

Seminary denies that Schuller is ignored: Crystal Cathedral pastor claims he's been shunned

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As a prominent pastor whose Crystal Cathedral was only a few stone throws away, Robert H. Schuller was invited along with the local Catholic bishop to extend greetings at the June 26 start of the Association of Theological Schools' biennial meeting in Garden Grove, California. But his ten minutes of remarks to hundreds of seminary officials also included a lament about being shunned by those clergy-training campuses.

"I never got an invitation to speak at a theological seminary," said Schuller in reviewing his success in reaching the unchurched and teaching other pastors through his annual institutes. "I'm on a level of practicality that seminaries would be embarrassed to put in catalogs," he observed, but added, "No one in this room has encountered secularism like I have." Before concluding, he reiterated: "I'm still waiting for my first invitation to lecture."

Not so, said a spokesperson for Schuller's alma mater, Western Theological Seminary, a Reformed Church in America school in Holland, Michigan, following an inquiry from the Century.

Schuller gave a lecture there in March 1982 titled "Self-Esteem: The New Reformation," a theme of one of his many books. In May 1997 the pastor presented the seminary's annual Alumni Day Lecture, "A Vision for the Church in the Third Millennium," on the same day he received the school's first Distinguished Alumnus Award, according to Rayetta Perez, assistant to Western Seminary President Dennis Voskuil, author of *Mountains into Gold Mines: Robert Schuller and the Gospel of Success*.