



Salt, Leaven & Light

HARDING
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BIBLE AND RELIGION

January 11, 2010

The College of Bible and Religion of Harding University seeks to lead all students to know, live and share God's Word and to understand, love and serve God's world through and beyond their chosen vocation.

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The College of Bible & Religion Blessing Ceremony

Twice each year, on the nights before the December and May graduations, the College of Bible & Religion hosts a blessing ceremony for our graduates. It is a special time, full of rich biblical symbols, in which the faculty expresses to the students the promise we have seen in them and the personal prayer we have for them. In the weeks leading up to the blessing ceremony, the list of graduates is sent to the faculty, and the teachers volunteer to write a personal blessing for a particular member of the graduating class.

The ceremony itself begins with a welcome from the COBR dean and the singing of *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*.



Teachers, students, family and friends gather in the McInteer Rotunda for the blessing ceremony.



The Great Commission and the mosaic map of the world provide a fitting backdrop for the ceremony.



Dr. Monte Cox presents his blessing for B. Chris Simpson.

The meaning behind what is about to take place is then presented, and one-by-one the graduates join the faculty members who have written their blessing at the front. Next, the faculty member places his hand on the shoulder of the graduate and reads the framed blessing that he has

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Lord, speak to me

that I may speak

in living echoes

of Thy tone:

As Thou has sought,

so let me seek

Thine erring children,

lost and lone.

Oh fill me with Thy

fullness, Lord,

Until my very heart

is a flow:

In kindling the 'i' and

glowing word,

Thy love to tell,

Thy praise to show.

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written for the occasion. During the reading, the student hold in his or her hand a small bowl and towel, symbolizing the serving example of Jesus from the thirteenth chapter of the Gospel of John.

Once all the blessings have been read, the entire graduating class gathers at the front, and the faculty stands behind them. A member of the faculty then leads a prayer in which we ask God to richly bless these graduates as they move on to the next phase of their lives. The ceremony concludes with the singing of *Lord, Speak to Me*.

For five years now, COBR has held a blessing ceremony for our graduates. We want our students to go out from here to do great things in the kingdom of God, confident that their teachers love them, believe in them, continue to be interested in them, and pray that God will richly bless them on the road ahead. The sights, sounds,



Friends Raul Alvarado, Jonathan Colvin, and B. Chris Simpson pose for a picture.



Dr. Paul Pollard leads the prayer of blessing as the teachers surround the graduates.



Dr. Dan Stockstill leads *Lord, Speak to Me* as the final prayer of the blessing ceremony.



Dr. Jim Johnston congratulates a student, Donald Johnston.

hugs, and symbols of the blessing ceremony are intended to convey just that. Our hope is that for many years to come, a framed blessing, a bowl, and a towel will remind them of these things.