

# SMI *From My Perspective...*

Leadership is not easy. Many times it involves taking a stand and extending accountability. And often times this encounters resistance, and grumblers sometimes become enemies because of their self-focus, self-involvement and self-preservation. But doing the right thing is what is required of effective leaders. And doing the right thing is not always doing what is easy.

In the midst of a culture in which doing what's right is often considered 'relative' to the individual making the decision, churches and ministries are often faced with the pressure to disregard the laws of the land and provide tax-deductible receipts for contributions given for the benefit of individuals or personal gain. SMI strongly desires to shine brightly in the darkness of such disobedience. As tax exempt nonprofit organizations subject to federal regulations, ensuring transparency and legitimacy of program emphases and expenditures is essential. The privilege of offering a tax deduction for contributions received does not allow us to hide behind "separation of church and state". Even Christ said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to the Lord what is the Lord's". Otherwise the church would not be all that different from the world.

It's no hidden truth that our government is suffering from issues of transparency and accountability. Even President Obama has recently identified the "deficit of trust" that is all too real. Why is it that leaders and organizations fall prey to seeing themselves as exempt from accountability and above the law? Healthy leadership proactively fosters, even seeks out, accountability and stands boldly to show itself transparent, humbly accepting probing questions and processes and honestly answering with forthcoming responses—because healthy leaders know they exist for something beyond themselves. They have a sense of selflessness and a heart for the people they impact. There is a sense of humility and an absence of pride that allows them to be guided and corrected because they know their actions affect those under their influence. They sacrifice for the sake of others' best interests rather than their own. And they possess the strength to always do what is right because it's the right thing to do, even when it's not easy and even when it's sometimes misunderstood. Humility and integrity are the hallmarks of healthy leadership. Discernment, confident resolve and commitment are its staying power. Are we as Christian leaders and organizations conducting ourselves in a manner that is deserving of people's trust? Are we adding to the deficit of distrust, or are we through our actions making efforts to balance it?

At SMI, we want our students to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their leadership influence because a healthy minister brings about a healthy ministry. Leadership is not easy, but effective leadership is made easier through self-awareness, sensitivity, self-correction and strength. May we be found faithful. Jimmy R. West  
Executive Director

## MINISTRY FOCUS

### Mentoring in Unlikely Places

Many years ago, there was a paper mill worker named Richard, with seminary training and a heart to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His opportunity finally came when a friend arranged for him to preach at a country church outside of St. Louis. However, the week before the preaching engagement, Richard was struck in the head with a hammer at work! Yet, undaunted, Richard kept his preaching assignment, arriving that day sporting his sermon in his hand and a bandage on his head.

Such determination has been a mark of the ministry God has given Richard "Dick" Tevebaugh and his faithful wife, Nell for nearly all of their 60 years of marriage. Dick and Nell live at Westminster Towers, a retirement community where he volunteers as the chaplain. They "adopted" us shortly after we moved to Rock Hill, having us over to dinner at the Towers a few times and bringing food (and some of her treats in a decorated tin can) to our house when we first moved in.

I have had the privilege of serving and learning under him these last several years, accompanying him as he has visited residents in the hospital, preached to them in the Vesper services, and led them in Bible studies. The overwhelming trait that characterizes him is "bold gentleness." His boldness may come partly from his past experiences in life. A veteran of the 82nd Airborne division during World War 2, where he fought in the Battle of the Bulge and in the final push toward Berlin, Dick knows what it means to make difficult decisions. Yet, he will tell you up front that his gentle spirit toward God and others is a work of God's grace through Christ in his life.

Hammers have not stopped Dick, nor anything else in his 80+ years. I have enjoyed learning from this saint of God and his lovely wife.

We also have enjoyed a few of the Towers' Monday night movies while serving the residents who attended popcorn and drinks. We have had many opportunities to visit residents on a more personal basis. During one visit, our son Ellis enjoyed talking with and viewing the paintings of an accomplished painter. Another afternoon, Ellis had the chance to sit and chat with a resident who is a former coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers. Our son Rion has become a bit renowned for his voluntary efforts to serve tea to the residents after the Sunday afternoon Vesper services. God has blessed us richly through this ministry.

*Roddey Caughman has been a part of SMI for the last five years while pursuing a Master of Divinity from Reformed Theological Seminary's extension in Charlotte, NC. Through SMI, he has ministered to the residents of Westminster Towers as well as the music ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Since graduating last May, Roddey continues to serve with SMI in this ministry here in the states while preparing to transition to serve Christ with his wife in the area of foreign, Deaf missions. SMI's program allows students to remain in ministry up to one year after graduation in order to facilitate a smooth transition into fulltime ministry or the mission field.*

Impacting the Kingdom, one future minister at a time.

### • • • • • ▪ Avenues of Giving

Donors have several options when giving to SMI:

1. Mail check or money order.

2. Monthly contributions can be automatically deducted from your checking account. Automatic contribution (EFT) forms are available on the website or from students.

3. Credit card via our website or electronically.

4. Many companies will match contributions made to non-profit organizations through their employee matching gifts program. We have received matching gifts from companies such as Macys, Exxon, AXA Financial, etc. as a result of donors' efforts to access these resources. Maximize your gifts by checking with your company to see if they have a matching program.

5. Many companies are limited in supporting religious organizations; however, employees can re-direct gifts through United Way to SMI. Simply communicate with your company's United Way representative to initiate this process.

6. Stock Donations: Individuals can take advantage of a tax deduction for appreciated stock gifts. Contact the SMI office for details.



### ▪ Spread the Word!

If you know of someone who can benefit from the ministry of SMI, please tell them about our ministry. Remember, it's not just students who can benefit—churches as well as schools and individuals benefit also.

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*"Theological education is a humbling process... Those of us involved in theological education want people to come out of the process with conviction, but not with arrogant, simplistic views. To be right is not just to have correct ideas, but to have a loving spirit and attitude toward other people. Humility, flexibility, a self-critical posture, a readiness to hear and serve others—that is what a good theological education reinforces."*

Richard J. Muow, PhD  
– President, Fuller Theological Seminary

Living  
life in  
such a  
way  
that  
God can  
give us  
away...

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## Our Vision

Our hope is that students will not only be blessed financially through SMI but they will be enriched spiritually and personally as well. During the time God has entrusted them to our care, our primary focus is to invest in this next generation of ministers. Our goal is to provide relevant resources to encourage and enhance their personal and professional growth. It is our desire that this investment in tomorrow's ministers will retain life-long effects with far-reaching rewards as they develop and equip those under their leadership and impact those who are involved in their ministries.

## Investing in Tomorrow's Ministers Today

- Personally
- Professionally
- Financially

## Our Mission

SMI empowers the next generation of ministers to maximize their opportunities today in order to increase their effectiveness tomorrow.

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*A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.*



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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