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The Master's *Mantle*

Trusting the Lord of the Harvest



We Train Men as if Lives Depended on It.

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In This Issue

In Matthew 9:37–38, Jesus “said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers to His harvest.’” His admonition was to ask God to send out faithful men through whom He would build His church.

This edition of *The Master's Mantle* highlights the theme of faithful harvesters “Trusting the Lord of the Harvest.” There is the mistaken notion that the church and pastors are responsible for the results of their labors. But nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, pastors are to work hard, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. But in the end, a pastor's ultimate responsibility is to be faithful. As Paul reminds the Corinthian Church, “it is God who causes the growth” (1 Cor 3:6, 7). It is true that God uses ordinary men to accomplish extraordinary things, but the Lord of the harvest is the One who builds His church.

In this issue, we will explore how God uses faithful men to proclaim the Good News of the gospel and train “men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). We highlight the harvest of faithfulness on the other side of the world that is impacting an entire continent. And we give an example of steadfast, hard-working faithfulness in ministry in small-town America.

Yours for the Master,

John MacArthur

The Theology of Sleep: Trusting the Lord of the Harvest

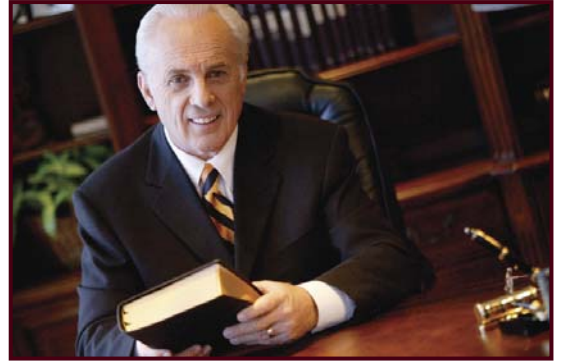
*John MacArthur, D.D., Litt.D.
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Wherever I am in the world I sleep very well. To some degree, I believe that is related to my theology. If I believed that the salvation of souls depended on me, I don't know that I could sleep well. I understand the horrors of eternal hell, the wrath of God, and what's at stake. It is a passion for me to reach people with the gospel. And I suppose with that kind of conviction dominating my heart, I might have a hard time sleeping because of the urgency of the issues at hand. But my confidence is in the Lord and His power and not in me. So I can enjoy rest because my responsibilities are very limited.

Mark 4 is a kind of Magna Carta from our Lord on the issue of evangelism. The chapter begins with the Lord teaching again by the sea. With a very large crowd gathered around Him on the shore, He got into a boat in the sea, sat down, and began to teach them many things in parables.

This was a daily scenario for Jesus during His Galilean ministry. Massive crowds were so crushing that on numerous occasions the Lord and His Apostles could not even make it to a meal. But as large as the crowd was, very few of them were true believers, leading one of His disciples to ask Him, "Are there only a few who are being saved?" (cf. Luke 13:23).

The flesh would respond by saying, "We need a different strategy; this one is not really working." That is how flesh always responds to evangelistic disappointment, to low numbers. The response



might be, "Well, it's got to be our fault; we're not doing this the right way." That kind of fleshly thinking is behind all evangelical adjustments in the gospel—that somehow we must overcome the sinner's resistance. So we do that by creating a message packaged in a style familiar and comfortable to the sinner.

The church has always suffered from a parade of entrepreneurial types offering to change the results by changing the message. This must have been in the back of the minds of the disciples, wondering, "Are we going about this the right way? When does all this messianic fulfillment come to pass?" So a year before the Great Commission, the Lord gives a whole chapter on evangelistic instruction. It is foundational and critical to understanding biblical evangelism.

In Mark 4:26-27, He begins, "The Kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day and the seed sprouts and grows—how, he himself does not know." The Kingdom of God, the sphere of salvation over which He reigns, is like seed that sprouts and grows, yet the farmer—the agricultural expert—does not know how it happens. The soil produces crops by itself!

This is the wonder of the gospel: you sow the gospel, you go to sleep, and it grows. The only human act is to sow and go to sleep, while the crop mysteriously grows. This is the language of the Apostle Paul—some sow, some water, and God

gives the increase. This is also bound up in John 1:12-13: “To as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become sons of God, even to those who believe on His name, who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Spiritual birth—spiritual life—is a divine miracle.

The same metaphor is used in Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, “You must be born again” (John 3:7). It is something beyond you, and Nicodemus gets it. In verse 4, he said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” He is talking in metaphoric language: “I can’t do that! I’m not in charge of my birth. I can’t be in charge of my rebirth. How does that happen?”

Jesus does not say to him, “Here are four steps; here are three steps; pray this prayer.” He says to him, “That is really beyond your power. The wind blows where it wishes; you hear the sound of it; you don’t know where it comes from; you do not know where it is going—so is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). It is a divine work, a heavenly miracle. The seed grows, but the farmer does not have an idea how it happens because he is not in charge of the power. The Spirit does His work. The Spirit blows in like the wind, transforming, regenerating the heart.

The thief on the cross, a criminal worthy of execution, affirmed the sinlessness of Christ (Luke 23:41). What happened to the thief? The only explanation for the faith of that thief was the power of God on his soul. Is one’s cleverness somehow the source of conversion? While the Lord Jesus, at His weakest moment, hangs on that cross, the Spirit of God brings life to a dead heart, a clear faith and understanding bursting forth in salvation. This is the greatest conversion moment in the New Testament. The parable says, “Sow the seed and go to sleep,” because you are not in charge of the results.



Back in Mark 4:28, the seed sprouts and grows “by itself.” The Greek is *automate*, from which we get “automatically.” Used elsewhere only in Acts 12:10, when Peter was released from his chains, the prison gate opened automatically. God opened the gate. And the crop grows automatically. It is divine automate.

We may be the means, but we are not the power. We may be the secondary agency, but we are not the causing agency. We have no role but to sow the seed, go to sleep, and let the work of God be done—and it will be done in the most amazing ways. The success of the gospel does not depend on your power, manipulation, or entrepreneurial skills. But there are essential elements in that automatic operation that must be there.

The first element is *humility*. It is not in our power to do the work. The disciples were very familiar with the sowing scenario where the fields were crisscrossed with beaten paths (4:3ff). What they were not familiar with is verse 8: “Other seed fell into the good ground and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop that produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.”

This was unheard of! This had to be good news to the disciples who were beleaguered by the fact that there were so very few who were interested. Our Lord says to them in this little parable that there is coming a harvest that is going to be massive. You know the story. There are three kinds of fruitless soil: the hard soil, the rocky soil, and the weedy soil. There are three kinds of good soil: the thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and a hundred-fold.

Our Lord explains the parable: “The sower sows the Word” (4:14). The sower is anybody who throws seed. Whether you have a tattered burlap seed bag, or a designer seed bag, anybody who throws seed is a sower. But the issue is not the sower; the issue in the parable is soils. The rest of

the parable is simply an explanation of soil. Matthew 13 says the soil is the heart. I can sow the seed, but I cannot change the heart. Like the farmer, I just sow the seed and go to sleep, but I am not in charge of the heart.

It is not enough to make Jesus attractive. It is not enough to make people have good feelings about Jesus, nor is it enough to get people to activate their will for some personal benefit. Hearts are the issue. There are hard hearts, those impervious to the appeal of Christ. There are superficial hearts—the rocky soil people who receive the truth joyfully for a little while. But joy is not an indication of saving faith. True repentance is not necessarily joyful; it might be agonizing. There are the weedy soil distracted, double-minded hearts caught up in the things of this life.

Ultimately, we have no power over those hearts. We cannot give life to the dead, light to the darkened, or sight to the blind. It is solely the Lord's work to take out the stony heart and give a heart of flesh, to put the Spirit in the heart (Ezek 36:26-27; Deut 30:6). So we approach this ministry humbly; we are simply the human means. We sow seed.

The second element is *obedience* (4:21): "A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not brought to be put on the lamp-stand?" We are humble because we know we are not the power in salvation. But we are obedient because we know we possess the light. That is the point of that story. One might say, "Well, if it's all the power of God, then I don't have any role to play." We do not cover up the light, though; you are the lamp. We are humble because we know we are not the power to change the heart. But we are obedient because we know we are the means by which the light comes (Rom 10:14; Acts 1:8).

The third element is *diligence*. Some people say, "This takes the motivation out of evangelism." But



Jesus says, "Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you and more will be given you besides" (4:24-25). How diligent should we be? Here is the motivation: usefulness in gospel evangelism is proportionate to the seed sown and leads directly to eternal reward. Sow sparingly; reap sparingly. Sow bountifully; reap bountifully. You sow the seed humbly, obediently, and diligently, knowing that your usefulness is proportionate to your sowing. This leads to divine blessing, eternal reward, and purchased friends for eternity.

The last element is *confidence*. In Mark 4:30-32, Jesus said, "How shall we picture the Kingdom of God? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown on the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are sown on the soil, yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade."

We sow confidently because God has determined an exponential outcome. A tiny mustard seed produces explosive growth—a bush as high as fifteen feet and as wide as five or six feet. The Kingdom is going to rise like that. From small beginnings, no one could ever imagine that very soon people would be saying about this little kingdom, "These people are turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). The final explosive growth of the Kingdom is that the gospel spreads across the world and the church spreads across the world, ultimately culminating in the glorious, final reign of Jesus Christ over the whole earth.

We can sow the seed humbly, obediently, diligently, confidently, and leave the results to the Lord. To be a part of this is exciting, because the burden is not mine, except to sow the seed. ■

Faithfully Strengthening the Church in South Africa

From opposite sides of the world, the lives of two men converged in a completely unexpected way for the glory of God and the building up of Christ's church. One coming from the classrooms of The Master's Seminary in California and the other coming from family rejection and false theology in South Africa, the two were united in God's sovereign plan to strengthen the church in Africa.

Joseph is his name, and, like his biblical namesake, he took a long, painful journey to see the Lord's plan accomplished. Raised in South Africa in an African Traditional Religion environment, Joseph's religious upbringing include a potpourri of animism (belief in existence of a soul in plants, animals, and inanimate objects), animal sacrifices, ancestor worship, and even some Scripture. At the age of 20, Joseph and his brother attended a Pentecostal evangelistic crusade where both received Christ as Savior. Excited about their new faith, the young men returned home to tell their father—a pastor in the Old Apostolic Church (African Traditional Religion). The true gospel came into conflict with the false gospel. The young men were beaten, thrown out into the bush to survive, and even warned by the police to stay away from their father. It was during this trial that Joseph began to pray about proclaiming the gospel full-time as a minister of Christ—thus eventually coming to Christ Seminary in Polokwane, South Africa. In his new faith, however, Joseph was exposed to large doses of Word of Faith theology. He was an avid follower of Benny Hinn, and actually had a poster of him which he brought to seminary to put up by his bed. During his first year in seminary, Joseph



*David and
Carol Beakley
with lion cubs*

proclaimed, "I will have every lecturer speaking in tongues before I graduate. You just watch!"

On July 1, 2002, David Beakley (M.Div. '02) arrived with his wife, Carol, and their children to train African pastors as a faculty member of Christ Seminary in Polokwane. His training at The Master's Seminary had prepared him to effectively give a theological foundation to the pastors-in-training. Understanding the worldview and backgrounds of his students, however, proved to be a new educational experience for David. It became clear that a large part of his ministry would entail responding to the impact of spiritual error and customs that had influenced his students. When David first arrived at Christ Seminary, he began teaching Hermeneutics, Theology, and other classes essential to train pastors.

Serving as the Academic Dean and Lecturer, David has now seen over a decade of God's faithfulness at Christ Seminary. Their children, raised primarily in Africa, are now back in the U.S., but four years ago David and Carol took in a Zimbabwean orphan named "Handsome," whom they are raising and helping to make a life in Africa.



*David teaching
at Christ
Seminary*

Started in 1997 with eight students and now part of The Master's Academy International (TMAI) family, Christ Seminary operates in a unique fashion. They work hand-in-hand with local churches to give further training to men already identified as faithful and capable. The men they train are active in local church ministry, so the program is designed around a modular system. The students attend lectures for ten days per month, after which they return to their homes and churches to complete assignments and serve in their ministerial capacities.

The faculty strives to shepherd these men with a multifaceted approach beyond the classroom. First, they set an example by their own personal involvement in local church ministry. Second, they mentor each student in the area of personal character development. Finally, they train students in the context of each student's current ministry, giving instruction and feedback for immediate ministry situations.

The Lord has blessed the training of pastors at Christ Seminary. This past November, 14 students graduated, bringing the total to 150 graduates now serving in local churches all over Africa (and even one in the U.S. and one in Germany). They offer both a Diploma of Theology and Bachelor of Theology and this year will be able to offer an Honors Degree (the equivalent of a Master of Divinity). Four graduates are working toward Master of Theology degrees. The seminary has now grown to have five full-time South African lecturers (three of whom are graduates of Christ Seminary themselves) and two part-time lecturers. The need for pastoral training in Africa has been felt deeply all over the continent. Recently, the student body was made up of men speaking 17 languages from 14 different African countries—more than 20% of Africa.

In 2002, David's very first group of first-year students was highlighted by the arrival of an unforgettable young man: Joseph. Though Joseph had been exposed to depths of theological error in the



Faculty of Christ Seminary

Front Row: Johann Odendaal, Charlie Rampfumedzi, David Beakley (TMS M.Div. '02)

Back Row: Gerhard van Emmenus, Joseph Mahloala, Andrew Isiabo (not pictured: Nathan Odede)

Word of Faith movement, he was a man continually pursuing the truth. As he was exposed to the two-edged sword of the Scriptures, Joseph began to change. His classes at Christ Seminary placed him squarely in the sights of the Word of God, forcing him to challenge previously held beliefs and answer tough questions from the Bible. The exegetically-based theology of Christ Seminary, combined with Joseph's unquenchable thirst for biblical truth, straightened out his error and gave him a foundation upon which to shepherd God's people.

However, with learning can come great pride—and Joseph had to learn humility. While in seminary, Joseph became the pastor of a rural Baptist church where he was living. As with many African churches, the women's committee ran



Graduation at Christ Seminary

the church. After Joseph learned the biblical truth of Paul's instruction to Timothy that "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man" (1 Tim 2:12), Joseph was anxious to immediately and instantly apply this to his church. David, along with Joseph's other mentors, had to intervene before Joseph returned home to his church. They counseled Joseph that the lesson for him was to be humble and patient. They urged him to return home to lovingly shepherd his flock, teach them the Scriptures, and let the unfolding truth of God's Word do its work over time.

Joseph returned home, patiently bringing the Scriptures to bear in the lives of his people, and eventually the women's committee voluntarily gave Joseph all authority as senior pastor. Joseph has developed into a powerful preacher of God's Word, with a unique ability to preach in multiple languages. Now married with two children, Joseph was faithful to shepherd that flock for over five years before God called him to his current ministry: full-time lecturer at Christ Seminary. Having completed his Honors Degree, Joseph Mahlaola is—according to the student body—the most feared



The Beakley family

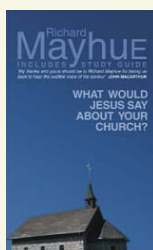
Greek teacher. In addition to Greek, he teaches Bible Survey and Hermeneutics.

Once a man who was led astray by false doctrine and practices, Joseph now proclaims the "way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26), and is now a trusted friend and co-worker of David and the other faculty members of Christ Seminary. Of the six lecturers, David Beakley is now the only non-African. This is the future of Christ Seminary—Africans who are trained to minister to fellow Africans both in the local church and in the training of future pastors. ■

Faculty Book Highlights



In John MacArthur's recent book, *Strange Fire: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*, he chronicles the unsavory history behind the modern charismatic movement. MacArthur exposes the charismatic celebrities who promote a "Christianity" without Christ and a Holy Spirit without holiness. He lays out a clear case for rejecting its false prophets, speaking out against their errors, showing true reverence to the Holy Spirit, and, above all, clinging to the Bible as the inerrant, authoritative Word of God—the one true standard by which all truth claims must be tested.



Richard Mayhue, Dean of The Master's Seminary, investigates the churches mentioned in the Bible: the seven churches of Asia in the book of Revelation, the four Greek churches, and the church in Jerusalem. A scriptural guide to study God's will for Christ's church, *What Would Jesus Say About Your Church?* provides an objective tool to learn God's will for the church and to evaluate the effectiveness and obedience of a local church body. One TMS graduate writes, "I used this book in preparation of a sermon series on the church. It is a must-read for church leadership and laymen alike."

Both books are available at gbibooks.com.

We Train Men as if Lives Depended on It.

Modeling Faithfulness in a Small Town Ministry

At The Master's Seminary, we regularly receive calls from small churches in rural areas that hope to secure a TMS graduate as their pastor. It is often a challenging ministry choice—dealing with entrenched attitudes and traditions, lack of resources, and diminished potential for ministry growth. The man who accepts this call must be patient, loving, and, most of all, faithful. There are precious saints of the Lord in our rural communities who need the tender care of a faithful shepherd. This is the story of one such man and his wife who answered this challenge.

When Ashley Anderson (M.Div. '07) retired after many years as a school superintendent, it was with the idea of spending the rest of his life in total devotion to serving Christ for His glory. Having lost his wife to cancer, he moved to Southern California to attend The Master's Seminary in order to equip himself more fully for ministry. This was continuing a family tradition, but not in the usual fashion. The Master's Seminary has seen numerous sons of graduates come to TMS, but in Ashley's case, the father was coming second. Both his son, Jonathan (M.Div. '04), and son-in-law, Smedly Yates (M.Div. '07), are alumni of The Master's Seminary. Jonathan is ministering in Florida while Smedly serves in Arizona.

Seminary was a rich time for Ashley in two ways—the first not surprising and the second quite a surprise. First, he was enriched by the education he received to be thoroughly equipped to expound the



Ashley and Janet Anderson

Word of God accurately and with theological precision. His love for Christ resulted in a burning desire to serve Him full-time, and TMS provided the foundation to do this. His involvement at Grace Community Church provided an outlet for ministry as well. Second, above and beyond his expectations for seminary, Ashley met Janet, a fellow member of Grace Community Church. Like Ashley, Janet had lost her spouse to cancer. The two were married when Ashley was halfway through seminary. Between them, they have five children and seventeen grandchildren.

Upon graduation, Ashley accepted a call to pastor Friant Foothill Bible Church in the Central California town of Friant. Like many small towns, Friant finds its heritage in the economics of the past. In the 1920s, White & Friant Lumber Company employed the majority of the town's citizens, ultimately giving the town its name. Today, Friant is in many ways a typical small town with good citizens in the community, but there also is an element of drug culture and criminal activity, and, as in all places, a need for the gospel of Christ.

Friant Foothill Bible Church has been in existence for several decades, but has experienced a continual turnover of pastors. A founding elder (who recently went home to be with the Lord) had told Ashley and Janet that he had seen essentially four different congregations come and go. When the Andersons first arrived, some in the church

had trouble accepting the idea of preaching verse-by-verse through books of the Bible, but after six years of faithfully expounding God's Word, Ashley believes the value of expository preaching is being seen and felt at Foothill. Consistently staying gospel-focused, his preaching often has a strong salvation emphasis to remind the believers of the joy of their redemption and to continue to minister God's grace to those yet to believe. And it has been a growing experience for all involved. Ashley has seen the value of this ministry in stretching his own faith and helping him trust the Lord all the more when some do not seem to grasp the truth of the gospel.

Ashley and Janet came with the intention to roll up their sleeves to faithfully serve, and in doing so they have involved themselves in every level of ministry. Ashley preaches and shepherds the church members. Another elder, whom Ashley characterizes as "an eager learner," now teaches two Bible classes a week for the church. Janet has been active in promoting women's discipleship and fellowship, as well as playing piano for Sunday worship. Together, Ashley and Janet have organized an after-school Bible club in their home for grade school students to further proclaim the gospel.

Like any church in a rural community, Foothill has had its share of challenges. Ashley has buried several church members since his arrival, and others have moved away geographically, but through the faithful preaching of the Word, a core of devoted individuals have kept the church going through thick and thin.

Most people have never heard of Friant, California, but in the economy of God, the devotion of His servants there have put it on the map of heaven as God feeds His flock through a trustworthy shepherd. We are grateful for Ashley and Janet, models of faithfulness. ■

Alumni Ministry

"The things which you have heard from me . . . entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

—2 Timothy 2:2

WILLIO DESTIN (M.Div. '08), along with his wife, Neecole, has just arrived in Haiti to minister alongside pastors and church leaders by training them in the Scriptures. A native Haitian, Willio has a deep desire to equip Christian leaders in Haiti and has founded More Than Bread ministries. The goal is to clearly proclaim the Bible as the sole authority for life and doctrine in the church. Specifically, Willio will be training pastors in the areas of Bible exposition, biblical scholarship, and applied theology. While praying and exploring ministry options in Haiti, Willio served for five years as a professor in the Los Angeles Bible Training School (led by Dr. Paul Felix, Associate Professor of New Testament at TMS).

Willio's desire to minister in his homeland was born while attending a chapel service at The Master's Seminary. He was deeply affected by a visiting missionary who shared his desire for men to minister in their home countries, where they know the language and culture. Before moving to Boston



Willio and Neecole Destin with their daughter, Abigail

in 1990, Willio had spent the first decade of his life in Haiti—and still speaks both native languages of Haiti fluently. So, in the midst of a seminary chapel service, Willio began praying about Haiti.

In 2006, Willio traveled to Haiti with a team of friends and pastors to explore ministry opportunities. Focusing on Haitian villages rather than the big city, Willio learned from his meeting with local pastors that the top need of these men was training. The seminary in the capital (Port-Au-Prince) was too far away and the pre-seminary requirements were too advanced for many of them. These



pastors—living in the poorest country in the western hemisphere—did not ask for food, clothing, or hospitals. Instead, they asked for the Word of God. The people needed more than bread, and thus the ministry, More Than Bread, was born to serve Haitian pastors and their churches.

In 2007, Willio and a group of TMS alumni traveled to Haiti to organize a pastor's conference and continue the exploration of ministry possibilities. Additionally, they selected two local men and sponsored them for seminary training so that they could in turn serve as instructors for the Bible Institute that is forming under the direction of More Than Bread.

We praise the Lord that Willio and Neecole are now in Haiti full-time and beginning the work of strengthening the church. ■

The Master's Seminary Welcomes New Faculty Member

Dr. James Mook has joined the faculty of The Master's Seminary (Associate Professor of



Theology) as of January 2014. Dr. Mook received Christ as Savior in 1963 following an evangelistic service in a Baptist church. Dr. Mook married his wife, Nancy, the same year he

received his Doctor of Theology degree. He accepted a call to pastor a Bible church in south Texas, where he served for five years. For the next twenty-two years, Dr. Mook taught Systematic Theology at Capital Bible Seminary (CBS) in Lanham, Maryland. He served as the Chairman of Systematic Theology (starting in 1998) and as the Th.M. Program Director (starting in 2007). Throughout his years at CBS, Dr. Mook often preached in churches, at retreats, and at seminars. As a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, he has read several papers at national meetings. In addition to writing short articles for magazines, Dr. Mook authored "The Church Fathers on Genesis, the Flood, and the Age of the Earth" in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth*. Dr. Mook is known for his love of his students. Ever pastoral in his interactions, he brings to The Master's Seminary the mind of a theologian and the heart of a pastor. He is keenly aware of the dual necessity of training men in the knowledge of Scripture and in the godly character needed to shepherd Christ's church. He is also passionate about mentoring students who have potential to teach theology on a collegiate or graduate level. Dr. Mook is a welcome, seasoned addition to the faculty of The Master's Seminary.



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