

May 31, 2017

*Dear Bebo, Roger, members of the Shepherding and Advisory Committee, and fathers and brothers of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley (PMV):*

Thank you so much for the honor and privilege of working for the Lord in PMV with you. By your call and permission, I serve PMV as Chancellor/CEO and John E. Richard's Professor of Systematic & Historical Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary. September 1 of this year will mark the beginning of my 5th year as Chancellor of RTS (which seems really hard to believe). We have been blessed by God at RTS, and I want to share with you briefly about both my labors and God's favor to us at RTS, as a part of my annual report to PMV.

I continue to serve actively in all aspects of the life of PMV and the PCA. I attend all presbytery and GA meetings, and serve on PMV committees. I continue to serve as the chairman of the MJCCW by your appointment. This last year I also served on our PCA Study Committee on Women in Ministry, as well as the PMV nominations committee. I will attend three Presbyterian general assemblies in June, DV (PCA, ARP and EPC) and the Acts 29 annual gathering in July.

I have regularly preached in numerous PCA and other reformed churches this past year. I preach on average about 3 of 4 Sundays in the month, and regularly speak at special services (conferences and the like). Most of my preaching is in the PCA. When I am not preaching somewhere, I am worshiping with my family at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS under the able ministry of my pastor, David Strain. This past year, I have preached at a number of PCA presbytery meetings and have had the joy of being the guest preacher on a number of commissions to receive new PCA churches into our denomination, as well as serving on ordination commissions for a number of former RTS students. I also preached for our PMV mission church in Jakarta, Indonesia this last September!

I teach a full load of theology courses at RTS, in addition to my other duties as Chancellor. This is by conviction that my calling is primarily to teach and preach the Word. I have taught at RTS Jackson and Orlando regularly for the last three years. I have also taught a course in January each of the last two years at RTS New York City.

RTS is celebrating our 50th year of ministry, beginning this year. We have more students than ever (we started with 14 and now have about 1550 taking courses for credit, about 2000 including auditors!). We have three national/international campuses (Jackson, Orlando and Charlotte), two regional/metropolitan campuses (Washington and Atlanta), and three smaller sites (New York City, Memphis and Houston), and we opened in Dallas on January 1. So we are teaching in eight States, nine cities, plus through our Global program students from every continent, as well as in Sao Paulo, Brazil in our joint program with Mackenzie Presbyterian University. We have also just signed an agreement to work with UPH, a university in Jakarta, Indonesia, to open the RTS Center for Reformed Theology.

I would remind the presbytery that all RTS board members and faculty are required to affirm unequivocally our commitment to biblical inerrancy and the Westminster Standards annually. By God's

grace, RTS has not wavered in our commitment to biblical and reformed orthodoxy. Each year, I have to sign this subscription formula:

"Believing that there is but one only, the living and true God, and that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one and the same in substance, equal in power and glory, and with solemn awareness of accountability to Him in all that we feel, think, say and do, the undersigned engages in and subscribes to this declaration:

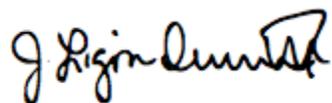
1. All Scripture is self-attesting and, being truth, requires the human mind wholeheartedly to subject itself in all its activities to the authority of Scripture complete as the Word of God, standing written in the sixty-six books of the Holy Bible, all therein being verbally inspired by Almighty God and therefore without error.
2. Reformed theology as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as its standard of doctrine at its first General Assembly in 1789 is the system of doctrine taught in Scripture; and, therefore, it is to be learned, taught and proclaimed for the edification and government of Christian people, for the propagation of the faith and for the evangelization of the world by the power of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. And I do solemnly promise and engage not to inculcate, sanction, teach or insinuate anything that appears to me to contradict or contravene, either directly or implicitly, any element of that system of doctrine.
4. NOW THEREFORE, the undersigned in the presence of God, states and signifies that he consents, agrees, and binds himself to all of the foregoing without any reservation whatsoever, and that he further obligates himself immediately to notify in writing the trustees should a change of any kind take place in his belief and feeling not in accord with this statement. Amen."

It is a joy and honor to be able to affirm those vows and work for you at RTS. I tell my students: "I'm not even allowed to dream against the Confession in my sleep!"

My wife, Anne, came out of her temporary one year "retirement" to become Senior High Counselor and to teach at Jackson Prep again. This has both been a ministry on her part and helps us with tuition costs for our children. Our daughter, Sarah Kennedy, is entering her third year as an honors student in Education at the University of Alabama. She is very involved in RUF and her PCA church in Tuscaloosa. Our son Jennings is a rising senior at Jackson Prep, and involved in the youth ministry at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson.

I would humbly request that the presbytery continue my service laboring out of bounds of presbytery at RTS.

Your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. D. Linn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.