

# New Context, Same Focus

by Daniel Ziegler



On Friday evening, Jon Showalter gave a presentation on his experiences in Christian higher education in the past 20 years. It was a farewell of sorts, because he's leaving his position at Rosedale Bible College and accepting a commission from RMM in North Africa. Despite the transition, Jon expects his life focus to remain on education, though in a radically different setting and through different means.

Twenty years ago, Jon Showalter began his tenure at RBI (now RBC). Over the years, RBC and Jon have both grown and changed. His responsibilities at home have grown as he and his wife Dawn work to raise a family of four boys. Responsibilities at RBC have also grown as Jon moved from the faculty to a position as academic dean. A constant in Jon's life, however, has been his love of teaching. "When I was asked to be dean," said Jon in an interview on Friday, "I said 'I'll be dean, provided I can still teach a lot.'" Although he continued teaching, Jon's new role changed the emphasis of his work to include a greater focus on

administration. Jon referred to the position as an "enjoyable blend" of administration and teaching.

As Jon and his family prepare to leave Rosedale for a term in a radically different North African environment, Jon expects that his life's focus will continue to be on academia. "I enjoy the energy that accompanies learning and discussing ideas," says Jon. He and his family plan to begin their time in North Africa with a year of language study. "This will be dramatically different [from my time at RBC] because I'll be a student, not a teacher. Long term, however, I may find a teaching position in [North Africa]."

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Leaving the world of higher education for a time enables Jon to use educational principles in a different context. "RBC has prospered in the past in part because it has stayed connected to the mission of the church... the church is called to reach out and to pass on the message of the gospel.

RMM is focused on taking the message to the world, and RBC is focused on passing on the faith. But these are not separate." **BB**