, to encourage one another, and to pray for one another.

This statement by Robert Palmer, vice president of the Seminary and teacher of church renewal courses, characterizes the philosophy of the curricula.

We are concerned that our students gain more than a factual knowledge of biblical, historical, and philosophical truth. We want them to receive adequate guidance in working out their theological education in the actual situation of the ministry. We seek to prepare the student to speak the Word of God plainly, in terms relevant to the situations people are facing in this age.

In his book *The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century*, Dr. Francis Schaeffer says, "Not being able, as times change, to change under the Holy Spirit is ugly. In an age of total upheaval like ours, to make non-absolute absolute guarantees both isolation and the death of the institutional, organized church." Covenant Theological Seminary is committed to *living* churches pastored by men alive to the traumas suffered by this generation.

The shock of the future isn't so far away any more. The time for church renewal is *now*. The future of the present offers its challenge. Meet it with us. ●



WHY A THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION? (1970S)

George W. Knight III

This article was written by Dr. George W. Knight III for a Covenant Seminary handout from the 1970s titled "Theological Education." At the time, Dr. Knight was associate professor of practical theology. He served at the Seminary from 1970 to 1989 and has since served at Knox Theological Seminary and Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, as well as pastoring several churches in the PCA and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He is the author of a well-respected commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, along with many other books. Dr. Knight here gives a concise summary of the need for and importance of specially trained gospel ministers and other leaders in the church.

And the things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:2

The fact that all Christians are called to be the ministers (servants) of Christ, to witness for Christ, to teach one another and be submissive to one another in the Body of Christ, might seem to rule out a special ministry of pastor-teachers or even of special evangelists. This might even seem to lead to what one has recently set forth in writing as a modest proposal, namely, to close the seminary and dismiss all ministers. (How appropriate this would be for seminaries and ministers not faithful to Christ and his Word, but such a parenthetical acknowledgment of decadence in parts of that which go by the name *church* does not come to grips with the problem itself.)

The question of the propriety of a special ministry, and that ministry specially trained, must be answered affirmatively on the authority of Christ and his Word. What is the basis for this affirmation?

It is none other than the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, who says in Matthew 16:18 and 19: "I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The apostle Paul indicates in Ephesians 4:11ff. that Christ "gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." And these special offices which Christ himself gave are given for the purpose of "perfecting the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). Although those unique, once-for-all and non-

repeatable offices such as apostles are no longer given, the permanent offices such as the pastor-teachers continue by Christ's appointment and by Christ's special giving. There is no dichotomy or polarization between pastor-teacher and believer. The pastor-teacher is given to be the servant of all saints that they also might more effectively serve Christ as his servants.

Secondly, it is Christ's normative example and the apostle Paul's explicit direction that indicate that such a special ministry is to be specially trained.

We need not turn to any particular verse in the Gospels to realize that Christ specially called and specially trained the twelve. The Gospels are taken up with the training of the twelve by the Master Teacher. A large part of his approximately three-year public ministry is lavished upon them to whom he commits that Great and Only Commission.

The apostle Paul's instructions to Timothy in those two letters by that name are replete with references to Timothy's past training as well as indicative of the training that Paul is thereby imparting to Timothy. Furthermore, that principle of training and teaching those who are in turn to teach others is enunciated in the words of 2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Following the pattern of our Lord and obeying the demand of the apostle, theological seminaries have sought to commit to faithful men the instruction of our Lord embodied in the Apostolic writings. The example of our Lord and the command of the apostle have also given the shape, form, and content of teaching and training provided by the theological seminary.

Let me illustrate.

How often our Lord opened the Scriptures to the disciples both before and after the resurrection. The quotation from Isaiah 61 in Luke 4 put his whole ministry before them as the Messianic work fulfilling his Father's will and revelation. The Sermon on the Mount removes the crust of human tradition from the radical demand of the Old Testament, which Jesus's "I say" drives home with new power. His beginning with Moses and going through to the prophets, showing the disciples that the Scriptures spoke of his death and resurrection gives the biblical directive for his work and places those writings in the true Christological perspective. Finally, he has already promised to them that his words will be brought to their memory and that other



Students and faculty gathered outside the old Administration Building sometime in the 1960s.

seeks to draw together the questions that rightfully belong together and demand unified and correlated answers. As Paul in letter after letter instructed the church and warned them of false teachers, so a seminary continues today to equip men to defend the faith by means of that which is designated apologetics.

We, like John and James, are

truths will be revealed to them.

So, a faithful theological seminary will teach Old and New Testament alike in the unity and focus which they have in Christ, whose Spirit gave them for our instruction. This will mean that those two fields will loom large in the curriculum. Further, it will demand that men will be trained in the languages in which these were written—Hebrew and Greek. Just as the Greek New Testament preserved certain Aramaic words of Jesus, such as *Abba*, Father, to convey the richness and directness of that communication, so also men will want to hear and read the divine oracles in the richness and resonance of the languages in which they were spoken and written.

Jesus drew the seemingly different strands of the Old Testament together and showed that they were one royal thread which unchangingly spoke of him. Likewise, in that searching question about how he could be David's Son and David's Lord, the question of who he was was placed before the hearers. So a Department of Biblical and Systematic Theology seeks to see that progressive and overall perspective of the Bible and also

always wondering about those people "over there" who claim to believe in and serve Christ. Or like Jude, and also John and Peter in their first letters, we are faced with the great sorrow of false teachers and false teaching. To give perspective on those "over there" today and yesterday and to see and appreciate the Lord of glory at work through the centuries, a theological seminary provides courses in church history.

A seminary that models itself on Christ's example and Paul's labors and instructions not only withdraws for a time of instruction, but also pointedly and practically applies the aforementioned truths to tasks to which Christ has called us. A Department of Practical Theology [now called Applied Theology] grounds men in the many-faceted servanthood which is the ministry—preaching, evangelism, missions, Christian education, church government, worship, pastoral counseling.

So, a seminary seeks to train men who are to be ministers of Christ in his Word as he trained those twelve in his Word and that of his Father. And although the level of non-theological training is not prescribed in the Scriptures, one who ministers to his age will desire nothing less than the educational level of his peers, that of a college or university. Paul stands out as one whom the Lord providentially prepared and educated.

The years go all too rapidly as they did for Christ and the twelve, as well as for Paul. And the training is no guarantee of or assurance of success, as essential as it is. Even the men Jesus taught must be endued with power from on high—the promise of the Father—the Holy Spirit: how much more men trained by mere men. But just as Jesus not only poured out his Spirit upon men, but also trained them, so we in obedience to him seek to do the same today.

Have you been called to that special ministry? Then seek to be a trained servant anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Have you been called to serve God in a special way although not in the gospel ministry? You, too, should seek to be trained as well as anointed.

Just as trained men were the first recipients of the Great Commission, so they are still the recipients today. World evangelism and world missions still today call for a trained ministry.

What is your calling? ●

“WHATSOEVER YE DO . . .”: AN EDITORIAL (1958)

by William S. Barker



Dr. William S. Barker was Covenant Seminary's second president, serving from 1977 to 1985. Prior to that, Dr. Barker had taught for a time in the history department at the Seminary's sister institution, Covenant College (1964–1972), where he was also dean of faculty (1969–1972). In 1972, he became associate professor of church history at Covenant Seminary, serving as dean of faculty from 1972 to 1977, when he became president. Long before he served Covenant as a professor and president, however, he was also a student at the Seminary. In 1958 he wrote the following editorial in the school's newsletter to remind his fellow seminarians of the high calling to which Christians are called, even as students, before our God. The editorial appeared in The Bagpipe for April 1958 (vol. 3, no. 4).

Spiritual blessing has been abundant at Covenant in recent days. Chapel messages from faculty members on the exaltation of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews and on Jesus's parable of the talents, the first meeting of the seminary discussion club on "The Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Believer's Life," a series of challenging missionary speakers in chapel, and the school's spring-term day of prayer have seemed to be raising to a crescendo the Lord's call to Covenant for revival devoted to him.

The last of the series of missionary speakers, one of the final missionaries to depart from Communist China, told of how after his escape he realized that the most powerful sermon he had ever preached lasted for two years and contained no words. God is more interested, he said, in the fruit he can grow in you than in the job you are concerned about doing for him. Christians he described as not just persons, but rather as individual plans of God.

The belief that our lives are individual plans of God makes every small detail of our lives important. Assurance that my being at Covenant is part of God's pattern for the finished product he desires me to be means that each aspect of my present activity is my primary concern now. The Lord would have us show ourselves faithful in little

things before he presents us with greater responsibilities. He may be calling us into future full-time service, but are we serving him fully now?

The job of the student is the high calling to which we are now called. Are our attitudes in the classroom and our zeal toward our studies such as we would show in labors on the mission field? Do we contest on and around the basketball court with the same spirit with which we would conduct our spiritual battles? Have we endeavored to carry out our campus responsibilities in the same manner that we would fulfill what we believe to be God's purpose for our lives? In the way that we undertake the present portion of God's plan we will no doubt conduct ourselves also in the future. True revival at Covenant requires not so much dedication of the future as the natural prerequisite and companion to that—dedication of the present.

President Rayburn is currently on an errand for the Lord. That is, his mission to raise funds for the support of Covenant College and Seminary is an errand for the Lord inasmuch as Covenant is accomplishing the Lord's purpose, inasmuch as it is a part of his plan. We pray that no one of us, by failing to realize God's plan here, may be interfering with his desire to maintain Covenant. ●

WHAT I FOUND AT COVENANT (1958)

by Dr. R. Allen Killen

Dr. R. Allen Killen first came to what was then Covenant College and Theological Seminary as a visiting lecturer in 1957 (the school's second semester). He served on the faculty as professor of systematic theology

from 1958 to 1967. He later taught at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee, and at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. In addition to preaching and teaching, Dr. Killen authored a number of books:

The Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich (1955); Reaching Modern Man (1972); and Philosophy and Christian Thought (1973). He is remembered for his interest in philosophy and contemporary theology, particularly

for delineating the philosophical background of neo-orthodoxy and other modern movements, including eastern mysticism. The following is a reflection he wrote about his impressions of the campus, faculty, and ethos of the institution after having been here for a year. Though the Seminary has changed in many ways since then, the attitudes and underlying spirit of grace that Dr. Killen describes have remained a hallmark of the institution. These reflections were originally published in *The Bagpipe, the newsletter of Covenant College and Theological Seminary, in February 1958 (vol. 3, no. 3).*

What I have found at Covenant College and Theological Seminary in St. Louis is a subject upon which one could write at length, particularly in the light of the unique and remarkable things which both I and my family have enjoyed since becoming a part of the faculty of Covenant. But I will confine myself to a few highlights.

Covenant has a lovely picturesque campus bounded on the east by a fine residential district, and on the west by rolling farm country. The heart of the campus is a large mansion placed in the center of 22 acres of lawns and trees, and bordered by the homes of the president and five members of the faculty. Each of these homes has been so built that there is a good classroom in the basement. In this the Lord has definitely guided, because, with lectures being given on both the college and seminary levels at the same time, the school could not have otherwise possibly met the need for classrooms.

You will probably be wondering most of all about the spiritual atmosphere here. I did too before I came to St. Louis as a visiting lecturer for a semester a year ago. Coming to Covenant was, for me, and later this summer for my family, in some ways like entering a new world. Under the kindly, consecrated leadership of the president, Dr. [Robert G.] Ray-

burn, there is manifest immediately a humble, earnest desire on the part of the whole faculty to be, first of all, in the center of God's will. The motto of the institution could be best summed up in the words of Christ, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things [material needs] shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Faculty meetings have, in particular, been a great source of blessing. The discussions have been open and free. We have all learned much by the special papers given by members of the undergraduate and the graduate schools. Inter-faculty cooperation has been remarkable and God has used it to produce greatly improved courses and instruction. This has been possible by the spirit, immediately noticed, of esteeming each better than himself.

It has been a privilege, given of the Lord, to see the college and seminary complete its first year and graduate a fine class in both schools. That it is now in the second year with an increase of fifty percent in the student body is a second miracle.

From the start, I was impressed by the fine attitude between professor and student. In April I had the opportunity, at the kind invitation of the seniors in the college, to go with them on their "sneak." In the three days at Camp Tadmor I saw the impact Covenant had had upon these gifted young men and women, and

realized the tremendous contribution a sound spiritual Christian college can make. These are students I believe that God will use.

What of sports and social activities? The school is by no means unbalanced. Never have I seen a keener student participation in the support of college matches than that shown for the basketball team. Social, literary societies, and formal student banquets, organized with splendid Christian programs and fine taste, fill out the social activities.

The housing of college and theological students under one roof has, in its own way, added to the blessings of the students on both levels. . . . The college students have gained from their contacts with more mature seminary men. The two faculties support, strengthen, and supplement one another; several of the professors lecture on both levels.

I believe that we can thank God (1) that it is possible to have the two institutions (college and seminary); (2) that they support and complement one another; (3) that God has led and guided in the erection of the faculty homes so that they have become a factor in the first year of the college's life, enabling it to expand; (4) for the fine students which he has already put in our charge; (5) for the challenge and opportunity presented to us all to support it with our gifts, our labors, and our prayers. ●

Front: Drs. Rayburn and Harris. Back: Drs. Mare, Buswell, Killen, Wallis, and Smick.



FRANCIS SCHAEFFER ON COVENANT SEMINARY (1976)

Francis A. Schaeffer, the renowned pastor, apologist, founder of L'Abri Fellowship, and the man for whom the Seminary's Francis A. Schaeffer Institute (FSI) is named, was a frequent visitor to Covenant in the two decades before his death in 1984. Schaeffer often lectured at the Seminary, and his characteristic passion for the Word of God, compassion for those who need the gospel, and desire to meet people where they were in their search for what he called "true truth" have become part of the Seminary's cultural DNA. The following quotation, which appeared in the Seminary's catalog and other materials for several years, was originally taken from a letter from Schaeffer to then-Seminary President William S. Barker in December 1976.

Covenant Theological Seminary means a great deal to me personally. I am thankful for its existence in this day of such confusion. I am thankful for it for many reasons. Above everything else I am glad that it has stood completely firm concerning the Scriptures and holds without compromise or "waffling" the fact that the Bible is without error in every area in which it speaks. That is, it is without error not only when it speaks of religious things but when it speaks of history and also those things which touch upon science. It also holds that the Bible gives us absolutes concerning right and wrong in the area of human behavior. Without this base we have no absolutes by which to either help or to judge our culture as it increasingly turns away from the Christian consensus and becomes dominated by humanism.

At the same time I am glad for the scholarship of the faculty at Covenant Seminary, and I am thankful that its teaching is not isolated from the needs of the twentieth-century world, but takes into account the specific needs of our own generation.

Perhaps the strongest thing I can say is that I am glad to teach there from time to time when my time permits it, and I am glad that a number of men working in L'Abri Fellowship have had their training at Covenant Seminary. ●



Above: Francis Schaeffer (left) joins President Dr. William S. Barker for a commencement procession in the 1970s. Right: Schaeffer talks with President Dr. Robert Rayburn (left) and Dr. R. Laird Harris (right) in the late 1960s.



In this periodic feature, members of our faculty offer thoughtful biblical responses to questions about life and ministry issues raised by Covenant Seminary alumni serving in a variety of contexts. If you have a question you would like to see addressed, please e-mail Joel Hathaway, director of alumni and career services, at joel.hathaway@covenantseminary.edu.

QUESTION

How can we manage “secret” conflict on the mission field? How do you help a team find a safe place when members don’t feel safe? How can you encourage and support a spouse in these situations? What are ways to communicate the situation to others outside the team or group?

Steven Sparks (MAEM '15 / MATS '16) // *Missionary*

ANSWER

Dear Steve,

Unfortunately, this type of situation is not uncommon in ministry, whether on or off the mission field. Building teams where members feel safe enough to engage conflict constructively is not easy. And yet, constructive conflict is one of the marks of a healthy team. Conflict is not necessarily bad. Perhaps a story from my own experience will help.

My first time on the mission field was with a team going to Africa to provide relationship and team building training for a worship conference. I was excited about traveling with the team, presenting on these issues, and joining with my African sisters and brothers in worship for two full weeks. However, the trip did not start or progress as expected. Things turned out okay in the end, but for the first week, there was tremendous conflict that was hidden and kept “secret.” Although members were experiencing tension, none of them openly shared their frustrations; no one was talking. This “secret” conflict went on for a week. I observed members of the team really struggling with our team leader and responding to me, the only African American, with a level of guardedness. On one hand, I understood the silence as we had just become acquainted. On the other hand, this undercurrent of unrest brought increased division, began to fester and poison the entire experience. A decision to take the risk and break the silence, bringing the conflict into the open with honest sharing, was the pathway to healing within the team.

Whether conflict is secret or not, it must be addressed with humility and honesty. Conflict held in secret—meaning that members are holding attitudes, beliefs, and judgment against one another but not addressing these issues—creates an atmosphere of insecurity, speculation, suspicion, and gossip that leads to division. “With whom can I share what?” “What if these people are not safe?”

“What if others find out?” Questions like these, especially when not addressed, can shape how members interact with one another, creating more anxiety and fear, often causing members to withdraw, withhold, and judge one another. Even in delicate situations where confidentiality around a matter of conflict must be upheld and maintained due to its sensitive nature within the team, some level of communication is needed. In these situations, what can be communicated, without full disclosure of the matter, is a commitment to apply the gospel and grace, a commitment to minister love and maintain unity to the best of one’s ability. When this is done, it helps to increase a sense of safety and trust. It often helps those who are not members of the team, or those who are on the team but not privy to all the details of the situation, to trust that things are not hidden and being addressed in secret, even when full details are not shared.

Conflict is guaranteed in ministry; after all, Romans 3:23 is true: all have sinned and fall short of God’s glory. James 4 reminds us of what causes quarrels and fights among God’s people. Ultimately, when there is conflict we must turn to the Scriptures, trust the work of the Holy Spirit in one another and in the situation, and ask for grace to embrace the conflict with honesty and humility. We must repent when necessary, offer forgiveness, and commit to unity, peace, and love in the faith (1 John 4:12, Eph. 4:30–32).



PROF. SUZANNE BATES
Associate Dean of Students and Adjunct Professor of Applied Theology (Counseling)




Sharing God's Grace in India and Nepal

Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!

PSALM 117:1

Sixty years ago, Covenant Seminary was a small school whose students came mainly from a handful of southern American states. Today, by God's grace, the Seminary's influence extends across denominational, generational, and geographical boundaries as Covenant draws students from all over the country and around the world. International students make up a small but growing portion of the student body (see sidebar). Many of them, like those featured here, hope to return to their home countries to continue the gospel work the Lord is already doing there.



Blessed to Be a Blessing: PRAKASH JACOB

Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state in India, is home to some of the oldest Christian communities in the world. Church tradition claims that many of them are descended from the work of the apostle Thomas, who, if not the first, was certainly among the earliest Christian missionaries to India. In fact, what is said to be the oldest extant church structure in the world, Thiruvithamcode Arappally ("Royal Church"), is in southern Tamil Nadu and was purportedly built by Thomas himself. The state, along with a few others mostly concentrated in the south, has a large Christian population compared to the rest of India. Only 2.3% of the nation is Christian (28 million out of 1.34 billion); the rest are Hindu (80%), Muslim (4.2%), or some other religion.

Situated in the far northeastern corner of Tamil Nadu, off the Bay of Bengal, is Chennai, the capital city of the state. Chennai is one of the largest and most populous cities in India. With a host of temples, beaches, and sites of historical and cultural importance, it is a favorite tourist destination for both Indians and foreign visitors. Chennai is

also a major center of Christian education, boasting several Christian schools and Bible colleges.

Prakash Jacob, the son of a pastor in the India Pentecostal Church of God, grew up in Chennai. Though he was raised in a Christian home, he didn't become seriously interested in reading God's Word until he was 10 or 11 years old. He had trouble grasping the idea of the Trinity, which his father tried to help him understand. When his father traveled around the region to lead Bible studies, Prakash often went with him. On one of those trips, when he heard his father proclaim the gospel, Prakash was particularly moved by it: "I wanted to tell him about it, but for some reason I kept it to myself. But my father could tell that something had changed in me. That was the point when I made a real commitment to Christ."

One might expect that growing up Christian in a predominantly non-Christian country would present some challenges. For some, that is indeed the case, but Prakash has not found it to be so. "I had a lot of friends who were Hindus and some who were Muslims. I went to their houses, and they came to mine. Sometimes, they would make comments jokingly about Christians based on their own misunderstanding of our faith. When I went with my father to open-air prayer meetings in the villages, the people welcomed us into their homes and asked us to pray for them. Later, when I went to a Christian college, certain professors—who were also Christians—would occasionally raise some issues when we had departmental prayer meetings, but they never showed their discomfort directly. In Tamil Nadu, where I have lived all my life, political parties include Christians. They protect us and are concerned about our welfare. I was never persecuted for my Christian faith at any time in my life."

In college, where Prakash studied statistics and computer science, he met many other people who loved the Lord. He got involved in a prayer group and became more serious about Bible study. Soon he had opportunities to lead the group. He read voraciously all the Christian books he could get his hands on. In post-graduate school, he began listening to a lot of sermons by Ravi Zacharias and later worked in one of the resource centers for Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. He discovered the works of Francis Schaeffer and devoured them. He loved *True Spirituality* and made copious notes in it. Eventually, he left the job at Zacharias Ministries to work for an international call center, but continued to do a lot of reading and study on his own.

During these years, Prakash felt a deep desire to go to seminary. At one point, he made plans to do so, but this fell through due to lack of funding. The desire never left him, though, and he knew that "if I did ever go to seminary, it would have to be one that truly valued the Word of God."

Two years later, he found the lectures and sermons of Francis Schaeffer on the L'Abri Fellowship website: "I loved listening to Schaeffer. For me, the audio was better

than the books.” He did some more online research about Schaeffer. That connected him eventually to the Covenant Seminary website. He liked what he saw, “especially the commitment to the Word of God.”

He applied, was accepted, and the Seminary’s Admissions staff helped him, his wife, Rebecca, and their two children make the difficult transition to America. “It was hard at first. We were missing our home. But the Seminary staff helped us find a car so we could get around. They helped us figure out the best options for our children’s education. They helped with lots of things we hadn’t thought about before coming here. We fell in love with the comfortable, welcoming community here.” Through it all, one Bible verse kept ringing in Prakash’s mind: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Heb. 13:5). “That verse took on a special meaning for us. God is faithful. He has provided for us every step of the way.”

Prakash’s time at Covenant has grown him in many ways. In particular, it has given him a greater sense of the Bible’s unity: “I had read the New Testament a lot before coming here, but neglected the Old Testament. Being here has helped me make sense of the Old Testament and see the Bible as a connected whole.” He also had been taught by his Pentecostal background that he needed to “wait for the Spirit” to work in him, but he has learned from closer study of the Word that “you don’t need to wait; if you believe, you have the Spirit.”

Prakash graduated in May 2017 with a master of arts in exegetical theology (MAET), but he plans to stay at Covenant longer to work on a master of theology (ThM). And after that? “I would like to go back to India and preach and teach the gospel, if the opportunity arises. I don’t want to keep it to myself for the rest of my life. I want to bless others with it. I’m open to whatever God wants me to do.”



Faithful Across the Generations: DAVID GNANADHAS

Born in Nagercoil, at the far southern tip of India, David Gnanadhas grew up mostly in and around Gundlupet, a town in the state of Karnataka, just northwest of the border with Tamil Nadu. The town is home to Vijayanarayana Temple, an historically significant Hindu temple dating back to the tenth century. Several other historic sites and major state and national forest reserves are nearby. The surrounding area is mostly rural and peppered with dozens of small villages. The population of Gundlupet itself is around 28,000 people. With its related Taluka, or sub-district, that number grows to 223,000. Fewer than 500 claimed to be Christians in the most recent census.

David’s father, Z. A. Gnanadhas, is a pastor who has dedicated his life to ministering to the Hindus and Muslims of India. He served 12 years with Quiet Corner, a ministry to

the tribal peoples of the country’s southern jungles, then, in the mid-1990s, came to the U.S. to study at Covenant Seminary. David was only an infant at the time. He and his mother joined his father at Covenant when David was a year old. On returning to India, the elder Gnanadhas planted Christ Presbyterian Church and started Sunshine Ministry, through which he continues to bring the gospel message and the love of Christ to people in the region around Gundlupet. Over the years, he has baptized more than 200 people, most from hardcore Hindu backgrounds. Many of the young men he has worked with are now Christian ministers. David says his father has always been an inspiration to him.

David went to a Christian boarding school from age 9. Many of the students there were Hindu. They liked having Bible stories explained to them, and David gladly obliged. Some of his Hindu friends became believers through this process. David himself remembers accepting Jesus as his Savior at an annual school camp in the jungle one summer: “Amid the many Bible stories and times of prayer, I felt the great love of God for me as I had never felt it before. I wanted to do anything for him.”

As he finished high school and prepared for college, he wondered about a future career path. He was good at computer science and engineering, but he was also passionate about Jesus and loved the way his father preached with students. Every year on his birthday, David would get up early and open the Bible randomly to let God speak to him. One year the passage he opened to was Mark 16:15: “And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.’” To David, the message was clear.

He spent two months that summer helping his father with a camp that served students from many villages, including a settlement of refugees from Tibet. Camp leaders went from house to house talking to people about Jesus. They held a VBS that provided books, bicycles, Bibles, and gospel stories and songs for the children. Sometimes, they met resistance or threats of physical harm from Hindus who wanted nothing to do with Christianity for fear of being cut off from their families. Others were astonished at the idea that God could love them and wanted to hear more. “This was a transformational moment for me,” David recalls. “I was shocked at their lack of knowledge and felt compelled to tell them more about Jesus. I knew then that this is what I wanted to do with my life.” David told his father he wanted to go to seminary so he could be better trained to share the gospel. His father recommended Covenant, his alma mater. David finished college, then prepared to travel to St. Louis to pursue a master of divinity (MDiv) degree.

When he arrived at Covenant in the fall of 2016, David found himself studying under many of the same professors who had had such a big impact on his father. Prof. Jerram

Barrs's Apologetics and Outreach course was particularly meaningful for him: "I have always read the Bible and meditated on it, but Jerram helped me take it to a new level. The way he talked about it helped give me a stronger emotional connection to Scripture." Participating in Dr. Phil Douglass's annual church planting field trip also struck a chord with David. He would love to go back to India and plant churches. He'd also like to build a Christian school that would bring together people from many different areas, and maybe start a seminary that would train more Reformed pastors. "There is a great need for the gospel in India," he notes. "I would like to do the kind of work my father has done, the kind of work the apostle Paul did—planting churches, raising up pastors to care for them, then moving on to somewhere else. Paul is a big role model for me."

David realizes that this is a big ambition and that there would be many challenges to such a plan in a nation like India. That doesn't dampen his enthusiasm one bit, nor does the idea that God could have other plans for him: "I will go wherever God wants me to go. I will be happy to do it."

Speaking Truth in Love: JOSHUA A.

Far to the northeast, in the Indian state of West Bengal, is the city of Darjeeling, famous for its distinctive black tea. Darjeeling sits just south of India's border with China and slightly east of the border with Nepal. With spectacular views of Kangchenjunga, the world's third highest mountain, and home to the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a World Heritage Site, the city is, like Chennai, one of the most-visited tourist destinations in India. Of a population of 1.8 million for the Darjeeling District, of which the city is the headquarters, Christians number only 142,000.

This is where Joshua A. (full name withheld for safety reasons) was born into a Muslim family and came to know the Lord in his late teen years. He originally started going to church because he thought it would help him break some bad habits, develop better friendships, and maybe, find happiness. He had no intention of reading the Bible. Three years later, the Lord had worked so many changes in him and used so many people to bless him that he became a believer: "God changed my life inside and out. I was a new person in Christ."

Joshua's Muslim family, however, was not happy about this. His father told him, "If you stay here, you must stop going to church. If you continue to go, you must leave here." Joshua stayed long enough to celebrate Christmas with his church friends, then left. He was able to take nothing with him. He was 19 years old, with no money and no job. God, however, was faithful: "He provided everything I needed." Joshua soon found work and remained in Darjeeling for three years finishing his education through

online courses. Sensing a call to seminary, he made his way to Allahabad Bible Seminary in the state of Uttar Pradesh, but had to drop out after a year for lack of funds. With nowhere else to go, he went back to his hometown, but there was constant pressure from his family to give up his faith in Christ. He felt unsafe.

While at Allahabad, Joshua had become friends with a pastor from Nepal who had come to the seminary for further study. The pastor had asked Joshua several times to visit him in Nepal and possibly do ministry with him there. With no other prospects, Joshua decided to head for Chitwan, along the southern edge of Nepal, and look up his friend. When he got there, however, he discovered that his friend had been transferred to another district. Again with no place to go, Joshua found a local church and told his story to the pastor, who gave him shelter. He intended to stay only a week or so until he could find work and a place to live, but the pastor asked if he would be willing to stay and help out at the church playing and teaching music. Joshua agreed.

During his first week there, a family came to the church to talk to the pastor. They were Buddhists, but the parents were concerned about their 19-year-old daughter, who was into drugs. They weren't interested in Christianity but thought that if they brought their daughter to church she might begin to turn her life around and make new friends. Struck by the similarity of the girl's story with his own, Joshua got to know the family and encouraged them. A friendship slowly developed as he shared fellowship with them, gave his testimony, taught them about the Bible as opportunities allowed, and shared the gospel with them. After several months, the daughter was attending church regularly and asking serious questions about the Christian faith. A year and a half later, the whole family was baptized together. The daughter got her life back on track and went to nursing school. Her father became an elder in the church. Her sister, now a believer, fell in love with a Hindu man and wanted to marry him but would not until he accepted Christ. She fasted, prayed, and shared the gospel with him until, a year later, he too became a Christian and they were married.

After ministering in Chitwan for two and a half years, Joshua went to Katmandu, the capital of Nepal, to pursue a bachelor of theology at the University of Nepal. There, he met a woman named Babita, who, after eight months of dating, would become his wife. Babita had been the first in her Hindu family to accept Christ. She too had decided not to be baptized until the whole family could do so with her, which, with a lot of patience, prayer, and love, took about a year.

Joshua also got to know the principal of the university, who was a pastor in the Nepali Reformed Church (NRC), an organization of churches in western Nepal that the principal had helped to found. Joshua worked as a youth

pastor and worship leader with the NRC while finishing his degree. His sense of calling to ministry was strengthened when he was ordained as an NRC elder. It was a busy and challenging time for Joshua, but he was happy and blessed to see how God was working in his life.

Still, he sensed a need for further training: "Only three to five percent of the pastors in Nepal have any real theological education. Many have only a year or two of study. Christianity is growing there, but much false teaching is coming into the churches from Korea and China. I knew I needed more education to be of better service." He initially took some courses through another seminary because the head pastor of the NRC had gone there. But soon he found Covenant online. One thing in particular caught his eye: "When I read the faculty backgrounds and saw that they had pastoral experience, that really touched my heart. Pastors have been really important in my life. I saw myself doing pastoral ministry and wanted to learn from men with experience. It isn't all about academics."

Joshua and Babita prayed about what to do and decided to come to Covenant. They were impressed by the Seminary's Admissions staff, who walked with them through every step of the process. A generous loan from Babita's parents helped pave the way financially. The couple arrived in St. Louis in time for the fall 2016 semester.

Joshua's time at Covenant has confirmed for him that he is doing the right thing: "The professors here have been very gracious with their time. They understand the struggles we are going through and they share their own lives with us. You don't have access like that to professors in Nepal. Teachers don't have a lot of direct contact with students. The professors here are friendly and humble. Each has different gifts, but they all care about the students and are helping us grow in faith."

His time here has also confirmed the calling Joshua feels to pastoral ministry. He has done some work with Nepali refugees at a local church and had the opportunity to preach, teach, and conduct worship with them. His dream is to go back to Nepal and plant churches, recruit leaders, and help develop an MDiv program at the seminary there: "I'm looking for churches to partner with me when I go back. They don't need money in Nepal; they need leaders. God is doing great things there, but we don't have enough leaders with a heart for the people. I think God has been preparing me for that even while I've been here. I love to share my story and see it help others to know Christ."

Rick Matt (MATS '05) serves as senior writer and editor at Covenant Seminary. He loves hearing and telling the stories of how God is working in the lives of those connected with Covenant Seminary. Rick and his wife, Rebekah, live in Crestwood, Missouri, and have four children.

International Student Facts and Figures

21 Current Number of International Students

9 Nations They Come From

Canada 2	India 4	Scotland 1
Korea 6	Great Britain 2	Sweden 1
Brazil 3	Taiwan 1	Singapore 1

8 Degree Programs They Are Involved In

MDiv 12	MAC 2	ThM 2
MDiv/MAC 1	MAET 1	DMin 1
MATS/MAC 1	MARC 1	

146 Total Number of International Student Graduates

Number of Countries Where International Students Have Served or Are Now Serving

38

Australia 30	Italy 1	Philippines 6
Brazil 6	Japan 6	Poland 1
Cambodia 1	Kenya 1	St. Vincent & the Grenadines 1
Canada 9	Latvia 3	Scotland 4
China 1	Malawi 1	Senegal 1
Costa Rica 1	Malaysia 1	Singapore 4
England 7	Mexico 2	South Africa 3
France 2	Netherlands 6	South Korea 17
Germany 2	New Zealand 4	Switzerland 1
Ghana 4	Nigeria 1	Taiwan 1
Hong Kong 1	Northern Ireland 4	Thailand 3
Hungary 5	Norway 1	
India 10	Peru 1	
Ireland 2		

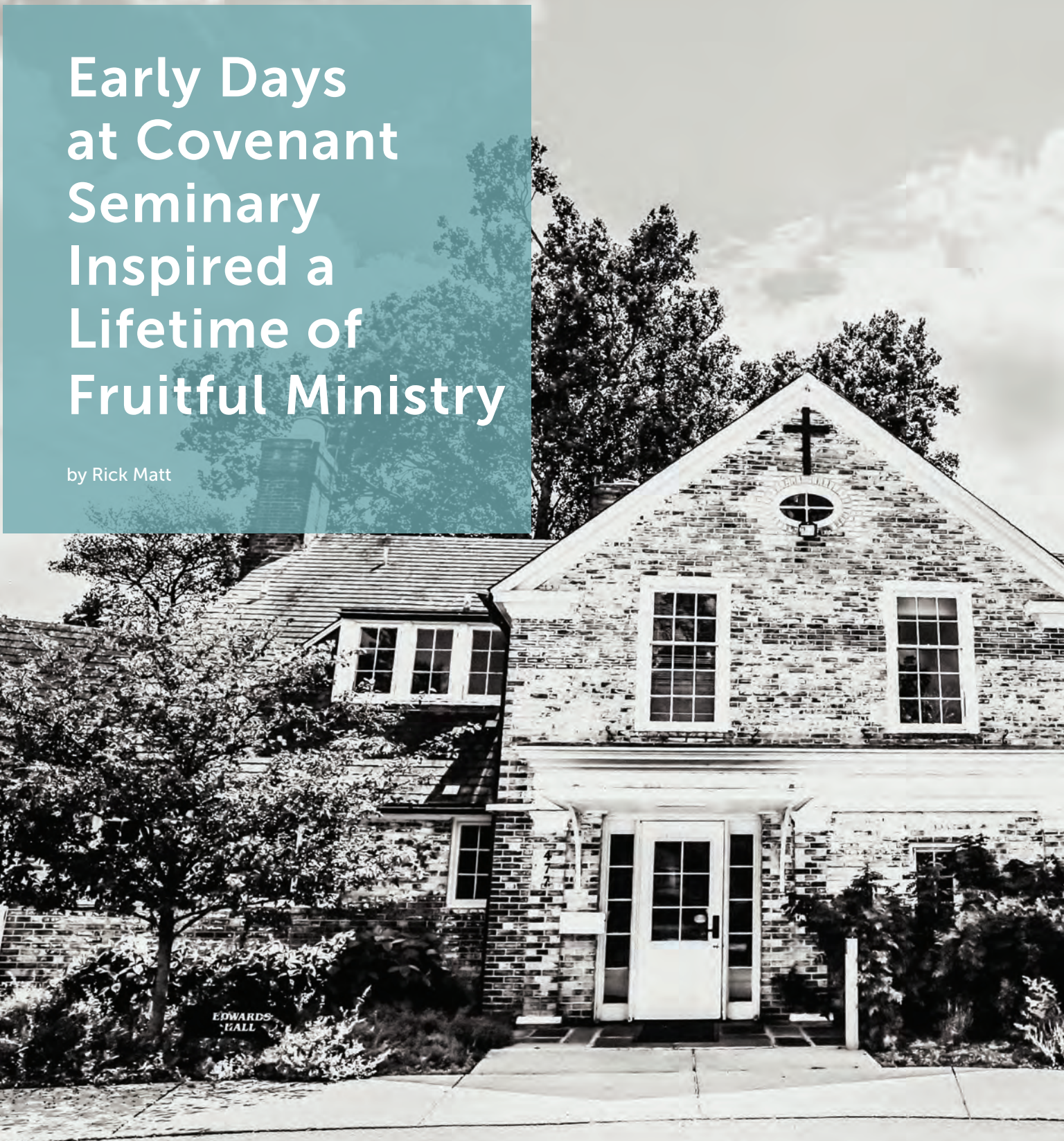
International Students Need Your Support!

God's gospel of grace and truth knows no geographical or generational boundaries. Your support for Covenant Seminary enables us to provide much-needed scholarships for international students so they can pursue the theological training they need to proclaim and live out God's Word in church or other ministry settings all around the world.

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Early Days at Covenant Seminary Inspired a Lifetime of Fruitful Ministry

by Rick Matt



EDWARDS
HALL

For many of the current generation of students, the early days of Covenant Seminary are shrouded in the mists of history. For Robert Scott, who graduated from Covenant in 1960—as one of only three graduates that year—the memory of those early days remains very clear.

Now retired and in his late 80s, Scotty, as his friends know him, enjoyed a long and fruitful ministry that included pastoring and/or planting churches for the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) in Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, and Arizona. He also spent 15 years as a church planter in Australia with Mission to the World. He credits any success he had in these efforts to the Lord and to the tremendous influence his professors at Covenant had on him. But that is getting ahead of the story.

Scotty was born in 1928 in Kansas City, Missouri. His father had been a World War I hero, and his brother served in the Air Force in World War II. Scotty himself ended up in the Army for a while, too, though not intentionally: “I spent two years at Oregon State University, but ran out money and couldn’t stay in school. I got drafted.” This was in the early 1950s and the Korean War was in full swing. Before he left for basic training in Louisiana, Scotty’s father told him, “‘Son, while you’re gone, at least have sense enough to choose your friends and do not let them choose you.’ I did, and God used that. Every place I went, all the friends he put in my path ended up being Christians.”

In basic training, Scotty heard that a new Ranger unit was about to be formed. He applied for it and got in. Eventually, he was stationed in Japan, where he met a man who would have a big impact on his life: “Dr. Robert Rayburn was the chaplain there. He led group Bible studies for the soldiers and one that was also interpreted for the Japanese. Through his preaching and teaching, and

the witness of some of the other GIs, I was converted. That turned my life around.”

When he got out of the Army, Scotty finished college at Highland College in Pasadena, California, where Dr. Rayburn was then president. He also married his sweetheart, Libby, with whom he would eventually have four children. He then decided to go to seminary, beginning his studies at Faith Theological Seminary, located at that time in Philadelphia. A year later, Covenant College and Seminary opened in St. Louis with Scotty’s friend and mentor Dr. Rayburn at the helm. Rayburn invited Scotty to be part of the new seminary. “He could be very persuasive,” Scotty remembers with a laugh. “Nobody was more influential in getting me to Covenant than Dr. Rayburn.” So, Scotty came to St. Louis.



Covenant’s early faculty (l. to r.): Drs. Buswell, Wallis, Killen, Mare, Harris, Rayburn, and Smick.

Alumnus Scotty Scott found their teaching and character inspirational for his own long life in ministry.

Those years of study were exciting, but difficult: “I was working two jobs to support myself and my family. It was hard. Sometimes in class I would be so tired. One professor told me, ‘Scotty, you may close your eyes, but keep your pencil moving.’ Often I could not read my own notes.” At one point, Scotty felt like giving up and leaving, but Dr. Rayburn convinced him to stay: “He said, ‘Prayer is hard work.’ He was a powerful pray-er. There were a hundred other guys better suited than I was to be a preacher, but Dr. Rayburn prayed

for me and I stayed. God used that, and he somehow used me.”

Scotty found his time at Covenant, especially the opportunities for direct interaction with the professors, formative for his future ministry: “The faculty were all very committed to their callings. They were not just scholars. They were very pastoral, with a great vision for ministry. They believed that men who were training to be pastors should be taught by men with pastoral experience.” He was impressed by each professor’s unique personality and strengths. Dr. Wilber Wallis, for example, “was a gentle

“Threats of some kind have always been there. Our job is to be absolutely faithful to our calling morally and spiritually.”

giant of a man. We learned we could get more out of him in class by giving wrong answers to his questions. He would give an analysis of why we were wrong and then provide a detailed correct answer. It was not in him to put anyone down.” Dr. R. Laird Harris “was known for his intellect and his humility. When he came to speak at churches in Australia, everyone noted this about him.” Dr. Elmer B. Smick “was always willing to let seminarians preach in his pulpit. He said, ‘Even if you faint, you have to stand behind the pulpit and start to preach.’” And Dr. J. Oliver Buswell Jr., for whom the Seminary’s library is named, was a great man of prayer: “When he prayed, it was almost like being in the presence of God—very uplifting and powerful.”

After seminary, Scotty spent 13 years working at various jobs and even taught at a community college while also leading various church plants in several states. “I made a lot of mistakes in those first years,” he recalls, “but I learned from them—sometimes with tears. It was a hard time but a good time.” Eventually, though, he had to make a choice: stay in ministry or take some other kind of full-time job. Around that time, he received a call to be senior pastor at University Presbyterian Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico. He pastored there for eight and a half years. It was a happy period for Scotty and his family. He thought he would probably stay there a long time. God, however, had other plans: “I had been asked by two MTW missionaries to give a recommendation for a PCA pastor friend of mine who wanted to go to Australia. During that process, I could somehow sense the Lord telling me, ‘You’re going to go.’”

Soon, MTW did ask him to go. For six months, he and Libby got their finances in order and prepared to move to Australia. He helped plant four churches there during a decade and a half. Sometimes he

would begin a church from scratch, building a congregation from a Bible study group that he or someone else had started. Sometimes he would come in after a church had already been started and lead it into a time of greater stability. Other times he would take over an existing, stable church and provide the impetus to help it move forward. The work was fruitful and Scotty enjoyed it. Once again, though, the Lord decided it was time for a change. In 1999, Scotty returned to the U.S. to accept a call from his former church as pastor to seniors. He served in this role, also working with outreach and mission efforts, until 2003, when he retired. Scotty and Libby have since become part of a new church plant in Las Cruces, where he occasionally preaches and officiates at communion. He also helps each week with the set-up and cleaning of the worship space: “My real calling?” he jokes.

Scotty still misses Australia and his time at Covenant Seminary, and he recognizes that the world has changed a lot since he began his ministry all those years ago. The decreasing influence of Christian values in today’s culture and the growing threat of radical Islamic terrorism are disturbing to him. Those entering ministry in a post-truth world will face challenges that people of his generation could not have imagined. What encouragement would he give to today’s seminary students? Scotty doesn’t hesitate: “Threats of some kind have always been there. Our job is to be absolutely faithful to our calling morally and spiritually. Look to the Gospel of John, and steep yourself in the theology of Romans.”

Rick Matt (MATS '05) is senior writer and editor at Covenant Seminary. **Ken McDonald** (MDIV '14), director of development, provided valuable assistance for this story.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI AND CAREER SERVICES



After the summer harvest, some farmers plant a bridge crop—a crop that is allowed to grow up, die off, and be tilled back into the soil at the end of winter. Bridge crops prevent loss of nutrition and soil erosion caused by rain and melting snow.

A survey of pastors reveals that the two greatest demands on their time are counseling and sermon preparation. Counselors often employ a form of “bridge crop” with clients. To prevent the erosion of memory and the increase of forgetfulness between sessions, counselors may assign their counselees homework, such as journaling, or simply periods of intentional reflection.

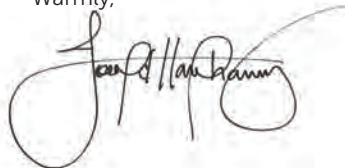
I recently asked pastors how they are bridging the long week between Sundays amid the torrent of media and technology-induced forgetfulness. Here are some of their bridge crops to help congregants remember that week’s sermon:

- + Type a condensed version of the sermon in a blog post called “Sermon in Short.”
- + Post midweek questions via social media to invite reflection on last Sunday’s sermon.

- + Send out a midweek newsletter based on content from commentaries and other reflections that did not make it into the sermon.
- + Teach on the role of prayer in daily life, ending each Sunday with a reminder to go home and pray a line from a psalm or other Bible passage studied that week.

There is a reason that “remember” is one of the most recurring verbs in the Old Testament, a command that has both material and temporal implications.

Warmly,




Joel D. Hathaway
Director of Alumni and Career Services

Share your other “bridge crop” practices at the Covenant Seminary Alumni Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/covenantseminaryalumni/>.

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Ordinations, Installations, and Transitions

Lori and **Mark Berry** (MDiv '99) from MTW missionaries to regional supervisors for Central and South America with Serge.

Phillip Bozarth (MDiv '11) to pastor of Grace Covenant Church (CREC), Fontaine, AR.

Kurt Brubaker (MDiv '11) from Immanuel Evangelical Free Church, St. Louis, MO, to pastor of Prairie Creek Christian Church (E-Free), Vinton, IA.

Timothy R. Butler (MDiv '10) from chaplain, Lindenwood University, to founder of FaithTree Christian Fellowship, St. Louis, MO.

Taylor Clark (MDiv '13) from director of youth and worship, Tyrone Covenant Church, Fenton, MI, to associate pastor, Faith Covenant Church, Kalispell, MT.

Robert Cunningham (MDiv '15) from pastoral resident, Trinity Presbyterian Church, to RUF, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA.

Mark Dawson (MDiv '05) to founder and director of Created for Good, Durham, NC.

Charlie Dey (MDiv '10) promoted to team leader for chaplaincy, St. Joseph Hospital, Lake St. Louis, MO.

David Doty (MDiv '13) from minister to the English congregation, Rochester Chinese Christian Church, Rochester, NY, to assistant

pastor, Akron Chinese Christian Church, Akron, OH. David is married to **Gloria** (GC '13)

Chrishon Drucker (MDiv '00) ordained as assistant pastor, Grace Presbyterian Church, Ocala, FL. **Keith Ledford** (MDiv '04) preached.

Tucker Else (MDiv '09) from pastor, Denver Baptist, Denver, IA, to campus minister, Christian Union, as Ministry Fellow, University of Pennsylvania, PA.

Lindon Fowler (MDiv '10) to executive director of Seneca Hills Bible Camp, Polk, PA.

Philip Glassmeyer (MDiv '07) was installed as solo pastor of Fellowship of Grace (PCA), Peoria, AZ, Nov. 6, 2016.

Mike Going (MDiv '00) from Trileaf Corporation, St. Louis, MO, to Efficient Capital, Naperville, IL.

John Gullett (MDiv '02) ordained to the sacred order priests in the Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida and installed as rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church, Auburndale, FL.

J. David Hall (MDiv '05) from Mission Advancement to Strategic Partnership Director, World Relief.

Ian Hard (MDiv '06) from associate pastor, One Ancient Hope, Iowa City, IA, to pastor, Christ Church, Pembroke, NH.

Kristofer Holroyd (MDiv '06) from associate pastor to senior pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Muncie, IN. He successfully completed his PhD from

Evangelische Theologische Faculteit, Leuven, Belgium.

Wes James (MDiv '07) from pastor, Harbor Church, Mooresville, NC, to pastor, Center Grove Presbyterian Church, Edwardsville, IL.

Chris Jennings (MDiv '02, MAC '04) to supervisor of the Chaplain Program and the Volunteer Chaplain/Clergy Fellowship program, Northeast Georgia Health System, Gainesville, GA.

Jeff Kerr (MDiv '10) from associate to solo pastor of Crestwood Presbyterian Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Tower Kountze (MDiv '14) ordained as assistant pastor, Harvest Community Church, Omaha, NE. **Paul Reynolds** (MDiv '13) gave the charge. **Dr. Stu Kerns** (MDiv '91, DMin '09) preached.

Victor Labrada (MDiv '14) to assistant pastor of young adults and families, Kendall Presbyterian Church, Miami, FL.

Daniel Levi (MDiv '14) from youth minister, Old Cutler Presbyterian, Palmetto Bay, FL, to assistant pastor, Christ Community, Titusville, FL.

Danny Edwards-Luce (MDiv '14) ordained as assistant pastor, Mosaic Community Church, Silver Spring, MD.

Alan Lutz (MDiv '86) to MINTS International Seminary, New Port Ritchey, FL.

Chris Manley (MDiv '13) ordained as assistant pastor, Hope Presbyterian Church, Bloomington, IL.

Brandon Van Marel (MDiv '14) to director of campus ministries, Midland University, Fremont, NE.

Erik McDaniel (MATS '09) from assistant pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church, Anniston, AL, to pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church, Jasper, TN.

Isaac Musselwhite (MATS '11) from several St. Louis businesses to internal IT support technician, Square Inc.

James Nichols (MDiv '11) from assistant pastor, Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church, Tampa, FL, to assistant pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Muncie, IN.

Kirk (MDiv '12) and **Anna Norris** (MAC/MATS '10) from short-term to long-term mission service. Kirk serves as the RUF-Global pastor, L'viv, Ukraine.

Leon Pannkuk (MDiv '89) to pastor of Swiss Evangelical and Reformed Church, Hermann, MO.

John "Penny" Pennylegion (MDiv '09) from associate pastor, Covenant Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, MO, to pastor of Christ the King Church, Roanoke, VA.

Rob Rayburn (MDiv '11) from ThM studies in Munich, Germany, to active duty Army chaplain, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, KY.

Kyle Richter (MDiv '15) ordained and installed as assistant pastor, The Crossing (EPC), Columbia, MO.

Jim Roach (MDiv '10) from hospital chaplain to campus minister at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO.

Erich Rose (MDiv '08) from ELS Centers on the campus of University of Missouri-St. Louis, to assistant academic director for undergraduate programs with Auburn Global, Auburn University. Erich is married to **Rebekah** (MAET '08).

Peter Rowan (MDiv '08) from RUF to pastor of Second City Church, Harrisburg, PA.

Philip Ryan (MAET '14) from Intown Community Church, Atlanta, GA, to assistant to the rector, Christ Episcopal Church, Valdosta, GA. Phillip is married to **Amanda** (MAC '14), who manages web and social media at the church.

Andrew Seley (MDiv '14) to pastor of discipleship, St. Paul's Evangelical Church, St. Louis, MO. Andrew is married to **Melinda** (MAC '13).

Dave Shain (MDiv '07) from director of youth, Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church, Douglasville, GA, to next generations pastor, Christ Church, Suwanee, GA.

Brian Shelton (MDiv '97) was named Provost of Toccoa Falls College, Toccoa, GA.

Jeff Schultz (MDiv '99) from senior pastor of Salem Evangelical Free Church to pastor of discipleship and community, Faith Missionary Church (EFCA), Indianapolis, IN.

Ryan Sparks (MDiv '14) ordained and installed as pastor, Reformed Presbyterian

Church of Bucklands Beach, Auckland, New Zealand.

Eric Stiller (MDiv '08) from assistant pastor of Central Presbyterian Church (EPC) to church planting at Central West End Church (EPC), St. Louis, MO.

Jacob Tedrow (MDiv '13) to planter of Hope Church, Seattle, WA. Jacob is married to **Aileen** (MAC '13).

Nathaniel Thompson (MDiv '10) from assistant pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Kailua, HI, to RUF at Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA. Nathaniel is married to **Suzu** (MAC '05).

Chad Townlsey (MDiv '10) from associate pastor, Southwood Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, AL to assistant pastor, Seven Rivers Presbyterian Church, Lecanto, FL.

Dan Truesdell (MDiv '14) ordained and installed as pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church (LCMS), Ewa Beach, HI.

Rob Wootton (MDiv '08) to pastor at River's Edge Bible Church (PCA), Prince George County, VA.

Seth Young (MATS '08) to associate pastor, Christ Community Church, Huntington, WV.

Michael Yurik (MDiv '14) from director of youth and families ministry, New Covenant Presbyterian Church, to assistant pastor of youth and children's ministries, Faith Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, DE. Michael is married to **Katherine** (MAEM '14).

Jeff Zehnder (MDiv '09, ThM '11) from associate pastor to solo pastor, Fairview Reformed Presbyterian, Industry, PA.

Family Updates

Amy and **Andrew Allen** (MDiv '12) welcomed Katherine Elizabeth Grace on Nov. 7, 2015.

Gretchen and **Michael Barber** (MDiv '07) welcomed Joseph Warren Harvester on Mar. 24, 2015.

Billy (MDiv '11) and **Melynda Boyce** (MDiv '11) welcomed Jeremiah "Jerem" Eben on Aug. 27, 2015.

Brooks (MDiv '11) and **Riva Cain** (MAC '11) welcomed Marley Marie on Apr. 1, 2015.

Jenny and **Sam Brown** (MDiv '11) welcomed Josiah Christopher on Mar. 10, 2015.

Dorothy and **Tim Carroll** (MDiv '11) adopted Amelia Angelia on Jan. 18, 2016.

Leslie Crabtree (MAC '04) married Brandon Jones on Jun. 15, 2015. Leslie received her LPC from the state of Texas.

Steven (MAC '08) and **Katrina Dalbey** (MATS '05) welcomed Paxton Stuart on May 30, 2015.

Glenn and **Amy Davis** (MAC '97) welcomed Boaz Slevin on Aug. 23, 2015.

Alicia and **Justin Donathan** (MDiv '10) welcomed Ambrose Scott on Nov. 10, 2015.

Brooke and **Steven Edging** (MDiv '11) welcomed Ezra Knox on Aug. 2, 2016.

Naomi and **Dan Emerson** (MDiv '07) welcomed Levi Daniel on Mar. 1, 2016.

Holly (MAEM '11) and **Alex Ford** (MDiv '10) welcomed George Wendell on Nov. 25, 2015.

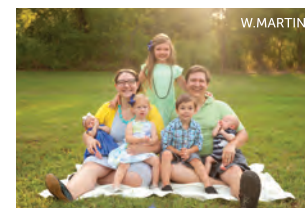
Kim and **Josh Hammans** (MAC/MDiv '14) welcomed Logan John on Jul. 10, 2015.

Ellen and **Tim Jackson** (MDiv '13) welcomed Shaffer William on Dec. 2, 2015. Tim was ordained and installed as an assistant pastor, Chesterfield Presbyterian Church, Chesterfield, MO.

Elizabeth and **Scott Kerens** (MDiv '07) welcomed William Frank on Jul. 3, 2016.

Doug Kothe (MDiv '11) and **Lori Kothe** (MDiv '11) adopted Mike, Jessie, and Brianna on Aug. 29, 2016.

Julie and **Dave Lindberg** (MDiv '10) welcomed Naomi Valerie on Aug. 31, 2016.



Kaitlin and **Wes Martin** (MDiv '15) welcomed Lorelai Jane and Killian James on Apr. 25, 2016.

Margaret and **Curtis McDaniel** (MDiv '09) welcomed Katherine (Kate) Grace on Mar. 18, 2015.

Laurabeth and **Jon Medlock** (MDiv '05) adopted Samuel Reese.

Karen (MAC '08) and **Luke Morton** (MDiv '09) welcomed Geneva Blaise on Nov. 25, 2015.

Stacey and Dane Ortlund (MDiv '05, ThM '07) welcomed Benjamin Goodwin on Feb. 24, 2016.

Amy Petery (MDiv/GC '11) married Chris Grethey on Aug. 13, 2016.

Jennifer and Nick Policow (MDiv '11) welcomed Simon Jesse on Apr. 10, 2016.

Lisa and Lance Qualmann (MDiv/MAC '07) welcomed Levi Thomas on Oct. 26, 2014.

Lindsay and Jeremy Ruch (MDiv '10) welcomed Ramsey Caruso on May 27, 2015.

Mandy and Jason Schafer (MDiv '15) welcomed Augustine "Gus" Ronald on Aug. 26, 2015.

Greg and Elizabeth (Pickett) Schuessler (MDiv '07) welcomed Mark Nicholas on Mar. 1, 2015.

Kathleen (MAC '12) and Jonathan Shumate (MDiv '12) welcomed Theodor Christian on May 30, 2016.

Katie and Simon Stokes (MDiv/MAC '13) welcomed Caroline Hardesty on Nov. 12, 2016.

Allegra and Dave Vosseller (MDiv '98) adopted Matthews Jin Shan on Dec. 7, 2015.

Michelle and Barry Walton (MDiv '15) welcomed Willis Bear on Mar. 1, 2016.

Sarah and Aaron White (MDiv '12) welcomed Violet Elizabeth on May 20, 2015.

Kristin Zeller (MATS '03) married John Drum on Mar. 5, 2016. Seminary alumni in attendance included Kim

Skipper (MATS '05), Aubrey Tell (who is married to Jeff Tell, MDiv '04) and Rob Hamby (MDiv '00).

Celebrations

James William "Bill" Barrow (MATS '10) celebrated 10 years at Cloister Chapel, Sea Island, GA.

Jim Bender (MDiv '93) published *The Feasts and the Future* (M. LiClair Publishing).

Luke Bobo (MDiv '03) published *A Layperson's Guide to Biblical Interpretation* (Wipf & Stock).

Luke H. Davis (MDiv '96) published *The Broken Cross* (Dunrobin Publishing).

Benson Ebinne (MDiv '09) is translating the Bible into Hohumono. Completed work includes the New Testament books of Matthew, Luke, Acts, 1 and 2 Timothy, and James.

Shane Gibson (MDiv '07) celebrated 9 years of ministry in New Orleans, 7 of them at St. Peter's Presbyterian Church, New Orleans, LA.

J. Hager (MDiv '08) launched Flatrock Community Church, Nashville, TN.

Jill Harding (MAC '14) completed her counseling licensure in the state of Missouri. She recently opened Magnolia Counseling Services in St. Louis City.

Robert Holaday (DMin '02) celebrated 11 years at Zion Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Alamo, TX.

Dorrance Kennedy (MATS '03) successfully completed his EdD in educational leadership at Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC.

Scott Lencke (MATS '07) on the publication of *Change for the First Time, Again: A Story of Change and How Change is Our Story* (Wipf & Stock, 2016).

Twila Miles (MATS '14) published *Whispers of Hope: Finding Perspective post Adoption* (Christian Focus).

Terry Nixon (MDiv '73) created and licensed The Candle Handle, a device to reduce wax drippings during candlelight services.

Mike Osborne (MDiv '86) published *Surviving Ministry: How to Weather Storms of Church Leadership* (Wipf & Stock).

Bob Perkins (MDiv '94) published *No Banana Splits: Building Lifelong Disciples in a Short-Term World* (Brighton Publishing).

Dan Quakkelaar (MDiv '13) launched worship services at Friend of Sinners Church, Milwaukee, WI, on Oct., 30, 2016.

Marcus Serven (ThM '92, DMin '11) celebrating 10 years at Covenant Family Church, Troy, MO.

Jeremy Sexton (MDiv '15) published two articles: "Who Was Born When Enosh Was 90? A Semantic Reevaluation of William Henry Green's Chronological Gaps," in *The Westminster*

ster Theological Journal 77 (2015): 193–218; and (co-authored with Henry B. Smith) "Primeval Chronology Restored: Revisiting the Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11," in *Bible and Spade* 29 (2016): 42–49.

Chris Sneller (MATS '07) was awarded a PhD in historical theology from King's College, London.

Jonathan Ryan Weyer (MDiv '02) co-founded a major Catholic writers' conference at the University of Notre Dame.

Dorothy Wills (MAC '01) was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau National Honor Society for Nurses.

Prayers and Condolences

To the family of Abraham Masaharu Ishihara (MDiv '85), promoted to glory on Feb. 8, 2016. Abe served as senior pastor of the Calstar Assembly of God in San Jose, CA, since graduating from Covenant in 1985.

To the Orme family at the passing of Dr. Daniel Orme (BDiv '62, ThM '63) on Aug. 31, 2015. Dan was first ordained in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and later served as academic dean of Carver Bible College, a school for African Americans in Atlanta, GA.

To the family of Brian Parr (MAC/MDiv '06) on his passing to glory on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2016.

Brian was skilled as a bagpipe player and served the Covenant Seminary community with his music at graduation and baccalaureate.

To the Patten family at the passing of **Donald Patten** (MDiv '98) on Apr. 27, 2016. He was serving as assistant professor of theology at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO.

To the Schaper family at the passing of **Steve Schaper** (MDiv '95). Steve worked in the technology industry. He loved the outdoors and planting trees with his father and grandfather.

To the Vaninger family at the passing of **Stanley Vaninger** (MATS '78) on Nov. 12, 2014. Stan taught Bible and church history for 17 years at Victory

Christian Academy in St. Louis, MO.

To the family of **Duane M. Wriedt** (ThM '60), called to glory on Dec. 21, 2015. After active service in the US Navy during World War II, Duane worked for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Minneapolis, MN.



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FEATURED UPDATES

Retreat Brings Renewal, Refreshment for Alumni Women in Europe

by Dr. Tasha Chapman and Tomoko Steinbach

A few years ago, a group of us women stood outside Founders Hall chatting about post-graduation plans. Dawn was going back to ministry in Madrid, Staci to Amsterdam, and Bori to Budapest. "Oh, it would be so great to meet up in Europe!" someone said. Tasha already had ministry work in Europe the following summer. Bori had lots of experience hosting retreats in Hungary and knew she could count on church friends to help us. Thus, the planning began for a "Covenant Seminary Women in Europe Retreat."

At Covenant, the international women hear each other's stories in weekly fellowship. Through sharing stories of brokenness, suffering, grace, and transformation, they are encouraged and know they are not alone. The Lord is working his ministry in and through their brokenness.

However, their ministry contexts back home are often highly isolating and challenging. One alumna explained:

At Covenant, we tasted from the glorious plan of our Father regarding gospel-centered, grace-based teaching, and fellowship, where our weaknesses and brokenness could be seen and cared for without being exposed to judgment. This kind of teaching and community, with this theological foundation and biblical worldview, is extremely rare in Europe. We alumni and our families usually are alone to represent gospel values and teaching, even in our own churches.

The Seminary's research shows how important quality time for rest, reflection, and relationships—especially with





Tomoko Steinbach (MAC '06; front row, left) and Dr. Tasha Chapman, adjunct associate professor of educational ministries, (front row, center) led a retreat in June 2016 for Covenant women graduates serving in Europe.

ministry peers who truly understood our world—is for sustaining us in fruitful ministry (see *Resilient Ministry*, by Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, and Donald Guthrie [IVP, 2103]). E-mails and newsletters help us keep in touch, but retreats can provide rewarding times to share the stories that are not told in letters—stories both amazing and heartbreaking.

In June 2016 we held our third retreat, again at the beautiful Lake Balaton, Hungary. The goals for the retreats have been simple:

- + Find, pray for, and contact all the Covenant Seminary women in Europe (45 so far!).
- + Ask the Lord to provide food and housing in a beautiful place so that the women will have no expenses once they arrive. (We needed to raise extra for the ice cream budget since the ice cream is so amazing at the lake. Thank you faculty wives!)
- + Provide a minimum of structure: just morning devotionals and meals (or the women will forget to eat, as we learned the first year). We knew the women needed no responsibilities and lots of open time to find deep rest and share burdens.

The impact of these simple retreats has surprised us all. Two attendees described it this way:

Coming to a retreat, where there are many women in a similar situation is just very refreshing. We don't really have to explain this situation to each other. There is a natural acceptance and a natural understanding toward

each other—there is always an immediate bond.

Three retreat days feels like a fortnight's holiday! I came back feeling thoroughly replenished—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially “fit.”

The retreat helped us remember who we are and Whose we are. Being apart from our busy responsibilities, together, was wonderfully disarming, restful, and hope-filled. Now we are asking if the Lord would have us duplicate this type of retreat on other continents, and for Covenant guys abroad as well. Are you interested in being a part of something like this? Let us know!

We all do well to ask ourselves, “When and where do I take opportunities for deep rest and intimate fellowship and encouragement with peers?” Our self-care is not selfish; it is a discipline of healthy stewardship, of all God has blessed us with in our personhood, in order to “finish the race.” Our personal and family health greatly impacts the health of our ministries and our ability to stay fruitful in ministry for a lifetime.

Dr. Tasha Chapman is director of educational studies and adjunct associate professor of educational ministries at Covenant Seminary. She is the co-author, with Bob Burns and Donald Guthrie, of *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving* (IVP, 2013).

Tomoko Steinbach is a 2006 MAC graduate of Covenant and former student life administrator for the Seminary.

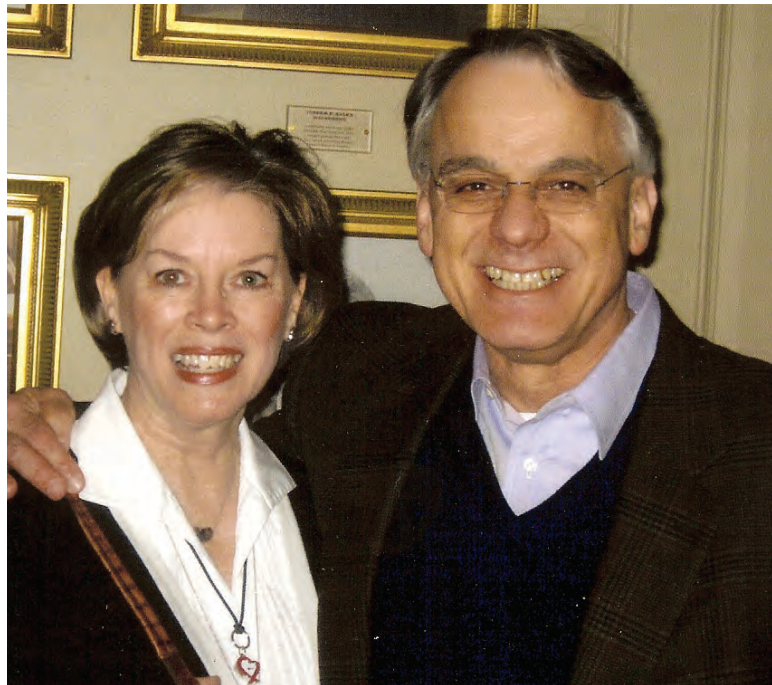
Jim and Judy Boyd: Passing on the Torch of Faith

by Rick Matt

Different people become part of the Lord's eternal family in different ways. Some, like the apostle Paul, experience dramatic moments of conversion by which their lives are changed in a mere instant. Others, less dramatically, perhaps, but no less blessed than Paul, grow up as covenant children within believing families, nurtured in the love of God and raised to do the works which he has prepared for them from before the foundation of the world.

By God's grace, Jim and Judy Boyd can tell the latter story. They were both born into believing families with Associate Reformed Presbyterian backgrounds, though Judy grew up in South Carolina in the Southern Presbyterian Church and Jim grew up attending military chapels while his father served at various posts. They have served the Lord all of their lives, both within the church and outside its walls. Now living in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Boyds are currently part of a PCA church plant there called Cross Park Church. Jim is a hematologist/oncologist with a thriving practice. Judy refers to herself as a wife, mother, and grandmother, but she is also a dedicated helpmeet to Jim in life and business, and an enthusiastic cheerleader for the Lord in all things.

One of the Boyds' passions is sharing the grace that God has shown them by assisting with and supporting various ministries that promote the gospel or train God's people for Kingdom service. They have a strong connection with JAARS (originally Jungle Aviation and Radio Services), a logistical support organization to SIL International (originally Summer Institute of Linguistics) and Wycliffe Bible Translators, all founded by Wycliffe's Cameron Townsend for the purpose of bringing the Bible to indigenous peoples in their native tongues. Judy was blessed while growing up to know one of the early Wycliffe missionaries, who was from her church. This helped instill in her a heart for bringing the gospel to others. She and Jim are often involved with events and fundraising activities for JAARS. Judy has served on the JAARS board for many years, chairing it



Seminary supporters Judy and Jim Boyd

for three of them. Jim has shared his medical expertise in JAARS's health clinics. Both of them have been part of mission trips with the organization that have taken them to Cameroon, China, Thailand, and Peru. Judy notes: "We enjoy helping out and seeing how our gifts are being used for the sake of the gospel. We've been blessed to be part of their efforts to bring people God's Word in their own languages. You can't really know Christ without the Scriptures. It's a special ministry."

The Boyds also have a special place in their hearts for theological education, having been involved with and supporters of several seminaries over the years. Though their connection to Covenant Seminary is fairly recent, the Boyds have been impressed with Covenant's emphasis on God's grace and how it seems to permeate every aspect of the school's life and curriculum. They were able to experience a bit of that last fall when they visited the Seminary campus for the first time to attend the Francis A. Schaeffer Lecture Series. They toured the newly renovated Community Center; met some of the students and faculty; and dined with both Prof. Jerram Barrs, professor of Christian studies and contemporary culture, and Dr. Os Guinness, the noted author and apologist who was one of the event's featured speakers. "We really enjoyed our visit," Judy recalls. "We were grateful for the hospitality and the gracious environment on the campus. It was nice to see that the gospel is not just words to folks at Covenant. The love of Christ is there."

How the love of Christ is expressed in the local church, especially by church leaders, is of great concern to the Boyds. Many people they know have found themselves in situations where, despite seemingly good intentions, someone was hurt because fellow Christians allowed zeal for the letter of God’s law to override the spirit of genuine care for Christ’s flock. This is painful for anyone, but can be particularly injurious to women—most notably single women who are struggling with difficult issues in their lives. Judy observes, “Sometimes in our churches these women get overlooked. The elders may not think it appropriate to visit a single woman in her home. In many cases, only another woman is able to fully grasp what her needs are, but often there aren’t any trained women on the church staff who can come alongside that woman and just listen to what she has to say. A woman sometimes needs to speak to a woman who can hear what’s going on in her heart. There’s a real need for this ministry in the church.”

To help meet this need, the Boyds recently provided a financial gift to Covenant to begin an endowed scholarship for female students in the master of arts in counseling (MAC) program. Though the Seminary offers many kinds of scholarships, including a Spouse Teamwork Award to

allow spouses of full-time students to take classes without paying tuition, it has few scholarships specifically for women. The first recipient of the new MAC scholarship is already benefiting greatly from the Boyds’ generosity as she pursues her degree. Jim and Judy’s desire is that many women will receive similar training so that they can bring the hope and healing of Christ’s love to generations of those suffering with emotional pain and trauma.

The Boyds’ heart for serving others flows out of the love they feel for the God who has showered his grace so freely upon them. They see themselves as part of a process of “passing on the torch of faith” to the next generation. This is especially true in the mostly younger congregation at their church plant. “A young church needs older people to come alongside folks and help,” says Judy. “That sense is often stronger as you get older. It feels more urgent. You want to pass the gospel message on.”

Rick Matt (MATS '05) is senior writer and editor at Covenant Seminary. **Deena Stuart**, director of legacy gifts, provided valuable assistance for this story.

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