

*Entrusted  
with  
God's Truth  
to  
Extend  
God's Grace*



INAUGURATION  
of the  
CHANCELLOR

SEPTEMBER 14, 2012



## *Brief Overview of* **REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

Over time, a small acorn can develop into a stately oak tree. This word picture accurately describes the story of Reformed Theological Seminary. After a season of intense prayer during a meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, five pastors, led by Dr. Sam Patterson, birthed a new seminary committed to the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures and to the Westminster Confession of Faith as its confessional standard. That seminary, first named the Reformed Theological Institute, opened its doors in Jackson, Mississippi, in the fall of 1966 with 14 graduate students. Almost 50 years later, Reformed Theological Seminary is one of the ten largest seminaries in the United States with six campuses, two extension sites and more than 11,000 alumni around the globe.

Dr. Patterson served as the first president of RTS (1966-1978), followed by Dr. Luder Whitlock (1978-2001) and then Dr. Robert C. (Ric) Cannada, Jr. (2002-2012). Early in Dr. Cannada's tenure, he determined that institutional restructuring was necessary, and his title was changed to chancellor and chief executive officer. A president was then appointed for each one of the growing campuses now located not only in Jackson, but also in Orlando (est. 1989) and Charlotte (est. 1992). Extension programs began in Atlanta (1996) and Washington DC (1996) which have developed into full campuses. Our Virtual campus (est. 1997) serves students in countries around the world. Currently, extension campuses are located in Memphis, Tenn. (est. 2010), and in Houston, Texas (est. 2010). Following Dr. Cannada's retirement, Dr. Michael Milton, formerly the president of RTS/Charlotte, was appointed the second chancellor (fourth president) of RTS as of June 1, 2012.

Independently governed by a board of trustees, RTS serves students from over 60 Reformed and evangelical denominations and churches. The seminary currently has over 2700 enrolled students and is accredited by both the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Commission of Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INAUGURAL PRAYER

5

ORDER OF WORSHIP

6

INAUGURAL MESSAGE

*Dr Michael A. Milton*

9

WHEN SAM HEARD GOD

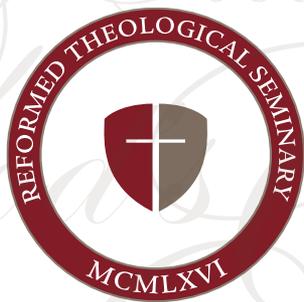
*A Message from 1 Samuel 3:6*

21

WAYS TO GIVE TO RTS

23

*to Extend*



*Grace*

# REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## *Inaugural Prayer*

SEPTEMBER 14, 2012

CHRIST COVENANT CHURCH, MATTHEWS, NC

GIVEN BY THE REV. ROBERT E. BAXTER

Eternal, Sovereign LORD GOD, our Father in heaven: in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ we pray, and in the light of the Coronation of our King Jesus, we celebrate the inauguration of Your servant, Michael Anthony Milton, to be Chancellor of Reformed Theological Seminary. It's Your work and for Your glory. And so our hearts beat with a cadence of praise and prayer to You for this mosaic of ministries—as Mike calls it—of campuses, presidents, faculties, students, alumni, and supporters from some 50 denominations of Your Church.

We know the Chancellor builds on what others previously built, and we thank You for them. We know also that You completed him with his wife Mae, and so we pray for both of them and their family.

Now for the Chancellor himself we pray. Give him the true wisdom that comes from You. Give him the faith to wait patiently for Your vision. Give him the physical stamina and spiritual strength to resist the attacks of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Make him to be what You wired him to want to be—a Second-Timothy-2:2- “mentor of mentors” to multiply this ministry through others. Give him that power that comes just from the point of his greatest weakness wrapped in Your grace—to venture big things that only You can do, so You get the glory. We ask a lot from You because you told us to, and Mike is going to need You a lot every day, but that's the way You want it, for all of us. The training of leaders for the next generation of Your Church is no small task, but You have equipped him through what he has suffered.

Empower his preaching, display Your grace, provide the funds, and produce eternal results for Your Kingdom and for Your glory through Jesus Christ in Whose Name we ask it all. Amen.”



## REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# Chancellor Inauguration

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

#### PRELUDE

*Sovereign Grace Overture Adonia String Trio*

The Rev. Dr. Michael Milton / J. Haines

*Teyinged Emym Cymreag (Welsh Hymns)*

Mrs. Pam Eash, Organist, *Christ Covenant Church*; Hannah Silver, Harpist; Lydia Silver, Cellist; Abigail Silver, Violist

*Video Greeting*

The Rev. Franklin Graham

*A Mosaic of Ministry*

A Video highlight of all RTS campuses

*Elogue in F for Piano and Strings*  
(G. Fenzi)

Mrs. Pam Eash

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Mike Ross, Senior Pastor  
*Christ Covenant Church*

Minister: Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**People: Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.**

Minister: Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,

**All: And establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!"** (Psalm 90:1, 2, 17 ESV)

#### PROCESSIONAL

\*Praise My Soul the King of Heaven

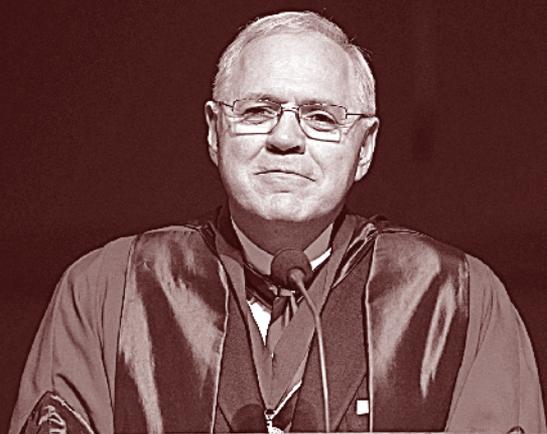
Mrs. Pam Eash (*Lauda Anima*)

#### INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

The Rev. Dr. J. Ligon Duncan, III  
*John E. Richards Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology*

OPENING REMARKS & INTRODUCTIONS	The Rev. Dr. Robert J. Cara <i>Chief Academic Officer</i>
ANTHEM	
The King of Love My Shepherd Is <i>(St. Columbia)</i>	Mr. John Haines, <i>Director of Worship</i> <i>Christ Covenant Church</i>
SCRIPTURE READING & PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION	
(1 TIMOTHY 6:11-16)	The Rev. Dr. Bryan Chapell, <i>Chancellor</i> <i>Covenant Theological Seminary</i>
THE SERMON	The Rev. Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., <i>President</i> <i>The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary</i>
THE VOWS OF INVESTITURE	Mr. Richard Ridgway, <i>Chairman</i> <i>RTS Board of Trustees</i>
THE SIGN OF INVESTITURE & PRAYER	The Rev. Dr. Robert C. (Ric) Cannada, Jr. <i>President/Chancellor Emeritus</i>
THE CHARGE TO THE CHANCELLOR	The Rev. Dr. Luder Whitlock <i>President/Chancellor Emeritus</i>
THE CHARGE TO THE RTS COMMUNITY	The Rev. Dr. Shelton Stanford <i>Senior Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian</i> <i>Church, Rock Hill, SC</i>
THE PASTORAL PRAYER	The Rev. Bob Baxter, <i>Associate Pastor,</i> <i>First Presbyterian Church, Dothan, AL</i>
SCRIPTURE READING (2 TIMOTHY 2:1-2)	The Rev. M. Steve Wallace <i>Chief Operations Officer</i>
THE INAUGURAL MESSAGE	The Rev. Dr. Michael A. Milton <i>Chancellor &amp; CEO</i>
	Message: <i>“Entrusted with God’s Truth to Extend God’s Grace”</i>
THE BENEDICTION	The Rev. Dr. Michael A. Milton
RECESSIONAL	
<i>*The Church’s One Foundation</i>	Mrs. Pam Eash
THE POSTLUDE	
<i>A Mighty Fortress is Our God</i>	Mrs. Pam Eash

*Please join us for a reception immediately following in the Narthex*



WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED





# ENTRUSTED WITH GOD'S TRUTH TO EXTEND GOD'S GRACE

(2 Timothy 2:1-2)

THE INAUGURAL MESSAGE  
OF THE FOURTH PRESIDENT/CHANCELLOR OF  
REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DR. MICHAEL A. MILTON

*14 September 2012, Matthews, North Carolina*

*A*

n inauguration is *not* a coronation.

An inauguration is a *consecration*—a setting apart for the purposes of God. This service is a consecration of our institution, our vision and values, and a consecration of our very lives, with my life intertwined with yours, to the redemptive plans of God in Jesus Christ.

Timothy was inaugurated in his work through the epistles of his mentor and father in the faith, Paul. In the second letter, his consecration becomes ours today, as he focuses on a particular work that must be done at Ephesus. The larger setting of the charge is a military metaphor. It is a commissioning, which is also a sort of consecration. And so we have here in 2 Timothy 2:1-2 words of consecration, words of guidance for an inauguration, that serve the church and form a veritable charter for the work of the theological educational ministry of the church.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Board of Trustees of Reformed Theological Seminary, administration, faculty, staff, students, families, delegates, and honored guests, I want to focus my inaugural remarks on first *consecrating ourselves through recognition of our community* and then *consecrating ourselves through reaffirmation of our covenant*.

## Consecration Through Recognition

The passage begins, “You, then, my child...” Timothy’s ministry would be fed by recognizing that he was a holy, spiritual, apostolic succession. Paul had gone before him at Ephesus and in a larger way in the ministry of the gospel. It is right, therefore, that consecration begins, as in this passage, with recognition.

In this inauguration I must recognize our founders. I must recognize those laymen who prayed and believed and supported the founding of this institution. Yet even their efforts were forged through the visionary urging of a young man who was converted to Jesus Christ in his second year in seminary, on the last day of February 1940,<sup>1</sup> an evangelist by the name of the Rev. Sam Patterson.<sup>2</sup>

I want to consecrate our institution by recalling the faith of that man: a brave World War II Navy chaplain, a devoted Presbyterian pastor, and an untiring evangelist who dreamed of a seminary whose vision and values were nothing less than the Great Commission of Jesus Christ lived out through a unswerving commitment to the inerrancy and infallibility of the Word of God; the faith once delivered to the saints, the Reformed faith; and a white-hot, contagious zeal to prepare pastors and other gospel servants to share Christ with the world. He was totally dependent upon God in prayer and in faith in His promises.

He made that case in the summer of 1963 to a lawyer in Jackson, Mississippi, named Erskine Wells, who countered that he was an idealistic preacher who didn’t know the real world.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Wells told Sam it was not practical. Sam responded, “How big is your God?” Mr. Wells said that question sealed the deal for him!

In the words of one of my predecessors, Dr. Luder Whitlock, it took a leader like Sam Patterson to “galvanize”<sup>4</sup> a group of men and a dream, and that gave birth to a movement. Five men came together: Erskine Wells, Robert Cannada

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1 Sam tells this story in many sermons. For instance, see the Rev. Sam Patterson (1916-1987), “Ambassadors for Christ,” <http://www.sermonaudio.com/search.asp?SpeakerOnly=true&currSection=sermonspeaker&keyword=Rev%2E%5ESam%5EPatterson>.

2 See the biography: R.B. Hobbs and Reformed Theological Seminary, *How Big Is Your God: The Spiritual Legacy of Sam Patterson, Evangelist* (Reformed Theological Seminary, 2010).

3 John Muether, “How Big is Your God?” *Reformed Quarterly*, Fall 2006: 4-11, 19.

4 Rebecca Barnes Hobbs, “A Signpost to Christ,” *Reformed Quarterly*, Fall 2006: 12.

Sr., Frank Horton—all three of them lawyers; Frank Tindall, a farmer; and Robert Kennington, a retired businessman, They joined the one clergyman of the group, Sam Patterson, and a seminary was born out of prayer.

It is important to note that while the seminary was born out of theological disruptions in the old Southern Presbyterian Church, the founding documents acknowledged, as one historian and current faculty member described it, that “the plan and purpose of the Institute was stated in strictly positive and constructive terms.”<sup>5</sup> On Christmas 1963, Sam Patterson announced the birth of Reformed Theological Institute to train pastors and missionaries to herald the name of the Christ of Christmas.<sup>6</sup> For countless souls who will be in heaven because of the gospel laborers prepared at RTS, the gift on that Christmas Day in 1963 will be memorialized as the greatest gift of their lives.

We were free, as Rev. Sam Patterson, our first president, would remind our founders, to flourish or flounder or fail because this was God’s work. Well, it flourished. And God deserves all the glory, but we should show our appreciation to those who followed with faith.

In this inauguration I want to begin with recognition of those vision and values and those who’ve gone before, like Sam Patterson. Sam’s only survivor is his daughter. I’ve communicated to my sister in Christ and expressed my thanksgiving to her and her family. I have heard from her about the sacrifice of her father, his love for the mission of this seminary, and his desire for the seminary to never waver from total dependence upon God and a passionate priority on global missions and personal evangelism for our students. May the prayers of our first president be all pervasive in this service and guide me and all of us as we go forward and inaugurate a new season of ministry so that we will be what Sam Patterson was said to be: “A Signpost for Jesus Christ.”<sup>7</sup>

And inauguration should be a time of recognition not only of our founders but those who led during the early years; those who tended the young plant and helped it, by God’s grace, to grow. It is my pleasure to recognize Dr. Luder Whitlock. Dr. Whitlock was our second president. For 23 years, from 1978 through 2001,<sup>8</sup> Luder and Mary Lou labored together to nurture that young plant called Reformed Theological Seminary. In doing so Dr. Whitlock became one of the senior statesman of theological education in North America and,

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5 Muether, “How Big is Your God?” 4.

6 Ibid.

7 Hobbs, “A Signpost to Christ.”

8 Lyn Perez, “Dr. Luder G. Whitlock (Emeritus), Former President and Associate Professor of Missions and Evangelism Emeritus,” <http://www.rts.edu/seminary/faculty/bio.aspx?id=30>.

indeed, in the world. He has been a friend to me over the years and an advisor. At this inauguration it is altogether good and right that we recognize the *President Emeritus*, Dr. Luder Whitlock. Luder, will you come forward and receive from our chairman the sign of the *President Emeritus*?

I would like to also recognize the First Lady of RTS during those great years of growth, Mrs. Mary Lou Whitlock. Mary Lou, please stand so that we can acknowledge you and thank you with a small gift and token of our appreciation for your gracious, prayerful and godly model of a woman of God for our pastors and pastors' wives.

Servant-leadership is inaugurated as a new season. Sometimes the seasons of life come up on us slowly and almost imperceptibly. Sometimes they are thrust upon us. For the son of the founding chairman of the Board of Trustees it was, perhaps, both. Reformed Theological Seminary was the frequent topic and object of prayer at the dinner table at the Cannada home in Jackson, Mississippi. After a good season of being a church planter and a senior pastor of a large, historic, downtown church, Dr. Ric Cannada became our third president and what became known during his time as chancellor and CEO of the RTS system of campuses.

The tender sapling that was planted under the ministry of the Rev. Sam Patterson, and matured to be a strong tree by the rivers of life-giving water under Dr. Whitlock, began to strengthen and spread under the ministry of Dr. Ric Cannada. His tenure as president/chancellor was marked by careful cultivation of the ground around the RTS tree through his gifts of organization and administration. But it was not only cultivation, but through Ric the work became a multiplication. New saplings were planted. The vision and values were built upon and enlarged under Dr. Cannada's servanthood. The seminary grew to the eight campuses we have now. Dr. Cannada took on the work of cultivating and planting with Spirit-filled attention, but with a pastoral involvement and a kingdom cause. The seminary tree grew without sacrificing the primary nutriment of prayer and dependence upon God. He designed and oversaw a transition that allowed for me to be here today. Dr. Cannada, we thank you for your service to Christ and to RTS. Please come forward so that in this inauguration, we may honor God by honoring His Spirit at work in your life for our sake.

Ric, as meaningful as your service has been and continues to be to Reformed Theological Seminary, it would have lacked a needed grace and beauty that you, my dear friend, simply could not have provided! Therefore, we are obligated by all that is good and right before God to honor and recognize the fervent prayers, constant support, smiling encouragement and spiritual beauty of Mrs. Rachel Cannada. Rachel, today on this inauguration day, we consecrate ourselves to a new season of ministry by recognizing *your* season of ministry. Please stand

so that we may show our thanks to God and our appreciation to you. Please receive this expression of our love on this day.

An inauguration is also a time to recognize those who have traveled the journey with you. For many years, one man has stood with me to help me, support me, and sometimes to literally carry me in ministry when I was ill. I want to honor the Rev. Steve Wallace, former executive pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Chattanooga and now chief of staff to the chancellor's office at RTS. Steve, will you come forward? Steve, at this inauguration I want to recognize your ministry. Your ministry has been one of support and encouragement of the Word of God.

Being chief of staff is not an easy job. It requires, in our setting, seasoned pastoral experience, wisdom drawn from time with Jesus Christ in prayer, and a God-given diplomacy that cannot be taught. You have demonstrated that you possess all of these traits. This past summer, while in London, I came across some words from Sir John Dill, the chief of staff to the irascible, enigmatic, peerless war leader, Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill. Sir John Dill's assessment of the office of chief of staff is now printed on the plaque you can hang in your office:

*"A Chief of Staff's work is more about keeping people from doing stupid things than doing courageous things."*

He was not talking about the generals on staff. He was talking about his boss. Steve, thank you for keeping me from doing stupid things. Thank you for being a pastor and a friend to me. Admiral Scott Redd, a member of the RTS Board of Trustees, said you were a right hand, but I think maybe you are also a left brain.

One of the reasons you are so good is that your wife is so helpful and such a faithful friend to my wife. Mrs. Debbie Wallace, your gifts in decorating tables, preparing banquets, and bringing beauty to our church and to this seminary can never equal the beauty you have brought to our lives. Debbie, please stand that we may inaugurate this time with recognition to God's work in your life, which has touched our lives. Please accept these roses as a sign of the fragrance of Christ that has been diffused through your life.

Our board oversaw this inaugural event, but it was a team of gifted people like the Rev. Lyn Perez, Mrs. Dawn Kilgore, and especially my assistant and our office manager, Ms. Wendy Simmons, who led the charge. Wendy, thank you. You serve as unto the Lord, and this inauguration should recognize your efforts, and in this gift to you recognize those who labored with you to support our ministry.

“You , then, my child...” Paul began. A man owes much to others, and that is what I have sought to communicate in this inaugural address. Yet beyond the institutions of ministry and the colleagues in ministry, there are those who live it, breathe it, weep over it, and laugh through it, and pray for it, day after day, year after year. For me that started with my Aunt Eva, who is with the Lord. She prayed for me as a wounded orphan, a prodigal son, and a young man in search of meaning. That has been my mother-in-law, a pastor’s widow, who now worships Christ face to face with my Aunt Eva. She encouraged me to marry her daughter and encouraged me in the ministry. It has also been our children who supported our ministry: Kim, Julie, Wayne, Amy, Jessica, Heather, and Matthew. Amy went to seminary with us and met a young man who became her husband while we were at seminary. I am so thankful that she, and Julie and Kim, and a couple of our grandchildren, Peyton and Parker, are here today. Yet beyond those precious souls who prayed and supported our ministry, there were two people who literally walked the path with me into this day: my wife, Mae, and our youngest, our son, John Michael.

Indeed, John Michael, who flew in from his first year at Grove City College to be here today, has always been there for us in ministry. He had no choice! He was born into it! There is no greater supporter of RTS than my son. He does not have ambitions, today at least, of being a minister or going to seminary. But he is a churchman. And he does support his father’s work, and desires to see pastors and other gospel servants prepared for kingdom service. I came to RTS in great part because of the vision of a 12-year-old boy who saw, with eyes of faith, a young man sitting under a tree that I could sit with and share whatever insights in pastoral ministry that God had given to me. I followed that vision to be here. Thank you, John Michael.

I once wrote a song about a pastor’s wife with this line: “If there’s crowns on that day, and I have my way, I’ll pray the Lord give you mine. For when others saw me, what they didn’t see was the deepest part of my life. Thank God for the pastor’s wife.” Mae is a modest Midwestern girl, a pastor’s daughter, who would prefer hosting a small, comfortable evening for people wanting to learn about Christ than be the center of any attention. Yet, honey, it is fitting before God to show honor to the one who really deserves it. Mae, please stand, as *my* First Lady, and receive my gratitude for the gift of sharing this life and this ministry.

## Consecration Goes Forward With Reaffirmation

I have spent most of my time in my inaugural address in *recognition*. Let me turn to *reaffirmation*.

Today I reaffirm the central mission and identity of this movement of God called RTS. I do so from a charter passage for all seminaries. Second Timothy 2:1-12 in the English Standard Version reads,

*“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

We have heard a fine sermon from Dr. Albert Mohler. I will try not to give you a second. But I will bring up what I find here to be a scriptural conviction upon my soul: We have, in this new season of ministry, been *entrusted with God’s truth to extend God’s grace*. That was the message from St. Paul to Timothy and from the Spirit to each of us here, whatever our roles, whatever our places of service: It is time for all of us, in this sacred hour, to reaffirm our lives to the repository of faith that has been handed off to us.

At RTS, I want to reaffirm several marks of ministry in this inaugural service.

### **1. I want to reaffirm our covenant with God going forward by remembering that we are totally dependent upon God.**

To “be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” is to consecrate yourself to this: You cannot do ministry outside of the power of Christ. Indeed, all facets of our ministry must begin with total dependence upon Christ through prayer.

When we feel strong because of our enrollment or our development or our published papers or indeed the sight of our graduates fulfilling the Great Commission, and begin to think that we did it, we are sunk. Our ministry must be grounded in a firm dependence upon Christ in prayer.

Let RTS be a place of prayer. I take it as my solemn duty to pray for our faculty, staff, students, board, and supporters, as well as our sister seminaries and their work.

## **2. I want to reaffirm our covenant with God going forward by remembering that we are called to teach the doctrines of grace.**

The grace of Christ points not just to a singular doctrine of how we are saved by grace, but to an all-encompassing way of life that proceeds out of that grace that is in Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry reminds us that it is not just grace shown to us at salvation but grace in Christ that continues to feed our lives, sustain us and lead us home.

We will neglect our founding values if our self-identity ever turns us into becoming merely an academic institution. We are a seedbed for pastors and other gospel workers. That is what “seminary” really means. And that has been our legacy and must remain our conviction going forward. Therefore, I must lead out of that sacred encounter with the grace of Christ. We must relate to each other out of that grace. We must relate to the church we serve and the institutions we serve with out of that grace. We must teach the whole counsel of that grace in Christ, the very plan of salvation, the hope of the world, and see ourselves first and foremost as a place where doctrines and truths are inculcated. Why? Because this truth strengthens us and those we minister to. Jesus said that you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free. The more truth, the more freedom, the more strength.

Thus, to be strengthened in grace is to be wholly committed to those means of grace: *Word, sacrament, and prayer*. Our life as a seminary is nourished in the sacred encounter with the Christ of grace through the Bible, the sacraments, and being a true community of prayer. This is truly the source of success of RTS in the past. It is our hope for the future. Apart from this, which is nothing short of total dependence upon God, we are nothing. With that sacred encounter with the grace of Christ, personally and as a community, we can, as David put it, leap over a wall.<sup>9</sup> Grace in Christ opens the door to unlimited possibilities for ministry. It brings optimism. It helps us form our theology not only on the syllogisms of human philosophy but on the miracles of divine theology. It guides us always back to the cross.

Paul speaks of “what you have heard from me,” and this leads me to a third reaffirmation:

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<sup>9</sup> “For by you I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall” (Psalm 18:29, ESV).

### **3. I want to reaffirm our covenant with God going forward by reaffirming our commitment to the inerrant and infallible Word of God.**

Paul's words were, as Peter reminds us, Scripture. Timothy was to consecrate himself in the Word he had heard, which others, too, had received.

There is always an attack on the Word of God. There is an attack on its supernatural origins, its efficacy, its priority in the church, and its sufficiency.

The repository of faith that has been given to us, as it was given to Timothy, and as it was given to our forefathers before us in this seminary and in the seminaries here, was first and foremost the revelation of Almighty God in His Word. We will study His Word. We will ground our ministries in His Word. We will find direction for our lives and for this seminary from His Word. And we will teach this Word because this Word brings eternal life and abundant life. God's Word contains all that is needed to prepare pastors, prepare mothers and fathers, build communities, and sustain life that is pleasing to God. For this Word is about the Word made flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Paul says that Timothy had heard Paul's words in "the presence of many witnesses..."

### **4. I want to reaffirm our covenant with God going forward by reaffirming our covenant with God together—that is, to the larger ministry of the church.**

The "many witnesses" reminded Timothy that his teaching from Paul was a catholic teaching, a teaching that was received by others. He cannot do ministry alone. He does ministry in the context of other witnesses. This is the catholicity of the church and something we must remain committed to more than ever.

That is the importance of the presence of this body of delegates here today. I trust this means more than your honoring of RTS, but is also an authentic, biblical expression of our unity in Christ and, quite simply, an affirmation that *we need each other*. We learn from each other. Our lives are intertwined—publicly, privately, denominationally, civically, and personally—so that the Word of God comes to us through others. My life has been shaped by my Aunt Eva; by my pastor, Bob Baxter, who is here today; and by mentors like the late Dr. D. James Kennedy; but also by you all. Some of you represent institutions that, even if I have not heard of Christ and His Word directly from you, then I have benefited from others through the years who taught me through their writings.

If we are truly in a post-Christian era and the landscape of America looks more like a withering, secularized field, stripped of the topsoil of an older, richer faith, then we are more like a mission field than ever before. If we are more like a mission field than ever before, you know that the missionaries have to live on the mission field—denominational isolation and pride must give way to practical cooperation. Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians and Anglicans and independents are all of a sudden cast into a role of just being *Christians*. RTS is a confessional seminary. We hold to the Reformed faith. And I would not be here if it were any other way. RTS's values and faith are mine. Yet, the 21st century is going to be marked by the need for the presence of “many witnesses” working together for the common goal of the Great Commission and of revival. There can be no loners in the kingdom; no prima donnas; no go-it-alone, self-sufficient, competitive organizations. We need each other.

I pledge myself anew to the vision of cooperation without compromise. I pledge myself anew to the value of the “many witnesses” and ask God to unite us for His redemptive purposes in our generation. There is simply no other way in this world today. And working in His field with each of you, at RTS and across the lines of traditions and movements of God, is a privilege I reaffirm. What is secularism, more than anything else, but that which caused the various traditions and branches of Christ's church in the West to work together like never before? Who ever heard of something evil and painful becoming the very thing that brings about redemption? It sounds a lot like the cross. And there is victory in that.

I would add one more affirmation that is critical from this passage:

**5. I want to reaffirm the pillar of our ministry: to build disciples who will build disciples. In other words, I want to reaffirm our commitment to the Great Commission.**

Out of dependence upon the grace of Christ, through the Word of God that Paul had preached, Timothy had been entrusted with a sacred gift that had to be given away to faithful men who would teach others also. Thus, the whole force of this text is about the extending of God's truth and grace to the world by preparing others. It is about the multiplication of ministry. In other words:

*Building disciples who will build disciples is the heartbeat of our ministry together.*

The other day a young man called in who had heard an RTS broadcast. He had heard the message and prayed to receive Christ. He wanted to know more about how to follow Jesus Christ as a new disciple. My beloved, this is our ministry. We

are here to see souls saved, lives transformed, and local and global communities impacted with the Good News of Jesus, and to teach them whatsoever He commanded. We are forever tethered to the Great Commission as the essential component in our ministry together.

We are entrusted with God's truth to extend God's grace through **dependence** upon the **grace** of Christ in His **Word** for the church and fulfilling **the Great Commission** for a lost world, so that on the day when Christ comes again there will be a multitude of souls safe in the arms of Jesus. That is our glory and our joy, and that will be the fulfillment of this day and of this ministry.

## A Fourth Inauguration

I want to say something that might surprise you. This is my third inauguration. I am not including my inauguration as president of RTS-Charlotte. I mean to say that this is my third inauguration as chancellor of Reformed Theological Seminary. The first one happened when Ric Cannada took me to see Mr. Frank Horton, one of the founding board members of the seminary. While we were there, Mr. Horton told me that he had been keeping up with me. He told me about the early days of the seminary—the challenges, the answers to prayer. Then he demonstrated one of those values: “Mike, will you let me pray for you?”

The 94-year-old man took my hand in his. I felt like I was being squeezed by a vise grip! His strength of character is matched by his strength of arm! No one was there but Ric, Mr. Horton and myself—or so I thought. You see, as Mr. Horton prayed, our Lord began to call down angels and the company of heaven to witness this moment. Mr. Horton was so caught up in the reality of being before God's throne, and his prayer language was so intense, I opened an eye to make sure I will still in his living room and not in the throne room! When he finished, I told him and I told Ric, “Whatever inauguration happens after this will be the second. For this was the first.”

Yet there was a second inauguration. It happened just a few weeks ago as our presidents and chancellor's officers joined me at a retreat in the North Carolina mountains. Our agenda? Pray. Worship. Sing hymns. Rest. Talk. One night, Steve Wallace led us in “Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners.” I think that Guy Richardson requested it. It is a beautiful Welsh hymn. And in that moment, I

was again caught up into the heavens, as it were, with those colleagues that I would be working with. To hear Guy Richardson, John Sowell, Don Sweeting, Scott Redd, Tim McKeown, Lyn Perez, Brad Tisdale and Steve Wallace singing that old Welsh hymn *a cappella*, late at night in the mountains, was a sublime moment. I told them then what I tell you now: *Whatever happens here is a public expression of what has just happened in private with them.*

Then, yesterday, the Board of Trustees laid hands upon me at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association headquarters and prayed over me. That was the third inauguration.

So I have been through three inaugurations. This is the fourth! But the important thing is that it is not about me. *It is about God's work through us, through His movement of the Holy Spirit in concert with so many others here.*

Inauguration is about consecration of ourselves to *recognize* God's faithfulness in days gone by and to *reaffirm* our commitment to Him in whatever days lie ahead—for His kingdom, for His glory.

Could this also be a day of consecration for you? To receive the Lord of glory through repentance of sin and faith in Christ? Could this be a day when each of us are consecrated anew to His truth and His grace and to share that with others?

Only then will this inauguration be complete.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

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# *When Sam Heard God*

(A Message from 1 Samuel 3:6)

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY  
AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE  
OF THE FOUNDER OF RTS  
THE REVEREND SAMUEL PATTERSON

BY MICHAEL A. MILTON, PH.D.

*Chancellor & CEO*

JAMES M. BAIRD

*Chair of Pastoral Theology*

*And the Lord called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.*

*S*am Patterson was in his second year of seminary. He was seeking to prepare for ministry. But he did not know God. Therefore, he could not truly hear God. Like Samuel, there was a divine drawing towards God. Yet before he could hear a call to ministry he had to have a call to know God by faith.

On the last day in February, 1940, Sam Patterson was converted to Jesus Christ. He could then discern the calling. He could recognize the voice of God on his soul because God had revealed His Word to Him. There would have been no WWII Navy chaplain who led men to Christ without that sacred encounter. There would have been no pastor who cared for and shepherded so many lambs of the Lord to their true Shepherd. There would have been no Reformed

Theological Seminary if Sam Patterson had not heard the voice of the One he knew personally.

As I look towards being installed this Friday to follow Sam in his office and in the seminary he envisioned I am thankful that Sam heard the God who revealed Himself through Christ.

Sam was saved in a seminary. Imagine that. No, really—imagine that. We must remain committed to seeing RTS as a response to God's Word existing to call others with God's Word, so that some will hear, some will be saved, so that many will be gathered together safe in the arms of Jesus when He comes again.

When Samuel—and Sam—heard God's call countless others would hear God's call as well.

And is that Voice now calling you?

*To Extend  
God's Grace*



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**Annual Fund—** Your regular annual giving empowers RTS to fulfill its calling, to prepare new leaders to fulfill the Great Commission in all types of ministry, but especially as pastors within those churches embracing the Reformed faith.

The annual cost to prepare a future pastor is almost \$25,000, but after receiving scholarship aid, the average full-time student pays only about \$8,000. Annual support helps us fill in the gap and educate a future pastor or church leader.

You may mail your annual gifts in the form of a check to any of our campuses, provide to us your credit card information for regular debits or make your gifts online at [rts.edu/give](http://rts.edu/give).

**Scholarship Funds—** These funds help RTS attract the best and brightest students and also provide for those who have financial need. There are many scholarship possibilities for your consideration, including general annual gifts, and named restricted or endowed scholarships funds that provide annual ongoing support for different students each year.

Also, the Church Partnership Program is a way for a student to have his home church support his or her seminary education. If a church will invest in the student by providing a third of the student's tuition and the student themselves contribute the next third, RTS will provide the balance.

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RTS acknowledges to the donor that the gift has been received, and notifies the honored one or the family members of the one remembered that a gift has been made. The amount of the gift is not revealed. Each year a Commemorative Roll is published to honor all donors and honorees and are mailed to donor a recipient families.

**Endowment-Type Funds—** One of the ways RTS addresses the future is through our endowment program. By building up these

types of funds, we increase our financial stability and provide a stream of dependable income. The principal of these funds normally remains intact. Only the income is used to meet ongoing needs, so the funds last indefinitely and provide ongoing resources to fulfill our calling.

Endowment funds can provide for faculty support or student scholarship. They can even provide for general operating costs or for maintaining buildings. All Endowment and Restricted Funds may be made in honor of a loved one, and designated members of the family may be listed to receive annual reports of students who receive the benefits from scholarship funds.

**RTS Foundation—** The RTS Foundation provides planned giving and estate services. It exists to serve those who share the vision of training pastors, missionaries, chaplains, counselors and other leaders to serve His church worldwide.

The Mind and Heart Donor Advised Fund is available and a brochure on the fund is available upon request. Please consider the Mind and Heart Donor Advised Fund as your vehicle to manage your annual giving to multiple ministries.

**Planned Giving—** Many friends of RTS have planned their giving through a legacy gift or "bequest." The most frequent form of planned giving involves making a provision in one's will to support RTS. Other ways of giving before death also can benefit donors and their families during their lifetime. These planned gifts can offer additional income, a hedge against inflation and even tax savings.

One of the most popular planned gifts that can provide additional income to the donor and also tax benefits is the Gift Annuity. You may make a tax advantaged gift to RTS, and receive an income for your life or for the life of you and a spouse. We are happy to provide you will specific gift annuity proposals at your request.

Donors who make planned or estate gifts are eligible to join The Heritage Society, which recognizes those who name RTS in their estate plans or incorporate a life income gift into their financial planning.

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