

The Year of

THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH

Imagine those early generations of Christians in Roman-Asian cities, surrounded by abundant non-Christian claims of certainty and truth. For more than half a millennium in that part of the world, local homes, marketplaces, gymnasiums and theaters had hosted ubiquitous philosophers and sophists who offered their “truths” both to students and bystanders. What perspectives could have aided those early believers in the midst of such a cacophony of truth claims? Clearly, early Christian leaders provided a compass by reminding their fellow believers of the certainty of God’s truth, of God’s revelation in the Messiah, and that God’s church was “the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15).

The Restoration Movement has clearly shared in the early church’s conviction about the importance of truth, the close connection between truth and salvation (1 Timothy 2:4), and the importance of truth as a guide to the maturity of believers (Ephesians 4:14-15).

Admittedly, the pursuit of truth must have an almost archaic sound to it. Although Scripture uses imagery of pursuit, running and physical training as common metaphors for the life and maturity of the believer, spiritual convictions based upon such imagery get little press in the life of the contemporary American church.

A commitment to the pursuit of truth, like all pursuits related to God, remains a lifelong commitment. The believer never arrives at a place in this life where the pursuit of truth should cease. Surely there are important transitions and stations in this pursuit, but the pursuer of God’s truth is never satisfied. May we all be encouraged by the Apostle Paul’s words: “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Dr. Rick Oster
Professor of New Testament

H A R D I N G U N I V E R S I T Y
GRADUATE SCHOOL *of* RELIGION
Transforming Leaders

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HARDING UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION

FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT



May 2, 2009

Celebrating the Year of
The Pursuit of Truth

PROGRAM

**DR. W. B. WEST, JR. CENTER AUDITORIUM
SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2009 • 10:00 A.M.**



Processional: "All Things Praise Thee"..... G. W. Conder
Led by Leon Sanderson, Assoc. Minister, Church of Christ at White Station

Invocation..... Dr. Stan Granberg
Adjunct Professor of Missiology

Alma Mater Kinder, Flatt, and Sanderson

Message from HUGSR Advisory Board..... Ron Wade
Chairman, HUGSR Advisory Board

Introduction of Speaker Dr. David B. Burks
President, Harding University

Address..... Dr. Jack P. Lewis
Professor Emeritus

Recommendation of Graduates Dr. Everett W. Huffard
Vice President/Dean, Harding University Graduate School of Religion

Conferring of Degrees..... Dr. Burks

Presentation of Awards Dr. Huffard
Dr. Steve McLeod, Registrar

Ministry of Study Award Rusty Woods
President, Student Association

Message from Faculty..... Dr. Richard Oster
Professor of New Testament

Hymn: "How Firm a Foundation"..... Don Chapman/ John Rippon

Benediction..... Dr. Leslie Williams

Recessional: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" T. Chisholm & Wm. Runyan

2009 GRADUATES

MASTER OF ARTS

Daniel Lee Cooper	David Pritchett
Jordan Patrick Guy	Aaron Michael Roland
Shelley L. Jacobs	Ethelene Bruce White
Young Ran Park	



MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Glen Alan Bowman
Rusty J. Campbell
T. Ryan Head



MASTER OF ARTS IN COUNSELING

Justin Paul Lewis
Jonathan Richard Teel



MASTER OF DIVINITY

Lendon L. Bartlett	Terry D. Smalling
Barry J. Fowler	Rachel Ann Steele
Brian R. Hajicek	Nathan Doyle Swanson
Peter A. Horne	Jonathan Richard Teel
Alan Byron Howell	Robert James Turner
Wesley Sam Abe Kuryluk	Chad Alan Westerholm
Daniel Edsel Reese	James Thomas Wood
David Benson Rubio	Russell Lyle Woods
Mac S. Sandlin	



DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Bruce Eugene Bates
Thomas Hershell McLemore
Leslie James Williams