

What Expectations Do Pastors and Local Churches in the former Soviet Union Have of Higher Theological Education at the Beginning of the 21st Century?

Taras DYATLIK, *Rovno, Ukraine*

© Taras. Dyatlik, 2009

Introduction

Forty-two years ago, Doak S. Campbell, who was president of Florida State University for sixteen years (1941–1957), reflected on the crisis in Baptist higher education in the mid-twentieth century as follows:

Perennial crisis is the normal state of affairs. This would be the dominant impression created if the history of all institutions of higher learning founded by the people called Baptists could be encompassed in one narrative. The casual reader of such a story might conclude that, since some of those institutions still exist in spite of such continual crises, the present crisis in Baptist Higher Education is simply another in the long series of emergencies which, somehow or other, will be resolved in the normal course of events^[1].

Despite the fact that this was written more than forty years ago, what Campbell said is true more than ever with respect to evangelical higher education in the former Soviet Union. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, for a number of different reasons, local churches and pastors have displayed less and less interest in higher theological education. Following the period of rapid growth that began in the early 1990s, virtually all evangelical theological institutions have experienced not simply another crisis, but actually their first severe crisis with regard to numerous issues^[2], which will surely result in some of



Taras Dyatlik holds a Bachelor of Theology degree from Donetsk Christian University (1997) and a Master of Theology degree with an emphasis in Greek New Testament textual studies (2005) from Evangelische Theologische Faculteit (Leuven, Belgium). Presently he is a Ph.D. candidate at ETF specializing in Slavonic New Testament textual studies. Since 2008 he has been Coordinator of the EAAA Research Center. He is married with two children. Additional information is available at <http://dyatlik.net>.

^[1] "The Crisis in Baptist Higher Education," *Review and Expositor* (Winter 1967): 31.

^[2] For example, a shortage of adequate leadership, inadequate strategic planning, the absence of close relationships with local churches and pastors, an insufficient number of new students and of national faculty, a low level of scholarship, a lack of spiritual vitality among the students, etc.

the schools simply going out of existence. This is particularly true with regard to full-time theological programs since, at the same time, the number of students in various part-time programs has actually been growing.

As this tendency has increased more and more, theological institutions have begun considering the possible reasons for the decline. It would seem that in the current situation, theological schools need to seek answers to two crucial questions from local churches in order to determine how best to create among pastors a greater sense of the need for such schools. Looking backward: What are the reasons that local evangelical churches tend not to give much, if any, support to higher theological schools, and particularly to full-time programs? Looking forward: What are pastors' expectations of theological institutions, and which of these expectations have not been fulfilled?

This article represents a summary of qualitative research undertaken by Donetsk Christian University (substantially by the writer of this article) between 2005 and 2007, based on interviews with seventy pastors of local evangelical churches in five regions of the former Soviet Union: Western Ukraine, Southern Ukraine, Eastern Ukraine, Southern Russia, and Yakutia.

Statistics regarding Ukrainian theological schools^[3] can be found in a recent investigation conducted by Overseas Council International and the Euro-Asian Accrediting Association.^[4] The preface to that investigation states that, "the organizers of the project sought an-

swers to the main questions of theological education: To what extent does theological education answer the needs of the church and society? What improves the quality of graduates' preparation and what hinders it?"^[5] In contrast, the qualitative research done by the author sought to discover the main questions local churches and pastors are asking and how they feel about theological schools at the beginning of the twenty-first century, based on nearly twenty years of experience in cooperating with theological seminaries and Christian universities, colleges, schools, institutes, etc., in order to find answers to the two key questions posed above. There were four basic areas of inquiry:

1. What, in the pastors' view, is the basic purpose for the existence and functioning of a higher theological institution?
2. What programs would they like to see in a theological school?
3. What qualities would they like to see in students and graduates?
4. What qualities should characterize a professor in a higher theological institution?

At the end of the article some new directions will be proposed for qualitative research into how local evangelical churches perceive theological seminaries in the former Soviet Union. Some general suggestions will also be offered to those who minister in the field of theological education, in order that they might better meet the expectations of evangelical pastors without diminishing academic excellence. Certain of the pastors' ex-

^[3] Donetsk Christian University, Odessa Theological Seminary, and Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary

^[4] *The Effectiveness of Theological Education in Ukraine: A Research Project* (Odessa: EAAA, 2007).

^[5] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

pectations parallel those of evangelical churches in the United States and Western Europe. This may serve as a good reminder and confirmation of some universal expectations pastors have of theological institutions. The reader may also note, however, that certain expectations are unique to the context of the former Soviet Union, due to the absence of theological education for pastors until the late 1980s. The reader who has been involved in theological training in Ukraine or Russia may immediately recognize particular expectations conditioned by the specific post-Soviet context in which relationships have developed between seminaries and local evangelical churches.

The author of this article wishes to express deep appreciation to S. F. Rybikov (rector of Donetsk Christian University from 2002-2009) for his cooperation in making this research possible.

Further, it is the author's prayer and humble hope that the Lord will use the results of this research to enhance our ministry to local churches as theological educators so that we may better help churches to "grow up into Christ, who is the head. From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love" (Eph 4:15-16).¹⁶¹

1. Expectations of theological institutions in general

What is the ultimate goal of higher theological institutions? What kind of relationships do pastors expect between seminaries and local churches, as well as between theological schools? What is

their perception of the possibility of interdenominational cooperation in theological education?

1.1 The ultimate goal of higher theological institutions

During the interviews all sorts of opinions and expectations were expressed concerning the ultimate goal for the existence and functioning of theological schools. They can be broken up into three categories, reflecting three distinct central concerns: (1) the Bible and doctrine, (2) student character formation, and (3) missions and evangelism. Obviously, different pastors have different expectations, depending on the situation in their local churches. Some of them experience difficulty in the areas of biblical interpretation and doctrine; others have concerns regarding the spiritual maturity of theological students and graduates; while still others would particularly like to see more success in evangelism.

(1) It is expected that theological institutions (a) will prepare pastors and other ministers for local churches who will be able to interpret the Bible correctly ("teaching the message of truth accurately," 2Tim 2:15) in the face of religious pluralism; that students will become competent to maintain, teach, and transmit to new generations sound doctrinal understanding based on the Scriptures (cf. 2Tim 2:2: "And entrust what you heard me say in the presence of many others as witnesses to faithful people who will be competent to teach others as well"); and (b) will provide students with specific practical skills which can be used to build up local churches spiritually.

(2) It is expected that theological schools will teach their students (a) to

¹⁶¹ All quotations in this article are from the NET Bible unless otherwise indicated.

get to know Christ better and to learn from Him daily; (b) to seek the will of God and its realization in everyday life; and (c) as educated ministers, to be humble, maintaining respect for their home church and especially for the older generation of pastors and ministers (cf. 1Pet 5:5: “In the same way, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble”).

(3) It is expected that theological institutions will prepare more effective missionaries and evangelists who will be capable (a) of taking the news about Jesus Christ to highly educated people (the intelligentsia) who want to hear about the Gospel and faith in a more sophisticated way; and (b) of helping local churches provide more consistent and biblically-based answers to questions that contemporary Christians and unbelievers are asking.

Two additional perspectives, although brought up by only a handful of pastors, also need to be considered. First is the suggestion that higher theological education is relevant only for Christian intellectuals or for those believers who have been selected to engage in a more intellectual style of ministry. Second, and in marked contrast to the first, is the suggestion that theological schools ought to provide at least basic theological training—and, as much as possible, higher theological training, as well—to every church member who has the opportunity to receive it (an approach similar to a literacy campaign, but in theology).

Although only one pastor explicitly stated that the greatest need in local churches is for theologically educated

leaders, all three categories of expectations of theological institutions implicitly reflect the same idea—that local evangelical churches need leaders who are able to interpret the Scriptures accurately, to apply them to real life, and to transmit sound doctrine to a new generation of ministers; leaders who seek the will of God and have respect for the older generation of ministers; and leaders who are capable of preaching the gospel in a comprehensive way both to believers and unbelievers.

1.2 Relationships with local churches

“If a seminary has fewer contacts with local churches, it experiences more problems,” said one of the interviewed pastors. Even though most of the schools insist that their ultimate goal is to meet fully the expectations of local churches (if the reader does not believe this, he or she may simply ask the president of any evangelical theological school), the interviewed pastors assert that problems do, indeed, exist in relationships between local churches and seminaries. Despite correct mission statements, for some reason, something is not working. It is remarkable that almost every one of the seventy pastors from all five regions of the former Soviet Union where interviews were conducted complained that higher theological institutions in general have not built or maintained strong, stable relationships with local churches.

As they see it, such working relationships can emerge only as a result of close cooperation. This does not mean that there is no collaboration at all, but existing partnerships are exceedingly inconsistent and spasmodic. Theological schools could assist local churches not

only by means of their graduates (who, while providing help, also create special kinds of problems, which will be discussed below), but also by means of their students and faculty, who both could and should be contributing to church ministry much more than they are already doing in such areas as evangelism, preaching, leading Bible study groups, working with youth, helping in social work, etc. Local churches, in response, could give more assistance to theological schools by sending new students and by providing practical education (this will be discussed in a separate section below); in some instances they could even help financially or by supplying food; and pastors could get more involved by counseling students and even faculty members.

A number of the pastors who were interviewed also expressed their wish to receive printed prayer leaflets from seminaries—not, however, by e-mail, since most pastors of rural churches still do not have an Internet connection and therefore do not receive on a regular basis any information about the needs of theological schools. Most of the pastors would be ready to meet with representatives of seminaries once or twice a year to brainstorm about new points of contact, new areas of cooperation and new forms of partnership, and to discuss current problems between theological institutions and local churches. It is not at all expected that such meetings would involve hundreds of pastors and educators. They could be held within the bounds of a single city or geographical region (called an *oblast'* in Russian). But who will take the initiative to begin such meetings on a regular basis? Theological institutions currently look to the local churches, while the latter often expect the initia-

tive to come from the leadership of their church union or association.

Another dilemma pastors currently face is the great number of theological schools, especially in Ukraine, which often compete with each other to attract new students. For example, the Ukrainian Baptist Union alone has sixty-six theological institutions, including theological seminaries, two Christian universities (with theological departments), Bible colleges, schools and various institutes which run full- and part-time theological programs. By the late 1990s almost every regional (*oblast'*) branch of the Union had founded theological schools of various sorts to meet the specific needs of local churches.

Now, however, during this time of severe crisis, when virtually all seminaries are experiencing a lack of new students, pastors of local churches in every quarter are hearing a cry from the heart from many theological institutions: "Please send us new students or we may not survive!" One of the seminaries in Western Ukraine now has only four full-time students. Numerous schools offer attractive advertisements in order to attract new students which actually cause embarrassment to many pastors, when the students they send to these schools end up not experiencing what the advertising had promised. "The prestige of a seminary among local churches can be enhanced only by means of the quality of its academic programs and of its graduates, and not by its advertisements," commented one of the pastors.

How can a pastor make a decision under such circumstances? To which school should he give preference? This is another major source of anxiety expressed by most of the interviewed pastors, who sug-

gest that in order for better relationships to be established both with and between the schools, theological institutions need finally to begin cooperating with one another in creating a clearly defined three-level theological educational system, in which each school (whether it is a seminary, Christian university, college, etc.) knows its place and performs its task. Incidentally, in connection with this expectation, the Department of Education of the largest Baptist union in Ukraine took the initiative and invited the leaders of its schools to discuss perspectives on theological education on 29 January 2009. More information is available at <http://ecbua.info> (in Ukrainian).

1.3 Denominational issues

The vast majority of the interviewed evangelical pastors resist sending their church members to inter-denominational schools. By the term inter-denominational they usually mean higher theological institutions which accept into their programs new students from Baptist, Pentecostal, moderate charismatic, and other evangelical denominations. The main reason for their hesitancy is their fear that the students they send might be influenced by students from other denominations in such a way as to lead them to leave their own denomination. In order to avoid this problem, most pastors expect each theological school to have a well-defined, completely straightforward and clear statement of faith (not one that is too general in character or that has merely been translated from some English-language source), so that they can have an adequate understanding of the theological perspectives out of which their students will be trained.

During the past fifteen years heated controversies have arisen particularly over Calvinism vs. Arminianism, creating many divisions in local evangelical churches across Ukraine and Russia. Consequently, many Baptist pastors refuse to send students even to those schools which have only one or two professors who openly espouse Reformed doctrines and who might therefore exert a “destructive” influence upon their church members. “The conservative beliefs of theological institutions should be held so strongly that they will not be affected by either students or professors from other denominations,” asserts one of the pastors from Western Ukraine. Unfortunately, there are still many pastors in the former Soviet Union who equate Calvinistic theology with liberalism and assume that only Arminian theology is compatible with a conservative stance. This should be taken as a gentle but obvious hint that professors of theology would do well to hold seminars for pastors and local churches in the former Soviet Union, in order to explain the real differences between the theological views of Calvin and Arminius.

There is another group among the interviewed pastors who, for an entirely different reason, are strongly opposed to the idea of denominational schools accepting new students from other denominations. They argue that such “re-trained” students might start “ruining” their own local denominational churches with theological ideas borrowed from the other denomination. And they say furthermore that, in such cases, a theological school would be guilty of causing these controversies. A few pastors even asked the question, “Why would denominational schools prepare ministers for

other denominations? Let them prepare their ministers in their own theological institutions. But if a local church expects to get its students back following graduation, then it is essential that there be no students at all from other denominations in the theological school where they get their training.” Only an insignificant minority of the interviewed pastors is open to allowing their church members to study at such an “inter-denominational” theological school—and even then only if no more than five to ten percent of its students come from other denominations. Nonetheless, they do recognize that to keep this percentage under control is practically impossible, and therefore, as one pastor put it, “It would be better for each denomination simply to have its own theological institutions to meet the needs of its own local churches.”

2. Expectations of academic programs

This second section begins with some observations by pastors regarding theological programs in general. Following will be a discussion of their perspectives concerning the most suitable form of theological education. This section will conclude with the recommendation of some pastors that at least two specific disciplines be included in the curriculum of every theological student.

2.1 General observations by pastors concerning theological curriculum

Most of those interviewed complained again and again that “at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, theological programs were often developed without much consultation with

the leadership of local churches.” “By and large, these programs were imported from overseas seminaries and Bible colleges by foreign theological educators.” This is not to say that these programs failed completely to meet the needs of local churches or that they are worthy of nothing but negative criticism. The greatest need at the time was as quickly as possible to prepare as many pastors and missionaries as possible, because, unlike today, new churches were springing up like mushrooms all over the former Soviet Union. And indeed, after seventy years of spiritual hunger, any theological training was well received for the first several years.

But with the passage of time, after pastors had reaped the very first fruits of theological education, they anticipated that theological programs would gradually be revised in order that they might better meet the various specific needs of local churches during the post-Soviet era. This expectation stemmed from the fact that as students were taught such subjects as systematic and historical theology (in which they considered mostly Western issues), church history (in which they concentrated mostly on the Western church), missions (in which the primary focus was on Western approaches), hermeneutics (in which they were exposed mainly to Western models), counseling (in which, all too often, only Western methods were presented), and pastoral ministry (which for the most part ignored Eastern pastoral experience), they typically discussed and learned to preach about things which were not quite relevant to the specific needs of the churches. This does not mean that these subjects—or the Western perspectives that they reflected—had

no place at all in the curriculum. But with the passage of time, the essential content of these courses became less and less applicable to the practical needs of local churches.

In the course of our qualitative research, we also noted that pastors frequently expressed concern that in theological institutions, God tends to be studied more as an object than as a Person. Being in relationship with Him constitutes the very basis of spiritual life, but many pastors sense that there is an overemphasis on examining, scrutinizing, indeed almost “anatomizing” the qualities, nature and character of the incomprehensible God. (It is important to note that Eastern evangelicals are much more inclined than are Westerners toward mystical theology.)

When speaking about the theological curriculum in general, the interviewed pastors, for the most part, focused less on their personal expectations and hopes than on their concerns with the current deficiencies of full-time academic programs—at least as they perceive them, based on their experiences with graduates of theological institutions. While the pastors identified a few particular expectations (see below), their greatest wish is that theological educators would themselves take the initiative to explore more ways to align the essential content of the subjects they teach as closely as possible with the specific needs of local churches—even taking into consideration their specific geographical location (Ukraine or Yakutia, urban or rural, big city or small town, etc.).

For example, pastors in the central parts of Russia and Ukraine expect that graduates should be much better acquainted with Orthodox theology than

with the theology of other religious traditions, inasmuch as they will be doing evangelism and preaching specifically in an Orthodox context (or in a Greek-Catholic context, in the case of Western Ukraine). But the study of Orthodox theology is not as relevant or needed in Buryatia (near Mongolia), where it is expected instead that graduates will be thoroughly familiar with Buddhism and Shamanism, in order that they might more effectively witness about Jesus in that unique context. However, in the curricula of theological institutions, much more attention is usually given to Orthodox theology than to that of other religions, including Islam.

The expectations pastors have of academic programs can also be deduced from what they said about students and graduates as the fruit of the programs, and about faculty members as the leaders and implementers of the programs. (Their observations and admonitions will be discussed in the sections below.)

2.2 The most suitable form of theological training

With regard to the form of higher theological education, the interviewed pastors generally expressed one of two predominant views. A minority expressed the opinion that full-time educational programs are best, given the need to maintain the quality of education. However, the majority of the pastors in all five regions where interviews took place suggested that part-time programs offer the most optimal conditions “for the maintenance of students’ relationships with local churches and their ministry.” And some pastors, particularly in Yakutia, strongly advocated distance education,

since these pastors are located too far away from any recognized higher theological institutions to have the opportunity to enroll in any credible part-time program (or at least in one that is accredited by the Euro-Asian Accrediting Association). Therefore, they have only two options at present—either a full-time residential program or a distance-learning program.

The pastors were unanimous in their opinion that one of the most significant drawbacks of full-time training is that it isolates students from local churches, and especially from their home churches. It also causes students to lose touch with the real world, since they live on campus and do not have to be concerned about where their food will come from. Another frequently-mentioned drawback is that such programs have become increasingly expensive and difficult to afford. Because of these drawbacks, most of the interviewed pastors consider part-time programs to be the future of higher theological training. They suggest that such programs make it possible for students to remain connected with and involved in the ministry of their home churches. And because they are able to continue earning an income from secular employment, they are better able to afford the cost of tuition, although their churches can also provide some limited financial assistance, if necessary.

This pattern is, in fact, already being followed in at least a few theological institutions in Ukraine and Russia, at which the number of students in part-

time programs is gradually increasing year by year.

These same pastors do recognize, however, that academic standards for part-time students tend to be lower than they are for students enrolled in full-time programs, for example, with respect to the amount of reading required, expectations with regard to written homework and diploma papers, the level of difficulty of tests and exams, etc. This is due to the fact that (a) the class size in part-time programs is often much larger than in full-time programs; (b) students do not always have ready access to a good theological library; and (c) they do not have much opportunity to consult their professors between study sessions.

Another major concern mentioned by many pastors with regard to full-time residential theological programs is that it takes a long time for graduates to readjust to the practices of their home churches after being absent for three or four years. This issue will be discussed below.

Most of the interviewed pastors also expressed interest in participating in an interactive theological study program through the Internet, if such an opportunity were available. It should be noted that the Euro-Asian Accrediting Association (<http://e-aaa.info>), along with a consortium of Ukrainian and Russian theological institutions^[7] is working on a project called “Theology Online” (<http://theologyonline.info>) to provide more opportunities for interactive higher theological education.

At present, pastors have a clear preference for part-time programs as the most suitable form of theological education. To be sure, full-time training is regarded as highly valuable. Yet presently it is much less popular among ministers and

^[7] Donetsk Christian University, Eurasian Theological Seminary, Kremenchug Regional Bible College, Moscow Theological Seminary, Odessa Theological Seminary, and Saint Petersburg Christian University.

church members, as is evident from the declining number of students enrolled in such programs.

2.3 Expectations with regard to the study of specific disciplines

During the course of our research, a good number of pastors identified two specific subjects that they would like to see in the curricula of higher theological institutions.

Spiritual gifts. “How can a student of theology become a good minister if he does not know his spiritual gifts?” asked one of the interviewed elders. And indeed, pastors complained that many graduates, upon returning to their home churches, experience difficulty in identifying a specific sort of ministry that meshes with their spiritual talents and abilities. They would therefore like spiritual gifts to be included as a required subject in the curricula of higher theological institutions. However, as the writer of this article reflects critically on the pastors’ expectations, he cannot refrain from asking, at least with respect to the other church members, most of whom will probably never get any theological training: Is it not one of the primary responsibilities of pastors to help their church members identify their spiritual gifts?

Worship music. “Since every Christian participates in singing to the Lord during each worship service, literally every Christian needs to acquire at least some musical skills,” asserted Alexander Krishchuk, the Rector of the Christian Music Academy of Kiev, Ukraine, during an interview. Since many pastors and ministers lead worship and church services, it is expected that they should be acquainted at least with basic music the-

ory and possess some musical skills. Missionaries must also have musical skills, because while establishing new churches they are usually the first to teach new converts to sing Christian songs and to worship the Lord, before someone else takes on this responsibility as his or her special ministry. Musical and worship skills are greatly needed by ministers everywhere: in local churches, on the mission field, in theological institutions, in study groups, in Sunday schools, in youth work, etc. Does this not mean that this discipline should be one of the primary subjects in theological curricula? Many pastors expect therefore that students in seminaries will study Christian music and worship, along with its history, as one of the required subjects in order they might be better prepared to serve as effective ministers.

Thus, the main expectation of those interviewed is that the theological curriculum should be revised so as to meet the specific (even geographically conditioned) needs of local churches. Unfortunately, specific (meaning “practical”) needs were defined in such diverse ways in different parts of the former Soviet Union that this demands separate research.

3.1 Expectations of prospective students and admissions committees

1) Time and again during the interviews pastors pointed out that it is their prerogative to define the qualifications of applicants for admission and to decide which applicants should be accepted to study at a theological institution. But pastors perceive that seminaries often do this entirely on their own. Therefore, most of the interviewed pastors ex-

pressed the wish that at least half of the members of admissions (selection) committees should be elders, who could provide a great deal of help in detecting the true motives and objectives of applicants for admission. Some pastors suggested that young people from Christian families often attempt to flee to seminaries, either in order to receive an extension of their exemption from military service, or to escape from some sort of difficulty with their friends, families, pastors, and/or home churches. Sometimes students even enroll in a seminary just to be able to study English or some other foreign language, having no real interest whatever in theological education. When such students return to minister in their home churches, they are seen as *na ve*, inexperienced, lacking in worldly wisdom, impractical, and showing little concern for the spiritual pursuits of their home churches. Why should seminaries invest time and resources in such students? In order to avoid this and many other kinds of problems, pastors would like to be given the opportunity to assist selection committees in eliminating applicants with doubtful reputations before they become problematic students and, later on, problematic graduates and ministers. "If local churches want to receive the best graduates from seminaries, they should send them the very best applicants," concluded one of the elders.

2) When speaking about their expectations regarding students' character, virtually all the pastors suggested the same list of qualifications: applicants should be born-again, baptized Christians with at least one, and better yet, two or even three years of Christian life experience, and certainly one or more years of ministry experience. Almost all the pastors

either alluded to or quoted directly from 1 Tim. 3:6, saying that a student "must not be a recent convert or he may become arrogant." However, one pastor from Yakutia disagreed with this principle, suggesting that a person should be able to study at a theological institution without having already served in ministry. He insisted, therefore, that recent converts should be accepted by seminaries without regard to the length of time they have been believers. Another pastor suggested that only those applicants who have a gift of teaching should be accepted as students of theology. And one pastor from Odessa, Ukraine, even asserted that, "only those church members whose vocation is theological education would benefit from theological training." Yet he did not explain the means by which one could identify a person's suitability for this sort of vocation.

3) Speaking about the need for applicants to have "a few years of ministry experience," many of the pastors interviewed indicated that a student cannot learn how to become a pastor in the environment of a theological institution, since this is a matter of vocation and can be learned only in a church setting. Thus, in their view, seminaries should provide higher theological training only to students who are already ministers. Otherwise the students may get an incorrect (that is, an exclusively theoretical and abstract) perspective on pastoral ministry.

4) Another important issue related to applicants for admission is their intention eventually to return to their home church. The majority of pastors suggested that theological schools should not accept applicants who do not expect to return to their local church after they

complete their theological education. And if seminaries do accept such applicants, they should not expect pastors to invest anything in such students. A minority of ministers, however, from all five regions, expressed their willingness to support such applicants as long as they are planning to minister at least in some other local church. They are of the opinion that no matter which local evangelical church such applicants might eventually serve, every local church is part of the same Kingdom of God. They only expect and hope that they will be able to come to mutual agreement regarding this issue through an appropriate process.

5) Many pastors insisted that before receiving higher theological training, applicants should first complete their secular education, in order that they will be able to support their ministry financially afterwards. (This issue will also be discussed briefly in a separate section, "Possible reasons for declining interest in higher theological education," below.)

6) Many of the interviewed pastors suggested two ways that the problems associated with students' return to their home churches might be resolved, at least in part.

The first suggestion is that there be a kind of tripartite agreement between the theological institution, the local church and the student. Although this agreement would probably not be legally binding, it could nevertheless stimulate a sense of responsibility on all three sides. Incidentally, the writer is aware of at least two theological schools which have begun utilizing such agreements, but it is still too early to evaluate the results.

The second suggestion has to do with the issue of students being explicitly and purposefully sent by local churches to

pursue theological training. Typically, applicants apply on their own initiative to some theological institution to which their pastor is not opposed. This means that during the short (not quite twenty-year) history of theological education in the former Soviet Union, not many pastors or churches have actively sent people to study. (The same pattern, by the way, is true, as well, of volunteering for missionary service.) In most cases pastors and churches have played quite a passive role. The pastors interviewed expect, however, that if a student is actively sent by a local church to a theological institution, and if that act is affirmed with a tripartite agreement, those who graduate should sense an obligation to return to their home church. Therefore the leaders of both local churches and theological schools need jointly to develop a working scheme for students to be more accountable to their home churches.

3.2 Expectations of theological students during the course of their education

One of the most important expectations on the part of the interviewed pastors is that during their theological training, students will maintain their relationship with their home church. Many pastors also said that they expect students to remain accountable to their home church with regard both to their spiritual condition and their academic progress. And the pastors generally expressed a desire to receive information from theological institutions on a regular basis about students' achievements, grades, behavior, practical skills, etc. Only a few pastors indicated, however, that they had taken any initiative in building and maintain-

ing such relationships. Unfortunately, most of the pastors simply wait until students themselves take the initiative. At the same time, they recognize that if congregations do not take initiative in nurturing relationships with students, there is a strong possibility that the students will not return home after completing their theological training (which has already been discussed above and will be discussed further below).

Since year by year the average age of theological students has been decreasing, many pastors recommend having parents' meetings at least once a year since, if a scholarship is not provided, it is often parents, rather than local churches, who support the students financially (financial issues will also be discussed below). At such meetings, the leadership of a theological institution could explain to parents both the benefits and difficulties of theological training. This would help parents (and consequently also the students' home churches) keep track of what is going on with their children while they are studying. A theological school could also convene similar meetings of pastors whose church members are studying at the school. (This expectation has already been mentioned above.)

Some pastors also strongly recommended that students avoid remaining in school continuously, from the time of their bachelor's-level studies all the way through the period of their doctoral studies. Students, they believe, should take breaks for at least short periods of ministry, so that they can actively apply in a church setting the knowledge gained in the previous degree program. Otherwise, a student's spiritual life and future ministry may be damaged.

3.3 Expectations with regard to the practical education of theological students

A good balance must be maintained between theological training and practical education, in order to insure that by the end of their time in school, students will have more than an academic understanding of theology. In fact, every theological institution is already trying hard to fulfill this expectation of pastors in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, this is an area in which theological institutions and local churches ought to collaborate, to their mutual benefit.

The first goal of active practical education in local churches, say many pastors, should be to help students better recognize their spiritual gifts. This can be achieved as a variety of opportunities is provided for students to test their abilities in different aspects of church ministry. Students who are receiving higher theological education should actively try their hand at such activities as evangelism (including at least a short-term cross-cultural mission experience), social ministry (visiting disabled and sick people), counseling, teaching (in Sunday schools for children and adults, or in small Bible schools), helping in Christian summer camps, etc. This practical experience should consist of more than just one or two kinds of activity—preaching or leading Bible study groups, for instance—which is all most theological students have done in the past.

Another strong desire expressed by many of the pastors is for students to be sent back to their home churches to engage in practical education for an entire academic year. This would give their pastors the opportunity to observe the

progress they have made in their theological training and to help them learn more about practical church ministry. In cases where this is not possible—because of distance, for example—these pastors believe that students should at least get deeply involved in the ministry of some other local church. And if students get involved with more than one church, the total number of churches with which they are involved should be kept to a minimum. When students get involved with too many churches, the pastors say, the quality and benefit of the help they provide necessarily decreases.

Virtually all the pastors interviewed expect male students and graduates to be ready and able to preach anytime, anywhere. (This is still one of the distinctive traits of older Eastern evangelical ministers.) Some pastors do recognize that because their ministry schedules are so full, they all too often end up preparing their sermons not while on their knees in prayer, but on the spur of the moment—balancing their Bible on their knees while already sitting on the church platform, with just a few minutes to go before it's time to get up and preach.

The expectations of pastors can be deduced from the following critical observations of sermons given by theological students and graduates. Pastors complain that the language of such sermons is often complicated, employing specialized academic terminology that most church members have never before heard. When this happens, churches are sometimes transformed into venues for solving complex theological problems or for merely reading theological lectures. This is particularly true when theological students make reference to Greek or Hebrew words. Instead of preaching the Word

of God to help church members better follow the Lord, students and graduates sometimes simply provide a congregation with their exegetical analysis of a passage. Often such sermons end without any practical application, since the topic was taken not from the real needs of members of the local church, but from the academic setting. Also, many students and graduates find it difficult to tailor the style of their sermons to different audiences (for the younger or older generation, for rural or urban church members, or for laborers or members of the intelligentsia, for example). This last observation, in the opinion of the writer, is actually true of the majority of preachers around the world, irrespective of whether they have received a theological education.

4. Expectations of graduates

4.1 Graduates as the face of a seminary

“A graduate of any theological school is an advertisement either for or against theological education,” asserted one pastor. “If the advertising is perceived as positive, local churches will increase their support of theological schools; but if it is perceived as negative, seminaries should not expect much support from pastors.” A negative perception of theological schools is especially pronounced in some regions of Ukraine. For example, some graduates of certain theological institutions have accepted Calvinistic teaching (having been influenced either by Western professors or having adopted this position on the basis of their own reflection). As a result, those particular schools have gained the reputation of being distinctively Calvinistic institutions and have thereby lost the opportu-

nity to recruit new students from local (generally older) churches that hold to Arminian theology. On the other hand, (generally newer) evangelical churches that are more inclined toward Reformed theology often forbid their church members to apply to any seminary that is perceived as being Arminian in theology. It is regrettable that many graduates have not demonstrated sufficient wisdom in dealing with theological, as well as controversial other issues in local churches, thereby casting a shadow on the seminaries where they studied.

Moreover, some graduates have encountered insurmountable problems in connection with smoking and/or drinking (since virtually all Eastern evangelical churches, particularly the older ones, believe in total abstinence), women (because of divorce, adultery or sexual relations outside of marriage), money (sometimes deceiving and cheating their congregations or other believers) or other issues, which has not enhanced the reputation of the theological institutions where they studied. Both theological institutions and local congregations are affected by the lifestyle of graduates and by the approach graduates take in ministry, and it is the responsibility of both the leadership of seminaries and of their graduates to enhance the credibility of the school in question.

4.2 The hesitation of graduates to return to their home churches

We have already mentioned the problem of graduates failing to return to their home churches. Commenting on this problem, one pastor from Odessa noted that in one of their regional church unions, which includes over 130 local churches, more

than forty of the churches lack pastors. Pastors from the L'viv region in Western Ukraine expressed concern about the same issue, noting that out of almost sixty local churches in their regional church union, many of which are rural, roughly twenty are without pastors. In many rural areas of Ukraine and Russia, evangelical churches are increasingly struggling because of a decline in the number of ministers. Often the reason is that many of their church members who have received a theological education have not returned. If a theological institution is located in a large city (such as Moscow, St. Petersburg or Kiev), many students from rural churches look for any possible means to remain there, which has created a leadership vacuum in a great many rural churches. One rural pastor complained that "a theological institution should by no means serve as a kind of ski jump for students from rural congregations to relocate to bigger towns or large cities." Unfortunately, this pastor's call of distress constitutes the reality for many rural churches.

Some pastors placed blame on the theological schools themselves for failing to teach their students to return to their home churches following the completion of their studies. Other pastors place the blame more on church leaders, who all too often seem unable to interest graduates in returning to their home churches. Local congregations, they suggest, need to give graduates the opportunity gradually to ease their way back into the real world and into ministry, and to be tolerant of the mistakes they will surely make. Church elders in such situations should be careful not to put such heavy demands on graduates that they will quickly burn out or become disillusioned about ministry.

4.3 The graduate, ministry, and material support

Since pastoral ministry in the former Soviet Union is still viewed as bi-vocational,¹⁸¹ it is still expected that while a graduate is fulfilling his duties as a minister, he will also support his family by means of secular employment. A few pastors even indicated that they regard the desire of young graduates to be in full-time ministry as bordering on sin. Other pastors expressed the attitude that graduates should spend their first year or two back in their home churches doing something other than ministry—that they should take time to readjust to the life of the congregation before getting involved in any sort of ministry.

Many pastors asserted that graduates tend to have unrealistic expectations about being placed into ministry. Many graduates, they have observed, seem to say, in essence: “I have received full-time theological training! Give me a church and let me lead it!” The pastors also indicated that many graduates returning home from theological institutions expect or even demand that their local church would immediately grant them a full-time ministry position (“an easy chair and money”). In an attempt to avoid this problem, one pastor in Western Ukraine even used to add the following caveat to applications for admission: “without right of full support as a minister following graduation.” Another pastor said that “if a graduate does not want to work with his own hands, he should by no means

¹⁸¹ This is despite the fact that almost every local church could support its pastor. It should be noted that here and there local churches in Ukraine and Russia are, indeed, supporting their pastor full time.

receive theological training.” “Graduates require an apartment and a salary, and many of them do not want to work with their hands to earn income. However, in our context it is expected that graduates will earn their own income,” complained another pastor. The comments of this last pastor lead us to consider the following issue.

4.4 Graduates and local church leadership

According to the pastors who were interviewed, there seem to be two primary reasons why seminary graduates experience problems in their relationships with the elders of their home churches. First, some pastors are simply not prepared to receive and work alongside theologically educated church members whom they view as a potential threat to their own position.

Second, some graduates display an improper attitude (described by some elders as “spiritual pride”) toward their pastor, thinking of themselves as superior and more intelligent—resulting, at times, in a divisive atmosphere, as some members of the congregation begin to side with the graduate, in opposition to the pastor. Given this danger, the pastors who were interviewed advised that seminary graduates, who admittedly may outshine them intellectually, need to display a high level of sensitivity, especially given the context of the former Soviet Union, where so many pastors still lack any formal theological training.

Furthermore, graduates should not forget that it is not theological training or a degree that qualifies them to assume pastoral ministry, but rather a calling from God, which, of course, can be en-

hanced by means of theological education. Graduates should also be prepared to work shoulder to shoulder with their pastor and elders, having a humble attitude and being ready to learn from them ministry skills and other things that formal theological training cannot provide.

4.5 Graduates and their readiness to fulfill any kind of church ministry

Another expectation pastors have of seminary graduates is that they should be ready to carry out whatever task or ministry may be needed within their congregation. In order insure that this will happen, the elders interviewed suggested that graduates should: (a) know their spiritual gifts; (b) be ready to serve on the basis of their theological knowledge and skills; (c) be team players; (d) be aware of their specific place and role on a team; (e) be able to build different kinds of teams (that is, have organizational skills) for the accomplishment of various sorts of ministry; (f) love the Lord, the Scriptures and people; and (g) be respectful toward their congregation and its elders.

4.6 Pastors as members of examination committees

The final major expectation expressed by many pastors with respect to graduates is that pastors should have the opportunity to be involved, along with the faculty, in the process of deciding whether or not diplomas should be granted. This decision should be based in part on students' participation in church life and ministry during their theological training. The writer believes this to be a very valuable suggestion that ought to be seriously considered as soon as possible by the leaders

of theological institutions. If a seminary's mission statement states that it prepares ministers for local churches, then why should pastors and elders not be involved in the final examination process? In addition, the pastors interviewed expect theological institutions to help their graduates find ministry opportunities if their home church has little to offer. Schools could create a database of their graduates that would be made available to pastors and local churches looking for a candidate for a full- or part-time ministry position.

5. Expectations of seminary faculty

The last major area of discussion with the seventy pastors concerned their expectations of professors at higher theological institutions. The pastors' responses can be divided into three categories: (a) the professor's personal character; (b) professors' participation in church ministries; and (c) the acceptability of female professors in theological schools.

Since in the minds of many pastors theological training is closely related to mentoring and discipleship, they believe that the spiritual lives of professors and their participation in church ministries should set an example for students to follow. Regardless of the subject area in which professors teach, it is expected that their first priority should be to help their students become more mature Christians; providing them with academic knowledge should be second in priority. (This expectation is also reflected in the second ultimate goal of theological institutions that was discussed above.)

How can professors lead their students in the best possible way? "It is by

means of their active participation in church life and the way they apply to ministry the subject matter of their academic discipline,” answered most of the pastors. “Many problems in relationships between graduates and congregations could be prevented if their professors would set a proper example in this regard!” The pastors interviewed suggested that the main problem with professors of theology is their tendency to teach so-called “armchair theology”—that is, theology that is born not in the context of everyday church life, but in the shadow of seminary cubbyholes. And one should not be surprised when such cubbyhole professors reproduce cubbyhole graduates of theology after their own kind! “Professors could better teach and encourage their students to apply theological knowledge in real church settings if they themselves did this,” suggested one of the elders. So in the opinion of these pastors, relationships between local churches and theological schools would be stronger and the level of cooperation would be greater if the faculty members of theological institutions participated more actively in various church activities. And even though some professors offer all sorts of excuses as to why they are not active in church life, the leaders of seminaries need to give special attention to this expectation of the pastors.

It was the thorny issue of female professors in theological institutions that produced the liveliest discussion among the pastors interviewed. A minority of the pastors insisted that there should be no female professors in seminaries at all—that theological training must be provided totally by men. The majority of the pastors interviewed conceded, how-

ever, that it is acceptable for women with the gift of teaching to lecture in at least certain academic subject areas—but not in the area of theology. (Some pastors included biblical studies in this prohibition, as well.) The pastors are open to the idea of women teaching in seminaries particularly when their classes consist entirely of women. Interestingly, possession of the gift of teaching was, for some reason, not brought up in connection with male professors.

Some seminaries in the former Soviet Union do have female professors who teach academic subjects that are very closely related to theological and biblical studies, since in practice there is no way to make a rigid distinction in such subject areas as spiritual life, counseling, New Testament Greek grammar, etc. Among the opinions expressed concerning female professors were some real “pearls of wisdom.” A pastor from Eastern Ukraine stated, for example, that only under exceptional circumstances should a woman should be allowed to teach in a seminary (i.e., if no male professor can be found) and, even then, only if she meets certain specific requirements: she must be married, her husband must be involved in ministry in a local church, and his ministry must be of sufficiently high rank. Another pastor mentioned that if women are permitted to teach at all, they need to make sure that they do not cross the line between teaching and preaching—particularly if male students are present.

6. Possible reasons for declining interest in higher theological education

At least six possible reasons surfaced during the interviews with the seventy

pastors as to why interest in full-time theological education has been declining in the former Soviet Union:

(1) Some pastors in Eastern Ukraine advise their church members to postpone enrolling in a full-time theological program until they have gained some professional training or have completed advanced secular studies. (Access to higher education was available only to a very small number of Christians during the Soviet period). The reason for such advice is that in the former Soviet Union, the vast majority of pastors still view their ministry as bi-vocational. That is, they earn money to support their families through secular employment while simultaneously engaging in pastoral ministry. And, of course, if pastors routinely follow this pattern, they naturally expect that theological students will do the same. For this reason, a good number of potential ministers choose to study in part-time theological programs.

(2) Some pastors, as a matter of principle, do not actively send, and often even resist sending, any of their church members to study at higher theological schools. These pastors themselves never received any formal theological training, and they do not place high value on such training. Indeed, some pastors suggest that church members who are theologically trained actually create more problems than do believers who lack such training.

(3) Another reason suggested for the declining interest in theological education is the fact that the reputation of some theological institutions among local evangelical churches has been tarnished, while other schools have never

earned the trust of the churches. Many of the pastors who were interviewed complained about the influence on their students of either Calvinistic or Arminian theology, particularly from Western professors; imprudent handling of such issues as drinking and, in some cases, smoking; sexual immorality and/or pornography among some students in their dormitories, etc.

(4) A number of larger theological institutions in Ukraine and Russia have seen a decline in enrollment due to the establishment of many smaller regional theological colleges or schools, which the pastors say provide “more practical education and are under the control of local churches.”

(5) A number of pastors from Eastern Ukraine are hesitant to send their church members to certain higher theological institutions that they perceive are following the typical American model of education and that, given their mostly American faculty, are seen as propagating American culture. They believe that this influence is closely connected with the American financial support on which these schools depend.

(6) Some pastors suggest that the number of people studying at theological institutions will increase only if the churches begin to experience a greater rate of growth. In one of the church unions in Ukraine, approximately 10,000 new converts were baptized in 2000, while in 2006 the number was only 4,500. If local churches do not experience significant numerical growth, the number of new students at theological institutions can be expected to continue decreasing year by year.

Conclusion

In response to the pastors' expectations that have been briefly reported in this article,^[9] the writer would like to offer several critical remarks, some general suggestions for theological educators, and some further proposals concerning possible new directions for qualitative research.

In the opinion of the writer, most of the pastors' anxieties and concerns are legitimate. Some of their remarks, however, demand at least a brief critical response.

In the course of the research it became obvious that pastors had varying views on the meaning of "theological education," or "to be theologically educated." The writer got the feeling that most pastors expect graduates of theological institutions to be spiritual and theological "Supermen," who have the ability at all times and in all places to do anything and everything that their congregation may need—to preach, teach, write articles, speak on radio and television, lead the Sunday school, sing as a member of the worship team, deal with donors and with financial issues, be a good administrator, etc. But no theological school could never prepare students to meet all the expectations some pastors have of graduates, inasmuch as students do not all have the same gifts or calling.

When speaking about the need for students to be helped to recognize their spiritual gifts, most of the interviewed pastors failed to acknowledge that teaching at a theological institution is also a legitimate avenue for exercising one's spiritual gifts. Only one or two of the pastors showed any understanding at all of the fact that, by training future pas-

tors and other Christian workers, theological educators are at least indirectly ministering to local churches. In the minds of nearly all pastors, church ministry is something that is performed only within a congregation, or at least for the sake of a specific congregation. It is obvious therefore that there is a great ongoing need to help pastors gain a broader perspective on the vital connection that exists between theological education and church life. Eastern evangelical theological educators have much work to do, first in defining exactly what theological education means, and then in communicating this to pastors and church ministers.

Given the legitimate questions raised by pastors about the applicability of at least certain academic subjects to church life, professors might consider spending several minutes at the end of each lecture discussing how the ideas studied that day could help address the current needs of the local churches from which the students have come. Furthermore, faculty members should not be satisfied merely to convey theological knowledge, but they should also help their students develop proper attitudes toward the Lord, toward their congregations, and toward ministry and ministers in general. And professors themselves should serve as positive role models. The leaders of theological institutions also need to give serious consideration to the pastors' expressed desire to participate in admissions and graduation committees, to help create and develop new academic programs, etc. In this way, church elders and theological educators could exercise influence on one other, resulting in mutual assistance, respect, confidence and benefit.

In the course of the research, only a very small number of pastors men-

^[9] The full list of expectations of all seventy pastors is at least 100 pages long.

tioned anything at all about the missionary dimension of theological education (whether practical or academic). This probably says something about the growing tendency of local churches in the former Soviet Union to focus increasingly on internal church ministries, rather than on reaching out to non-Christians. Unfortunately, most theological institutions these days are moving in the same direction, with their graduates, even in their scholarly pursuits, giving less and less consideration to such ministries as evangelism and missionary work—even though, in many cases, the schools’ mission statements still reflect the original missionary goal of the institution. Writing about the role of Christian scholars as evangelists and missionaries, Joel A. Carpenter says that they:

... can make a difference, but they need to see themselves as missionaries, as kingdom agents in a lost world. They need to give witness, as intellectuals, to the kingdom in its fullness, as God’s vision of shalom. We must keep this sense of purpose and mission clear and keen, for otherwise the secular knowledge industry will eventually assimilate and overwhelm the Christian scholars’ movement of today. Yet we cannot go it alone. We need great institutional support behind our efforts, and we will find this only in a sustained and lively connection to the church, the main source of God’s grace in the world today. Then, as agents of the Great Commission, Christian scholars can help the church fulfill its mandate to make disciples of all nations.^[10]

^[10] “The Mission of Christian Scholarship in the New Millennium,” in *Faithful Learning and the Christian Scholarly Vocation* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003), 73.

With regard to the issue of finances, some pastors suggested, with some justification, that “our local churches [in the former Soviet Union] will first have to learn how to fully support their pastors [in view of the traditional bi-vocational approach] before they can begin supporting other types of ministers and ministries [including theological education].” Yet, at the same time, most of the pastors interviewed indicated that their local churches could, in fact, provide at least some significant financial support for theological education, if only there were not so many theological institutions. The operational budgets of some theological schools during the academic year 2008–2009 surpassed U.S. \$500,000, and the amount needed will likely continue to increase because of the growing financial crisis in the former Soviet Union. “How could Eastern evangelical churches ever entirely support such budgets from local resources?” several pastors wondered.

However, let us take as an example the Ukrainian Baptist Union. If the average annual budget of each of the sixty-six theological schools affiliated with this Union were U.S. \$200,000, the Union’s entire system of theological education could be supported for only ten dollars per month per church member. Furthermore, more and more voices are now being raised that the time has come to close many theological schools, although the criteria to be used in selecting schools for closing have not yet been decided upon, nor is it clear whose responsibility it ought to be to make the final decisions (the leadership of the union, the leadership of the various schools, the schools’ boards of trustees?).

Some pastors suggested that a number of Christian businessmen in the former Soviet Union, who have more than enough money to buy the latest, most expensive models of cars made by Mercedes or BMW, or full-sized Jeeps, could themselves completely support the theological schools of the union, without any help from other church members—although, as a matter of fact, one of the elders said with a deep sigh, “an old woman will sooner give a bucketful of potatoes to a student than will a businessman give \$10.”

Who will take the initiative to begin speaking and teaching in the local churches of the former Soviet Union about financial opportunities of this sort? Pastors who are busy trying to make their congregations grow or to keep them growing? The leaders of theological institutions who are desperately looking for new students and for ways to survive during this time of crisis? Western partners who will encourage theological schools and local churches to assume a greater degree of financial responsibility for theological education? Who else...?

Yet, in fact, the majority of the pastors interviewed are currently open to helping certain theological schools financially. Indeed, some of them are actually doing so. For instance, the churches of the Autonomous Baptist Union of Ukraine conduct a special church service annually, during which a collection is taken for the two theological schools affiliated with their Union. And many local churches—particularly those in rural areas—are ready to help the schools with food supplies such as potatoes, cabbages, carrots, sugar, etc. But they expect the leadership, faculty members and students of theological institutions to take the initiative in soliciting such assistance.

Regarding further qualitative research into the relationships between local churches, pastors and theological educators in the former Soviet Union, the writer would like to suggest a few new possible research questions which he believes ought to be posed in the near future. The main aim of such research would be to discover better ways to identify and meet the contemporary needs of evangelical congregations and to improve the theological training of leaders, in order that they might be able to serve the Lord faithfully and effectively in the twenty-first century.

(a) What differences have theologically educated pastors (whether full- or part-time) seen in their ministries since receiving their formal training? And what means do they employ to define the needs of their congregations? (b) Having observed the results of theological training programs for about twenty years now, how do pastors and elders evaluate the content and quality of such programs? And what sorts of new programs—programs in which they themselves might participate—would they like to see seminaries develop? (c) What is the attitude of pastors toward women as students and as professors of theology, and why? What are the prospects for theologically educated women in Eastern evangelical churches? (d) What are the main problems that graduates experience? And how might pastors and professors help them better adjust to church ministry following graduation? (e) What could pastors do to help improve the spiritual atmosphere of theological institutions? And how might they contribute to spiritual formation and enhance the spiritual lives of both students and professors?

In the process of discussing the historical emphases of Christian higher education, Arthur F. Holmes writes:

Student formation must be more intentional... it depends in large measure on the caring mentor who befriends a student, [who] takes interest in his spiritual life as well as his social and extra-curricular activities,... who recognizes the student's strengths and weaknesses as well as his gifts, who models work as service and believes that who we are is more important than what we do. We need to talk about the characteristic temptations that professionals and students face in their fields of service, and about the particular virtues they need... We need to build that kind of community on campus and within departments,

communities of faith and character and learning, supportive communities that model appropriate virtues.^[11]

In concluding this article, the writer would like to appeal to professors at higher theological educational institutions never to forget that we have been entrusted with a high level of responsibility for meeting contemporary church needs by means of theological education. Students generally copy exactly the attitudes we display toward God, toward the Scriptures, toward church elders and ministry, and particularly toward one other. Therefore, to provide our congregations with the best graduates, we as professors need to do our best to be exemplary followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and faithful servants in his Kingdom.

Bibliography and Recommended Literature

Craig, William Lane and Paul Gould, eds. *The Two Tasks of the Christian Scholar: Redeeming the Soul, Redeeming the Mind*. Crossway Books, 2007.

Diekema, Anthony. *Academic Freedom and Christian Scholarship*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Dockery, David and David Gushee, eds. *The Future of Christian Higher Education*. Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1999.

Holmes, Arthur Frank. *Building the Christian Academy*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001.

_____. *The Idea of a Christian College*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

Henry, Douglas and Bob Agee, eds. *Faithful Learning and the Christian Scholarly Vocation*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

Hughes, Richard. *The Vocation of the Christian Scholar: How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005.

Marsden, George. *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. Oxford University Press, 1997.

Sire, James. *Habits of the Mind: Intellectual Life as a Christian Calling*. InterVarsity Press, 2000.

The Effectiveness of Theological Education in Ukraine: A Research Project. Odessa: EAAA, 2007.

^[11] Building the Christian Academy (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 117.