

Upcoming Events...

Preaching Workshop

Preaching Hebrews . . . a Better Way is the theme for the conference scheduled for 25-26 September. This is the seventh such annual conference at the RTC.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most intriguing and difficult books of the Bible. It also has a rich and relevant message for

the church today. Because it is so difficult, preachers may sometimes be tempted to bypass Hebrews. To encourage church leaders not to succumb to this temptation faculty members have been working hard to come to grips with this challenging portion of Scripture.

It is our prayer that this book will be expounded from our pulpits more frequently than is often the case.

In this endeavour we will be assisted by the Rev. Mike Raiter, the Principal of the Bible College of Victoria. We are anticipating that with God's help this will be a very enriching conference for all who attend. So please enroll now.

Registration forms are available from the College.

preaching Hebrews ...a better way

RTC Preaching Workshop
25 & 26 September 2008

Newsletter
Spring 2008

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Newsletter

Spring 2008

Student Reflections

Students in their final year of study were invited to contribute to this newsletter. They were asked to reflect on their college experience. What has their time at the RTC meant to them personally? What were some of the main lessons learned? What are they taking with them into the rest of their lives? These are useful questions to consider but difficult to answer in a paragraph or two.

Below are the contributions of those who rose to the challenge. These students are completing all of the major courses the RTC offers. Hopefully the result is a representative sample of student impressions of the College. What can be safely said is that each of these students, whatever their precise course of study, would like to see their numbers more than replaced in the coming years.

Andrew de Vries

Ordination Student

I arrived at the RTC in July 2007 and had a number of unanswered questions:

- what could the RTC teach me that I couldn't get at another college elsewhere?
- what were the lecturers like?
- how would I be accepted by the student body?

As I now reflect on the year behind me, I am convinced that coming to the RTC to complete a year of 'Reformed Distinctives' has been a vital part of my theological education.



The subjects I completed were particularly geared for preparing me for ministry within the CRCA. The courses on preaching and the creeds and confessions are not offered elsewhere and gave me many new insights and skills.

The lecturers have a wealth of experience, both in the academy and in practical ministry, making them uniquely equipped to prepare future ministers and lay workers.

The student body is welcoming and I immediately felt part of a loving community that helped me practically and spiritually. Add to that the great devotions, the regular small groups, the benefits of small class sizes, the well resourced library, and the good humour that pervades college life, and it was a recipe for a year of spiritual, social, and intellectual growth. I would highly commend the college to anyone considering theological studies.

Alison McDonald

Graduate Diploma

I am now in my sixth and final semester of study at the RTC. Over the past three years I have debated with Origen, wrestled with the doctrine of creation, researched the "I am" statements in John's Gospel, and I'm finishing off by diving into a hermeneutical spiral!

Under the tutelage of the RTC lecturers, I have undoubtedly increased in my knowledge and understanding of the Bible. But more than that, I have been inspired and challenged to apply this learning to my life. I thank God for the invaluable opportunity to study at RTC and to learn



from the learned, godly and humble lecturers whose ministry is dedicated to teaching God's Word at the College. I have also appreciated the efforts of the College staff who work hard to create an environment conducive to study.

Although it is time for me to finish, I pray that the knowledge I have gained and the godly example I have witnessed, will continue to encourage and challenge me as I seek to serve God in my life after RTC.

Brendan Short

Degree

I have had many opportunities to teach God's Word in sermons, small groups and seminars in recent months. As I have done so, I have greatly benefited from the studies I have done through the RTC in Hebrew and Greek, Old and New Testaments.

I have noticed that these studies have enriched and deepened my understanding and my ability to teach the Bible clearly. There are many things that I observe in the text and in connections between texts which would not be clear to me if I had not spent the previous years studying to equip myself to handle the word of truth well.

I am very thankful for the years I have spent at the RTC learning from lecturers who love the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus. I know that my studies have not only grown me in knowledge, but also in usefulness and godliness.



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Anthony van Bommel

Diploma

In the past year and a half I have been studying a Diploma of Theology at the RTC. Throughout this time I have experienced a journey which has been difficult, challenging, frustrating, and overwhelming – studying has never been my forte.

However, by God's good grace, He has carried me through so far and He has taught me much about Himself through this course, equipping me with new abilities and skills which I can now take into whatever purpose God may have for me in the future.

The diploma course has given me a fuller understanding and better framework of the whole Bible and a more thorough biblical perspective for Kingdom service.

I would recommend the diploma to every believer, especially to men who may be called into church leadership or other church roles. I thank the Lord for the privilege of study. I continue to hope and trust that He will use this time to prepare and guide me for whatever it is He has in store for me in the future.

Anita van Ameyde

Diploma

My time spent studying at the RTC this year has been excellent. It is such a great opportunity that the Lord has provided for me to be here. It is an experience that He is definitely using to teach and grow me. It's so good being able to study from the Word every day and being able to really delve into it.

It has been quite a busy time and it can get quite tiring as we are given so much information in the lectures. In this type of learning there is also another step to take. It can't just stay as head knowledge. It needs to be applied to the heart as well. This is where a lot of prayer is needed



and time taken to 'unpack' all the information that is learnt.

By the grace of God, it is the most rewarding (and convicting) part and something that I am sure will be going on long after this year is finished to wherever the Lord leads me in the future.

The RTC has such a great community. One of the positives of it being so small is that everyone is able to get to know each other really well and be part of a little student family (even if there is a bit of trans-Tasman rivalry!).

The lecturers are excellent. They know so much but have a real concern for each student as a fellow believer. The thing that struck me the most was that these men have all this knowledge and yet one of my classes only has three or four people in it. It seems such a waste that there are all those empty seats. What a blessing it would be to have the classrooms filled to the brim with men and women wanting to learn more about our amazing God! It is the most important stuff there is to know.

Hayden Shell

Evening Course

It is over six years since I commenced my study at the RTC evening classes. During that time I have gained much.

Two main benefits stand out. Firstly, I have come closer to God than at any other time of my life. The study of the Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, cannot but help my spiritual life as well as gaining knowledge.

God has also called me to do pastoral and evangelistic work. The lectures in both these areas have enabled me to do these things better. The course in Ethics helped me as well. The advantage of studying at night has enabled me to have the daytime free to do ministry work. The courses are not just pie in the sky, but really are practical.



Study Opportunities in 2009

A wide variety of courses is available from the RTC – full-time and part-time; on campus and online; day and evening; and at degree, diploma and certificate levels.

The RTC seeks to train students not only for ordained ministry but for a range of ministries in the church, in the community and on the mission field. With these goals in mind the RTC is offering the following courses in the coming year:

- Diploma of Theology/Ministry:** This two-year course is open to all candidates who have completed Year 12 or the equivalent. Students will be required to complete basic subjects in Bible, theology and church history, as well as in areas of pastoral practice. After an added year of full-time study candidates are eligible for the Advanced Diploma of Theology/Ministry.
- Bachelor of Ministries:** This is a three-year course for those qualified for admission to an Australian university. Students are taught to interpret the Scriptures within their historical context, become familiar with the major theological tenets of the Christian faith, and gain an appreciation for the major developments in the history of the church. They will also acquire skills appropriate to ministry in one or more areas of pastoral practice.
- Bachelor of Theology:** Entry qualifications are the same as for the Bachelor of Ministries. There is much overlap between the two degrees, but the Bachelor of Theology has a stronger academic emphasis with requirements in the biblical languages. For the supporting denominations of the RTC this is the degree required for ordained ministry. Students doing well in this degree may proceed to honours level at the RTC with one further year of study.
- Bachelor of Christian Studies:** This is a three-year course. Normally two years are completed at the RTC and one year at an Australian university. The aim of the degree is to enable students to apply a Christian perspective and

commitment to their life in the world, including their professional and vocational life.

- Associate Degree in Theology:** This two-year course enables students to major in the foundational subjects in biblical studies, church history and theology. Students can expect to gain a well-informed outlook on Christian life and ministry. This course can also provide the groundwork for more specialised study.
- Graduate Diploma of Divinity:** This one-year course is open to those who already have a primary, non-theological degree (or equivalent). Students are required to complete eight subjects. Usually these are in the core areas of Bible, theology and church history, although some students have also been known to take the biblical languages and pastoral care subjects.
- Online Courses:** For the first semester of 2009 the following two subjects are available:
The Doctrines of Grace and Eschatology (TH401/601) and **The Church to 1550** (CH301/501). Both subjects may be taken at either degree or graduate diploma level.
- Evening Courses:** The two Certificates being offered in 2009 are the **Certificate in Theology** and the **Certificate in Pastoral Ministry**. The first semester will again be divided into two terms of five weeks each.
The subjects to be taught during Term 1 are **What Christians Believe (God and Man)** by Bill Berends, and **Pastoral Care** by Murray Capill. In Term 2 Steve Voorwinde will teach the **Pastoral Epistles** and Bill Berends will teach **What Christians Believe (Grace and Hope)**.

For eligible students in full-time degree and diploma courses both Austudy and FEE-Help are available.

For more information about costs and fees please contact the College office.

DO YOUR BEST TO PRESENT YOURSELF TO GOD AS ONE APPROVED, A WORKMAN WHO DOES NOT NEED TO BE ASHAMED AND WHO CORRECTLY HANDLES THE WORD OF TRUTH.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

New Staff

Kees Vanderstoep started in his position as Property Services Co-ordinator on 5 May, replacing Bruce Walker who had served in this capacity for the past two years. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Bruce for his work and wish him the Lord's blessing as a music teacher in a local private school.



Kees is a member of the Geelong Christian Reformed Church. He is a painter by trade and also served as the caretaker of Rehoboth Christian School in Western Australia for more than nine years. His wife Henriet has secretarial skills and volunteers her services at the RTC office one day a week. In Kees and Henriet we thank the Lord for his gracious provision at the College.

Since the beginning of the present semester we have also been blessed with new staff in the kitchen.

Adele Ford, a diploma student, and **Kim Spits**, wife of degree student Jason, have taken over from Bronwyn Hale. Both are experienced chefs and share the cooking responsibilities between them. With some fifty-five residents for dinner on week days their task is a significant one. Again we see God's hand in bringing them to our community at this particular time.



Ian Winter, Roger Rickard, Lucas Pardo & Pamela Barrand

New Students

Pamela Barrand has enrolled as a graduate diploma student. A physical therapist by profession Pamela has practised in her native USA and in Australia. She is married with four children. For many years she served as the music director of her local Baptist church. Pamela also teaches Christian education in the public school system. She would like to complete her theological qualification over the next two years.

Lucas Pardo is married with four children. The family worships at the McKinnon Reformed Presbyterian Church in Melbourne. Lucas worked as an engineer for a number of years since migrating to Australia from El Salvador. He commenced online studies with the RTC last semester. He now attends classes one day per week in Geelong while also doing subjects via distance mode with Ridley College in Melbourne. Lucas is enrolled as a graduate diploma student.

Roger Rickard has recently returned to Geelong with his wife Fiona and daughter Amelia. He had been following a career in telecommunications that has taken him to different parts of Australia. Roger is keen to gain a deeper understanding of God's Word and to be used by the Lord wherever He leads him beyond college. He has enrolled as a full-time student in the Bachelor of Theology program.

Ian Winter has served in lay leadership in local Geelong churches. Currently he is serving as an elder with Church by the Bay in Portarlington. He is keen to be more effective in his ministry and has enrolled in two subjects as a part-time student for the Bachelor of Christian Studies degree. His RTC studies are taken in tandem with management courses at the University of Ballarat.