

THE AMERICAN EVANGELICAL ACADEMY AND THE WORLD: A  
CHALLENGE TO PRACTICE MORE GLOBALLY

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I. INTRODUCTION

The majority of American evangelical seminaries admirably teach classes on missions, encourage their undergraduate and graduate students to consider vocational missions, and participate in programs that place their students in cross-cultural settings.<sup>1</sup> Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's stated mission, for example, is "To glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's vision statement is "To advance Christ's kingdom in every sphere of life by equipping Church leaders to think theologically, engage globally and live Biblically."<sup>3</sup> A quick perusal of seminary websites shows many more globally-focused mission statements, all of which share as a primary goal to teach students to think and practice their respective vocations missionally. In my experience, most evangelical seminary graduates and undergraduates indeed emerge from their degrees with an intentional global vision for the world—a vision that has significantly impacted the practical ministries of the American local church.<sup>4</sup>

In the more specialized field of evangelical academic scholarship, from budding Ph.D. student to established scholar, the global vision is the same, but the practical focus is often different.<sup>5</sup> That is, American evangelical scholars tend to focus their academic disciplines predominantly within the U.S. borders. Nijay K.

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<sup>1</sup> I follow Timothy C. Tennent's definition of mission (singular) and missions (plural): "Mission refers to God's redemptive, historical initiative on behalf of His creation. Missions refers to all the specific and varied ways in which the church crosses cultural boundaries to reflect the life of the triune God in the world and, through that identity, participates in His mission, celebrating through word and deed the inbreaking of the New Creation" (*Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010] 53–59). For a summary of various definitions of missions, see Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, with Timothy C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010) xv–xvii.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous, "Mission," <http://sebts.edu>.

<sup>3</sup> Anonymous, "Vision Statement," <http://gordonconwell.edu/about/Mission-and-Purpose.cfm>.

<sup>4</sup> One such example, among many, is increased lay interest in short-term missions. Ott and Strauss note that each year 1.5 million North Americans participate in short-term mission trips (*Encountering Theology of Mission* xii; cf. Michael Pocock, Gailyn Van Rhee, and Douglas McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005] 42).

<sup>5</sup> I follow Andreas J. Köstenberger's simple definition of scholarship—advancing knowledge in a given field—and his argument that a believer's faith cannot (and should not) be divorced from it (*Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholarly Virtue* [Wheaton: Crossway, 2011] 61–62). Because of my personal academic background, I primarily use illustrations and statistics from biblical and theological studies; however, the argument of this article applies more broadly to every evangelical discipline within the humanities.

Gupta, recent University of Durham graduate and rising Pauline scholar (co-editor with Michael F. Bird of the new *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters*), inadvertently reflects this geographical myopia in his successful blog (over 350,000 hits to date) in posing the question, “Does the World Need Any More Theology/Bible Professors?”<sup>6</sup> Although phrasing the question within a global context, Gupta answers the question with only the American (and perhaps Western European) context in mind.<sup>7</sup> This inadvertent geographical myopia manifests itself not just in blog titles but also, as discussed below, in the academician’s job hunt and publishing arena.

This geographical focus on the U.S. by evangelical scholars is occurring within an unprecedentedly crowded job market. Phrases such as “the market is flooded” and “there is little room at the top” and forums such as “Finding Academic Employment in Today’s Market”<sup>8</sup> now commonly appear at academic societies such as ETS and SBL. In a subsequent blog, Gupta captures this sentiment well: “It has always been bad odds for PhD candidates, but because of the ‘economic crisis’ in America, it has gotten much worse. For one of the positions I applied for, there were over 100 candidates and it was not even a high-profile school.”<sup>9</sup> In essence, it is common knowledge that the available U.S. teaching positions are far less than the number of evangelical Ph.D. graduates coming out of today’s universities and seminaries. The admirable goal of most of these newly-minted Ph.D.s is to do what it takes (publish in respected journals, garner teaching experience, build a peer network through professional societies, etc.) to navigate this well-known flooded vocational market of American evangelical scholarship, to swim, if you will, up the crowded river of job placement with a Darwinian “survival-of-the-fittest” stamina in hopes of spawning (landing a position) at river’s head.

How should evangelical scholars and institutions respond to these increasing numbers of academicians who have “nowhere to lay their academic heads”? In this article, I answer this question by arguing that in order for those of us in the evangelical academy (aspiring Ph.D. students, Ph.D. candidates, newly-minted Ph.D.s, some established scholars, and institutions) to be more theologically consistent, we must begin practicing our vocations more missionally. This simple argument builds on the lifetime work of two missiologists: Andrew F. Walls and Daryl McCarthy. Walls, a prolific writer and practitioner, has argued frequently that, among other

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<sup>6</sup> Nijay K. Gupta, “Does the World Need More Theology/Bible Professors,” <http://nijaygupta.wordpress.com/2010/02/24/does-the-world-need-more-theology-bible-professors>. I reference Gupta’s insights several times in this article because, as indicated in his recently published book *Prepare, Succeed, Advance: A Guidebook for Getting a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies and Beyond* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), he has his finger on the pulse of the current evangelical academy.

<sup>7</sup> Gupta’s answer to the question, after warning aspiring Ph.D. students to reconsider this particular vocation unless they have “a direct line from God telling [them] that this is [their] only path,” is that the world [i.e. the U.S.] needs *better* theology/Bible professors.

<sup>8</sup> A panel discussion presented at the annual Meeting of ETS, San Francisco, CA, November 18, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Gupta, “Getting a NT PhD and the Job Market,” <http://nijaygupta.wordpress.com/2009/01/14/getting-a-nt-phd-and-the-job-market>.

things, the evangelical academy should establish, interact with, and invest in Latin American, African, and Asian scholarship because, as demonstrated below, most of the world's Christians (and perhaps future evangelical scholars) now live in these locales.<sup>10</sup> McCarthy (president of the International Institute for Christian Studies [IICS]—an organization that places evangelical scholars from all disciplines in international secular universities) has for nearly three decades been at the helm of a small but consistent effort to encourage evangelical scholars to practice their vocations specifically within secular universities abroad.<sup>11</sup> Walls, therefore, gives a voice to burgeoning evangelical scholarship abroad while McCarthy wants to send evangelicals to the world's secular colleges.

Walls and McCarthy represent needed pieces to an ultimately incomplete puzzle. Walls correctly notes the need to establish and advance global evangelical scholarship but provides no methodology to do it.<sup>12</sup> McCarthy provides an admirably strategic method for the task, but because of pragmatic necessity and intentional focus, addresses only one (albeit very important) aspect of the broader global

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. Walls, "Christian Scholarship and the Demographic Transformation of the Church," in *Theological Literacy for the Twenty-First Century* (ed. Rodney L. Peterson with Nancy M. Rourke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 166–83; idem, "Theology and Scholarship in a Global Church," in *Antioch Agenda: Essays on the Restorative Church in Honor of Orlando E. Costas* (ed. Daniel Jeyeraj, Robert W. Paxmino, and Rodney L. Petersen; New Delhi: ISPCK, 2007) 41–48; idem, "Old Athens and New Jerusalem: Some Signposts for Christian Scholarship in the Early History of Mission Studies," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21 (1997) 146–53; reprinted (with some changes), "New Mission, New Scholarship: Exploring the Old Faith in New Terms," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 9 (2006) 23–29; idem, "Scholarship and the Missionary Movement: The China Experience," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 9 (2006) 30–33; idem, "Scholarship, Mission and Globalization: Some Reflections on the Christian Scholarly Vocation in Africa," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 9 (2006) 34–37; idem, "The Significance of Global Christianity for Theological Education and Scholarship," *Ogbomosho Journal of Theology* 15 (2010) 1–10; idem, "World Christianity, Theological Education and Scholarship," *Transformation* 28 (2011) 235–40. For a summary of Walls's contributions and a bibliography of his works, see William R. Burrows, Mark R. Gornik, and Janice A. McLean, eds., *Understanding World Christianity: The Vision and Work of Andrew F. Walls* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 2011); cf. Mark R. Gornik, "New Centers of Scholarship: Andrew Walls on World Christianity and Theological Education," *PTR* 11(Spring 2005) 9–12.

<sup>11</sup> Daryl McCarthy, "Reclaiming Universities for Christ: The Missiological Significance of Christian Scholars in Secular Universities" (paper presented at the annual meeting of ETS, Atlanta, GA, November 18, 2010); *ibid.*, "Chinese Universities Establishing Christian Studies Programs: The Quiet Momentum of an Academic Movement" (paper presented at the annual meeting of ETS, Atlanta, GA, November 17, 2010); *ibid.*, "Christian Scholars—Moving from Insular Myopia to Global Vision" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the IICS Vision Conference, Kansas City, MO, July 14, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> Walls, however, as early as the 1960s portended the need for such a methodology in the following inaccessible paper: "Missionary Studies and the Scottish Theological Faculties" (paper presented at the Conference of the Scottish University Divinity Faculties at Kings College in Aberdeen, Scotland [1967]). The arguments of Walls's paper are summarized in Wilbert R. Shenk, "Challenging the Academy, Breaking Barriers," in *Understanding World Christianity* 34–36. According to Shenk, Walls presents one practical method in reaching international scholars, namely that Western institutions should open their programs to them. This challenge, which was quite revolutionary in 1967, has largely been heeded as evidenced by the strong presence of international students in America's top evangelical institutions. I am building on Walls's challenge by arguing that, among other things, the time has come to move beyond admirably opening the doors of our Western institutions to students from abroad and focus on taking scholarship ourselves to them (see below concerning my argument to avoid the theological hegemony that *prima facie* seems present in this argument).

need. Additionally, both of these missiologists present their ideas in academic venues that will produce limited results: Walls in missiological publications (thus resulting in the proverbial “preaching to the choir”); McCarthy in limitedly attended and difficult-to-access ETS and IICS conferences.

In this article, I build on Walls’s and McCarthy’s pioneer work by (1) suggesting a broader methodology for the task—one that beckons some scholars from a specific geographical location that is currently experiencing a glut of scholarship (that is, the U.S.) to focus their academic energies on either international seminaries and/or secular universities; (2) introducing the global need for evangelical scholarship to an academic audience beyond the confines of missiological studies, an audience that includes both individual academicians and evangelical institutions (e.g. seminaries and missions-sending organizations) and an audience who has the qualifications and the theological mandate to carry out this global task; and (3) exploring the intersection of international, academic service and the advancement of a scholar’s respective discipline. In essence, I address three interrelated issues that demonstrate the need for more American evangelical scholars to move from *thinking* globally to *practicing* globally: the global need for evangelical scholars, a suggested approach to help meet that need, and how a scholar can both serve internationally and advance scholarship.<sup>13</sup>

## II. A GLOBAL NEED THAT NECESSITATES A NEW VOCATIONAL RESPONSE

While the American academy has an array of evangelical scholars from whom to choose, the same is not true for the rest of the world’s academic institutions, a well-known fact among those who practice their scholarship abroad.<sup>14</sup> Walls sum-

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<sup>13</sup> I do not intend the pragmatic global response to America’s flooded academic market that I encourage in this article to supersede the spiritual disciplines (e.g. prayer, counsel, etc.) required to make such important vocational decisions as uprooting a family and moving abroad. Rather, the purpose of this article is to make a pragmatic point: In light of the overabundance of evangelical scholars seeking employment within the U.S., some (perhaps many) should consider practicing their vocation(s) globally. This, I argue, is a significantly effective but under-utilized missions strategy. The biblical witness, as Ott and Strauss correctly note, provides a diversity in how people are led into missionary service, which may range from supernatural calling to more ordinary (pragmatic) guidance (*Encountering Theology of Missions* 225–30; cf. McCarthy, “Christian Scholars” 12–13). This article, then, serves the simple purpose of highlighting a practical global need that a specialized group of evangelicals can meet.

<sup>14</sup> Substantiating this argument is my personal correspondences over the years with fellow colleagues serving in various strategic locations around the world. These include, but are not limited to (many are omitted for security reasons), Erin Smith, M.A., Graduate Oral English Instructor at Shandong University (Jinan, China); William Wilson, Ph.D., former Visiting Professor of Christian Studies (2005–2011) at Fudan University (Shanghai, China); Layne Turner, Ph.D., former Visiting Professor of NT at Minzu University (Beijing, China) and former Academic Dean of the International Graduate School of Leadership (Quezon City, Philippines); Stephen M. Garrett, Ph.D., Lecturer/Researcher in Public Theology & Philosophy of Religion at the Social Communications Institute and Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (Vilnius, Lithuania); Danny McCain, Ph.D., Professor of Biblical Theology at the University of Jos (Nigeria, Africa) and cofounder of the International Institute for Christian Studies; and Stephen Ney, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of English Literature at The University of the Gambia (The Republic of the Gambia, Africa).

marizes the dilemma well: there is “an urgent need for the development of Christian scholarship in Africa, Asia and Latin America [and their] leadership in theological education.”<sup>15</sup>

Amplifying this need is the explosion of Christian growth in other countries—a familiar fact among missiologists that Timothy Keller summarizes well:

There are now six times more Anglicans in Nigeria alone than there are in all of the United States. There are more Presbyterians in Ghana than in the United States and Scotland combined. Korea has gone from 1 percent to 40 percent Christian in a hundred years, and experts believe the same thing is going to happen in China.<sup>16</sup>

This explosion of growth has already shifted the majority of the world’s population of Christians from the Global North to the Global South,<sup>17</sup> which has, and will continue, to affect the Global Church in unprecedented ways. Keller, for example, continues, “If there are half a billion Chinese Christians fifty years from now, that will change the course of human history.”<sup>18</sup> In spite of these shifting trends in world Christianity, the vast majority of American evangelical scholars seek to serve in the U.S. (as evidenced by the aforementioned flooded market), a location not currently experiencing the explosive growth of the Global South. In other words, as the Christian population blossoms in the Global South there are proportionately fewer evangelical scholars who are there to attend to its academic needs.<sup>19</sup> As these newly burgeoning Christian nations begin producing tomorrow’s Christian

<sup>15</sup> Walls, “World Christianity” 235–40.

<sup>16</sup> Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Dutton, 2008) 6. Cf. Christopher Wright, “An Upside-Down World,” *CT* 51/1 (2007) 42, and Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions* 35–36. Also on the growth of the Church in countries beyond the U.S. border, see Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* xxviii, 218.

<sup>17</sup> There is not yet a consensus in current missiology about what terms to use in describing the place of Christianity in the world: The West and non-West, the Third-World, the Two-Thirds World, the Majority World, etc. See Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity: How the Global Church is Influencing the way We Think about and Discuss Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007) xviii–xx. In this article, the phrase “Global North” refers to what is often called “the West” (the U.S., Europe, etc.) and the phrase “Global South” refers to Latin America, Africa, and Asia (including China, although not technically in the “South”).

<sup>18</sup> Keller, *Reason for God* 6. According to one recent study, about 16,500 Chinese are coming to Christ everyday (David B. Barrett, Todd M. Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing, “Missiometrics 2008: Reality Checks for Christian World Communions,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 32 [2008] 29; cited in Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions* 17).

<sup>19</sup> In the Global North the general population is outgrowing the conversion rate to Christianity (Bradley A. Coon, “The Past Five Years of Christian Growth Worldwide,” <http://lausanneworldpulse.com/research.php/928/04-2008?pg=all>). Statistically, then, Christianity in these countries is declining. The exact opposite is true for the Global South where Christianity, especially in China, is growing faster than the general population (*ibid.*). In light of the decline of Christianity in the U.S., one might argue that this is precisely where evangelical scholars should aspire to serve (thanks to my father, Douglas C. Campbell, for pointing this out). This argument would be more substantive if, as noted above, the American market were not flooded. For example, if the majority of the world’s evangelical scholars were hoarding in a predominantly non-Christian culture vying for jobs wherein hundreds of others were doing the same, then I would argue that some of them too should leave that country and serve where their gifts are underrepresented. It is not that the need in America is not great but simply that the need is met.

(and secular world) leaders, there is an acute need for credentialed evangelicals to teach them solid methods of research, writing skills, apologetic acuity, and pedagogically effective techniques.<sup>20</sup>

To meet this global need, I suggest that those entering (and some who are already in) American evangelical scholarship reassess their vocational goals. As implied above, the traditional vocational track for most aspiring American scholars is Bachelors—Masters—Ph.D.—*teaching position in the U.S.* A more theologically consistent vocational track, based on the missional heartbeat of Jesus in the Great Commission and based on the global need just discussed, is Bachelors—Masters—Ph.D.—*teaching position in a strategically global location.*<sup>21</sup> Theologians have long argued for believers to practice their vocations missionally.<sup>22</sup> Those who serve in the disciplines of evangelical academic life, wherein a thorough understanding of biblical missions is assumed, should be first to practice their disciplines globally.<sup>23</sup>

Also in meeting this need, the missional practice of evangelical scholarship must move beyond the roles of “missionary equipper” and “part-time academic missionary.”<sup>24</sup> The missionary-equipper retains full-time employment stateside and views his or her academic calling as one who prepares budding missionaries to advance the Kingdom abroad. The part-time academic missionary retains full-time employment stateside while teaching internationally during semester breaks. These two roles are needed, influential, and admirable, but they do not address the flooded vocational market in America nor do they adequately meet the global need for

<sup>20</sup> I address below the converse need for academicians in the Global North to learn from academicians in the Global South; international scholarship, succinctly stated, is a two-way street.

<sup>21</sup> I am not arguing that Americans should see themselves as God’s only “missions-sending country” as in, what Tennent calls, the “West-Reaches-the-Rest” paradigm (Tennent, *Imitation to World Missions* 31)—a paradigm that died in the twentieth century (Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* 218–19). Rather, modern missions endeavors should be practiced “from everywhere to everywhere” (Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission*, 21; see also Tennent’s discussion in *Imitation to World Missions* 21–24, 31–33). For arguments concerning the continued need for cross-cultural missionaries even within a “shrinking” global village, the most important of which is Jesus’ command in the Great Commission to “go make disciples of all nations,” see Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* 219–21.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Michael R. Miller, “Introduction: A Vision of Vocation,” in *Doing More with Life: Connecting Christian Higher Education to a Call to Service* (ed. Michael R. Miller; Studies in Religion and Higher Education 3; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007) 14–15. For an anthology on how theologians through the centuries have defined Christian vocation, see William C. Placher, ed., *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

<sup>23</sup> Teachers, according to James, will be judged more strictly than others (Jas 3:1).

<sup>24</sup> For want of a better term, I use “academic missionary” in this article to refer to American evangelical professors who specifically serve in seminaries and/or universities in locations outside of the U.S., Canada, and Western Europe. The notion that I want to avoid in using this term is that international scholarship is simply a front for evangelism. In order to be theologically consistent, an evangelical scholar serving abroad should, indeed, be committed to evangelism. But, as McCarthy puts it, “We don’t teach in order to evangelize. Teaching is not a ‘cover’ to get into a country to do ... ‘real’ ministry. Teaching is ... real ministry” (“Hot-Gospel Professors,” <http://iics.com/2011/10/hot-gospel-professors>). Scholars who serve abroad do not have to (and, perhaps, should not) cease contributing to scholarship both worldwide and in their new host cultures. In other words, my use of the term academic missionary is not antithetical to the advancing of scholarship (see below).

evangelical scholarship. Aspiring evangelical scholars who desire to impact both the global church and academy must themselves consider practicing their scholarship abroad long term where the need is greater. Succinctly, America's flooded market of evangelical scholars and the global dearth of them warrants a reassessment of evangelical academic vocational goals—one that, in striving for missional theological consistency, encourages many academicians to serve in geographical locations where their discipline(s) are scarcely practiced.

### III. TOWARD A GLOBAL APPROACH TO EVANGELICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Instead of each evangelical scholar trying to influence the increasingly competitive American academic market, another approach is preferable—one that makes better use of Kingdom resources in terms of finances and spiritual giftedness. Specifically, I suggest the following two-pronged approach for helping the academy (both the individual and the evangelical institution) to practice its disciplines more globally.<sup>25</sup>

Before explaining this approach, however, I must first address a broader methodological issue, namely the locus of academic service on which a particular scholar or institution might focus. There are two general places for evangelical scholars to serve abroad: A seminary (including Bible colleges and similar institutions) and a secular university, both of which require different emphases in service (each similar to the different emphases one finds in the U.S.). The scholar serving abroad in the seminary advances the Kingdom primarily, but not exclusively, as one who equips other Christian workers to practice their ministries indigenously. The scholar serving in the secular university advances the Kingdom primarily, but not exclusively, in an (often quite slow and methodical) evangelistic role to future national leaders (teachers, politicians, business entrepreneurs, etc.). I integrate this broader methodological issue (seminary and secular university) into the following two-pronged approach to encourage scholars to practice their disciplines more globally.

1. *Institutional.* Evangelical institutions—mission-sending organizations and institutions of higher learning (colleges, universities, and seminaries)—can implement various strategies that will encourage scholars to practice their disciplines more strategically within an international context. First, mission-sending organizations can increase efforts to place scholars in international seminaries and universities to do what they are called to do, namely scholarship.<sup>26</sup> Currently, most denominational missions organizations do not emphasize the placing of evangelical professors in international seminaries, as indicated by sampling the websites of some of Ameri-

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<sup>25</sup> As the subtitle of this section implies, this approach represents only an initial, and perhaps rudimentary, suggestion that subsequent missiologists and other academicians can refine and build upon.

<sup>26</sup> A caveat is needed: this requires missions-sending organizations to employ staff who not only understand missions but equally understand scholarship. An understanding of the former does not necessarily equate with an understanding of the latter (cf. McCarthy, "Reclaiming Universities for Christ" 11–12).

ca's leading denominational missions organizations. I explored 13 denominations that, based on their stated doctrines, would agree with the Evangelical Theological Society's statement of faith. Four of these 13 denominations commendably provide clearly-presented opportunities and methods for missionaries with higher degrees to serve the international academy: (1) The Evangelical Free Church of America (<http://efca.org>); (2) the Mennonite Mission Network of the Mennonite Church USA (<http://mennonitemission.net>);<sup>27</sup> (3) the Congregational Methodist Church (<http://congregationalmethodist.net>); and (4) The Churches of Christ in Christian Union (<http://ccuhq.org>) who refers potential academicians to The World Gospel Mission (<http://wgm.org>).<sup>28</sup>

Seven of these 13 denominations, however, provide no information for academic missionaries who desire to serve at an international seminary or a university: (1) The Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board (<http://imb.org>); (2) Orthodox Presbyterian Church (<http://opc.org>; [www.opcstm.org](http://www.opcstm.org)); (3) Presbyterian Church in America's Mission to the World (<http://mtw.org>); (4) Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (<http://abwe.org>);<sup>29</sup> (5) Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (<http://lcms.org>); (6) National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (<http://nationalbaptist.com>); and (7) Christian and Missionary Alliance (<http://cmalliance.org>).<sup>30</sup> Additionally, two of these 13 denominations mention academic missions as a part of their global strategy but each lists only one available position with no clear statements regarding the academic nature of the position: (1) The Church of the Nazarene (<http://globalmission.nazarene.org>; an ESL Instructor); and (2) The Converge Worldwide of the Baptist General Conference (<http://convergeworldwide.org>; a "theological instructor"). Thus, 9 of these 13 evangelical denominations provide *no clear means* for academic missionaries to practice their gifts globally.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The Mennonite Mission Network does not explicitly use the word "inerrancy" in describing its view of the Bible. Rather, it states: "We believe that all Scripture is inspired of God .... and [is] the fully reliable and trustworthy standard for Christian faith and life" (Anonymous, "Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, 1995," <http://mcusa-archives.org/library/resolutions/1995/1995summary.html>).

<sup>28</sup> The Congregational Methodist Church and The Churches of Christ in Christian Union do not themselves explicitly pursue any form of academic missions. But, they do partner with World Gospel Mission (<http://wgm.org>) that does place academic missionaries abroad.

<sup>29</sup> ABWE is not technically a denominational missions organization, but it practically functions as one for Independent Baptists.

<sup>30</sup> In a personal correspondence (3/15/2012), McCarthy informed me that the Presbyterian Church in America and the Christian and Missionary Alliance have in the past partnered with IICS to place a few academic missionaries. Perhaps other evangelical denominations also have academic missionaries serving in international universities. The point here is that potential academic missionaries cannot search the websites of these seven denominations and determine how they might use their gifts abroad.

<sup>31</sup> My findings in "mainline" denominations were similar. I explored 7 mainline denominations that, based on their stated doctrines, may not agree with the ETS's statement of faith (primarily in regards to its position on biblical inerrancy and not in regards to Trinitarian beliefs). Four of these 7 denominations provide no information for academic missionaries who want to serve the international seminary or university: (1) the Assemblies of God World Missions (<http://worldmissions.ag.org>); (2) Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (<http://elca.org>); (3) Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church

While these denominational organizations focus admirably on many missions endeavors, efforts aimed at finding placements in seminaries for the increasing numbers of evangelical Ph.D.'s for most of them either does not exist or represents a minimal effort. Methods to increase these efforts may include creating websites and/or weblinks that connect scholars to international seminaries looking for professors, linking to organizations that already place academic missionaries (e.g. World Global Mission), working more closely with American universities and seminaries in finding those interested in teaching abroad (see below), and including academic missions as a strategy within the overall purpose of their organization.

None of these denominational missions organizations recruits evangelical professors to teach in the world's secular universities.<sup>32</sup> Although it is admittedly a challenging task for these organizations to meet this need because most secular universities are skeptical of missionaries, they could devise creative strategies that do not lead to doctrinal or missional disloyalty (e.g. establishing sister organizations that focus on international academics). One pioneer organization not associated with a particular denomination is leading the way in this field—IICS. It is the only organization in the world whose mission is to place evangelical professors in international (outside North America), secular universities. The vision of IICS is that “someday every university student in the world will have at least one professor who can articulate and demonstrate the love and lordship of Jesus Christ” by “providing secular universities outside North America with Christian faculty who teach and live in such a way as to draw others to faith and transformation in Christ.”<sup>33</sup> Therefore, with only one organization in the world focusing on this unique mission, this is a largely untapped strategy for both established and nascent organizations.<sup>34</sup>

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(<http://new.gbgm-umc.org>); and (4) the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (<http://thefellowship.info>). Two of these 8 denominations mention academic missions as a part of their global strategy but either lists only one available position with no clear statements regarding the academic nature of the position (Evangelical Methodist Church [<http://emchurch.org>], which partners with One Mission Society [<http://onemissionsociety.org>]) or simply lists academic missions as their strategy but provides no placement opportunities and no clear method for doing it (The International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches USA [<http://internationalministries.org>]; although the American Baptist Churches USA provide a name and a contact phone number for those interested in academic missions, when I contacted them [3/2/2012] there was no established placement methods or known available international positions). One of these 7 denominations, however, provides clearly presented opportunities and methods for missionaries with higher degrees to serve the international academy: The Christian Reformed Church in North America (<http://crcna.org>). The point is that more than 70% of the “main-line-to-evangelical” denominations that I investigated have a lacuna in their missional strategies, namely the placement of evangelical scholars in international seminaries and universities.

<sup>32</sup> The only exception is the Christian Reformed Church that links perspective academic missionaries to the website of IICS, an organization that places Christian professors (from every discipline) in secular universities abroad (on IICS, see below).

<sup>33</sup> See <http://iics.com>.

<sup>34</sup> Christian Reformed World Missions, as noted above, practices an easy model for placing academicians in secular universities. They simply partner with IICS, note it on their website, and have a contact person in their organization to discuss the matter further (see [http://crcna.org/pages/crw\\_m\\_teaching.cfm](http://crcna.org/pages/crw_m_teaching.cfm)).

Although in these denominational missions organizations the advertised opportunities for *academic* missions are limited, ample advertisements for missionaries exist for those who want to plant churches, to evangelize, to feed the hungry, and/or to offer emergency relief. As immensely important as these ministries are—with the mission of church planting perhaps ranking as the most important<sup>35</sup>—they do not provide the increasing numbers of globally minded scholars an outlet to practice their specific gifts internationally. This is the case in spite of the significant influence that the academic academy has on these more traditional missional endeavors. The future leaders of most countries—those who will one day make political decisions about governmental policies to allow or to prevent certain evangelical groups into their respective countries—now attend a college or a university of some kind.<sup>36</sup> If evangelical scholars can influence these future leaders from the secular university lectern (or indirectly by educating indigenous church and Christian business leaders from the seminary lectern), then the odds increase for a positive response to future, more traditional, evangelical work even if the future leaders themselves do not convert to Christ.<sup>37</sup>

Second, institutions of higher learning can offer (perhaps optional) seminars and/or intentional academic advising (via one-on-one counseling and via printed pamphlets) about the need and the opportunities for international scholarship—a task initiated and monitored perhaps by the missions department. In my experience, advisors often discourage students from pursuing a Ph.D. in the humanities in light of the flooded U.S. job market. Gupta, for example, addresses aspiring biblical scholars facing this daunting market: “[If you] are unsure about doing a PhD and are jumping into it with a wishy-washy attitude, [then] do the rest of us a favor and bow out.”<sup>38</sup> If only the U.S. job market is in view, then this practical advice is commendable, but if the aspiring scholar’s motive is to practice globally, perhaps more qualified advice would better reflect a worldwide need.

Finally, institutions of higher learning could offer financial and practical incentives for budding scholars who aspire to serve internationally. Financially, insti-

<sup>35</sup> Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions* 376–79. On the complexity of the missional enterprise and its multifaceted nature, see *ibid.* 486.

<sup>36</sup> McCarthy, “Reclaiming Universities for Christ.”

<sup>37</sup> Within the secular university, which is where I serve in China, I call this “making space” in the minds of students for the Gospel. I often envision a scenario where one of my students, who themselves unfortunately reject Christ, becomes more amicable to Christianity simply because of my Christian presence in her life via the academic classroom—in other words, space has been made in an otherwise atheistic, agnostic, and/or anti-theistic mind. This person, in my envisioned scenario, then finds herself on a political board making a decision in the wake of a national catastrophe about prospective relief organizations entering the country to help. On this particular occasion, Samaritan’s Purse, an evangelical organization based out of Boone, NC, is interested in helping with the catastrophe. Initially those on the political board reject Samaritan’s Purse’s offer because of the organization’s evangelical doctrine and practices. But my former student, because of her positive exposure to academic evangelism, advocates for Samaritan’s Purse. As a result, the board permits an evangelical relief organization into a country traditionally closed to external Christianity.

<sup>38</sup> Gupta, “Getting a NT PhD and the Job Market,” <http://nijaygupta.wordpress.com/2009/01/14/getting-a-nt-phd-and-the-job-market>.

tutions could offer scholarships to those who plan to serve as academic missionaries. Practically, institutions could offer programs (especially during doctoral studies) where future academic missionaries garner field experience by teaching a semester (or two-week intensive courses) abroad either in a seminary or in a university.

These two institutions (mission-sending organizations and institutions of higher learning) can work together, as they already do in many other commendable ways, to increase efforts to place evangelical scholars abroad. Mission-sending organizations can offer to evangelical institutions of higher learning the following: Web postings, updates on global needs, printed literature, and a step-by-step process for transitioning from a Ph.D. to the international academic community. The institution for higher learning would simply advise interested students about the global need for evangelical scholarship and then direct them to their respective mission departments.

2. *Individual.* In order to increase the global presence of evangelical scholarship, individual scholars living in the saturated American job market should engage in an honest, self-critical assessment informed by traditional biblical principles such as humility, honesty, love-for-(international)-neighbor, and desire for global Kingdom advancement.<sup>39</sup> In essence, the goal of this assessment is to evaluate practically one's academic gifts and personal motives in relation to both the American and global contexts.

First, evangelical scholars should assess their academic abilities in relation to other American scholars in order to determine geographically where one can best utilize his or her gifts to advance the Kingdom on a global scale. In essence, I argue that we should reserve the current American academic context for those scholars who are particularly gifted at significantly advancing scholarship in prodigious ways. At present, the most efficient place in the world to research and to write within the evangelical academy is in the U.S. (and Western Europe). Resources are plentiful and cutting edge; political peace promotes congenial and peaceful study; day-to-day life is relatively predictable (e.g., buying bread, shopping for shoes, banking, etc.).

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<sup>39</sup> McCarthy encourages similar self-reflection by suggesting that evangelical scholars ask, "Where am I needed most?" To help encourage this self-reflection, he presents the following statistics and, thus, argues that the world's greatest evangelical academic needs lie beyond the American borders: (1) there are currently about 53,000 Christian academicians serving in the U.S.; (2) most American secular campuses have multiple campus ministries; and (3) there is one Protestant Christian worker in the U.S. per 304 people while in Muslim and Hindu countries there is one Protestant American Christian worker per 4.8 million and 5.4 million people, respectively ("Christian Scholars" 12). I would add the following statistics to McCarthy's list: (1) the U.S. is replete with Bible colleges, Seminaries, and Christian universities; (2) most of the world's leading evangelical scholars teach and research in the U.S.; and (3) the vast majority of the world's Christian resources are in America. I build on McCarthy's use of statistics to answer the question "Where am I needed most?" by suggesting that academicians adjudicate their scholarly gifts in relation to their academic peers, the global need for evangelical scholarship, and the respective contributions that each scholar will make in the U.S. compared to potential contributions abroad.

Practically speaking, we should reserve such a context for those who can academically make the most efficient use of it.<sup>40</sup>

Making such an assessment is admittedly subjective but it is one that we engage in regularly by internally assessing our abilities in relation to our peers; and, more importantly, it has precedence in Scripture.<sup>41</sup> In other words, it is commonly recognized that many scholars are particularly gifted at absorbing languages, at assessing large amounts of data, at advancing their respective disciplines in creative and significant ways, and while balancing such a taxing research schedule, at meeting the intense demands of teaching (student and faculty meetings, incessant emails, ongoing daily interruptions, etc.), all while attending faithfully to their familial commitments. One way to assess our academic gifts within a global framework is to ask the difficult, but needed, questions, “Are there others who can do the job (e.g. writing a particular article or book and/or teaching at a certain college or seminary) in the U.S. as equally as well and/or as better than I can?” and “Are they doing it?” If the answers are “yes,” then, instead of competing with those scholars for an increasingly limited number of teaching positions and writing contracts, then simply let them do the job while everyone else seeks to advance scholarship in other geographical locations where the presence of evangelical scholarship is lacking or absent.<sup>42</sup>

At first glance, this suggestion seems to insinuate that scholarly expectations for those serving abroad are lower and/or less academically significant than those who serve in the U.S. I suggest, conversely, that the expectations are of a different kind—a difference that does not diminish the necessity to reach one’s academic potential or a difference that advocates for shallow scholarship abroad. Evangelical scholars serving internationally should, as argued below, rigorously pursue their scholarly potential relative to that particular culture’s resources and practical living conditions and contribute to scholarship both in their host country and, perhaps more limitedly, in the U.S. The suggestion to adjudicate our gifts in relation to our peers is simply a pragmatic one that joins those most gifted with the resources they need to perform a calling more efficiently than others can do.

Second, evangelical scholars should assess what type of contribution their research will make to the Kingdom in comparison to the contributions that they can make by charting relatively new and virgin territory abroad. Gauging influential Kingdom contributions is complex given our limited perspectives and given the

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<sup>40</sup> One might retort that more researchers contributing to a discussion makes for sharper scholarship. Perhaps. It may also unnecessarily cloud the discussion, as ever-increasing publications surface each year.

<sup>41</sup> Wayne Grudem rightly argues this precise point based on Rom 12:6; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6, namely that spiritual gifts can vary in strength and that adjudicating one’s effectiveness in regards to a certain gift has Kingdom benefits (*Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Bible Doctrine* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994] 1022–25).

<sup>42</sup> McCain, an American Professor of Biblical Studies for 20 years in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Jos in north-central Nigeria, states this point well: “One of the reasons I enjoy serving in Nigeria is that there is nothing I would like to do in the U.S. that a hundred other people could not do equally as well if not better” (personal correspondence, 3/8/2013).

difficulty in understanding God's motives in the world placement of his servants, but such critical evaluations are needed. To assess our academic contributions within a global understanding of evangelical scholarship, we can ask questions similar to the following: Is my academic contribution in the U.S. more significant than the global need for an evangelical scholarly presence? Could the same time and effort spent stateside to advance a particular discipline be used to advance scholarship abroad where the relative contribution might significantly increase? How much greater would my contribution be to global advancement of evangelical scholarship if the same hundreds of hours that are allocated to write a particular book, that perhaps others can write equally as well, is allocated to a different geographical locale?

Researchers cannot produce methods to assess scientifically the significance of one's influence in, say, Western Africa in contrast to one's influence in America. As individual researchers, however, seek to contribute to academia, some lengthy self-reflection via questions such as these about how our contributions fit within global Christianity, as subjective as it may be, will help increase the global presence of evangelical scholarship.

Third, the evangelical scholar should, as difficult as it is, assess motives for seeking an academic career in America. I demur at making this suggestion to men and women who already sacrifice so much of their personal family time, finances, and other career goals (e.g. applying the same academic rigor to obtaining a lucrative M.D.) in pursuing scholarly vocations, but given the global need and the plethora of scholars who can meet it, some effort in self-reflection stands needed. Is the motive in serving stateside to build one's academic reputation, to ensure a relatively comfortable lifestyle, to garner tenure, or to live in peace and safety? If all things were equal (i.e. in a promising American job market that is matched by an increasing global presence of evangelical scholarship), these motives would not innately contradict a scriptural lifestyle. The reality is that, as noted above, all things are not equal—there is, indeed, a flooded American market and more importantly, there is a global need for evangelical scholarship. Within such an academic milieu, it is arguably important to assess motives for staying in America in order to vie for a limited number of teaching positions instead of taking evangelical scholarship where it is lacking.

More practically, fourth, in order to practice their disciplines more globally budding evangelical scholars should plan early by structuring their lives and education towards these ends. Moving and living abroad rarely occurs quickly, easily, or without significant sacrifice; often, mountains of obstacles stand in the path. To navigate this terrain as efficiently as possible we should plan our savings, property ownership, marriage relationships, and debt wisely within a long-term agenda of serving globally.<sup>43</sup> Likewise, in planning our educational tracks, taking missions,

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<sup>43</sup> Tennent reminds us that suffering is important and strategic in advancing the global cause of Christ (*Invitation to World Missions* 459–83). Cf. John Piper's third chapter "The Supremacy of God in Missions through Suffering" in *Let the Nations be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993).

sociology, and psychology classes will help place our disciplines on the backdrop of world Christianity and furthermore, deciding whether to pursue a seminary or university Ph.D. is important. Additionally, short-term international trips to serve and to teach will place invaluable practical skills at the disposal of the researcher's developing scholarship. In essence, up and coming scholars who want to contribute to the world's broader academic communities will be wise to plan earlier rather than later.

#### IV. CAN ONE SERVE ABROAD AND ADVANCE SCHOLARSHIP?

Part of the academic calling is to advance a certain discipline into uncharted territories. The scholar desiring to serve abroad will rightly want to know if that calling can be fulfilled. Is it, in other words, justifiable to call academic missions "scholarship"? After all, one might argue, the most efficient place to advance one's discipline is among the best academic minds, the top professional societies, and the world's largest libraries and most respected journals and publications—namely, in the Global North. Serving internationally certainly limits one's ability to significantly advance a particular field given the rate of expansion of ideas in the U.S. and the paucity of resources abroad. It is difficult enough to keep up with a particular discipline while living in your home culture, but it intensifies exponentially abroad where the time it takes to accomplish life's daily activities (banking, grocery shopping, etc.) increases. So, can the one serving abroad realistically expect to advance his or her discipline in ways that constitute calling it "scholarship"?

Before answering this question affirmatively, a caveat is needed. It is, indeed, unrealistic to think that one can advance a particular field while living abroad as efficiently as he or she can in the States. International life is usually too complicated and the resources too sparse. As argued above, it is more strategic to allow those who possess the unique gifts for significantly advancing their fields to serve where the resources to do so are most abundant. This admittedly requires others to sacrifice their personal desires to research and to write as often as they would like. Completely abandoning the call to advance scholarship, however, is not necessary or needed. The academic missionary can advance scholarship in general and their respective fields more specifically while serving abroad in several ways.

First, scholars serving abroad will advance their disciplines vicariously through the students they teach and through the indigenous scholars they influence by training their students and colleagues via lectures, academic mentoring, international publications, paper presentations in local societies, the publication (and/or translation) of introductory texts, and by demonstrating how to apply well-established methods and resources. One example of such scholarship is the *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* (*AJET*), Africa's premier journal on evangelical thought. *AJET* frequently publishes the contributions of African scholars (many of whom were trained at least in part by academic missionaries) who advance their respective

fields for, and within, the African context.<sup>44</sup> If every burgeoning Christian country in the Global South (to the degree that local law permits) could produce similar resources, evangelical scholarship (and concomitantly the global Church's ministry) would advance in excitingly creative ways. Contributing to scholarship vicariously, of course, does not carry the prestige of publishing in an esteemed monograph series or in a peer reviewed journal, but its significance cannot be overstated. In other words, a strategic contribution to evangelical scholarship may result from serving future international scholars from the shadows of lecterns in a distant land.

Second, modern technology simplifies contributing to, and staying connected with, scholarship in the Global North. E-publishing, for example, is here to stay while journal articles and books, including academic monographs, increasingly appear in electronic print. Academic blogs serve international scholars well by keeping them abreast of current scholarly conversations, and internet publications such as SBL's *Review of Biblical Literature* (emailed frequently to SBL members) give insights into newly published works in their fields. For those hard-to-access resources, a little patience and creativity can go a long way. For example, with the help of a stateside assistant many resources can be scanned and emailed to the researcher. Furthermore, in light of relatively efficient and widespread modern airline travel, one or two well-planned trips to Western Europe or the U.S., although quite expensive, can aid the researcher in finalizing certain research goals. In essence, the world as a "global village" now permits the international academician to contribute, albeit more limitedly, to scholarship worldwide.

If read in isolation, these first two points might perpetuate the unhealthy Western theological hegemony that sometimes still persists, an assumption that Tennent rightly challenges in *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*.<sup>45</sup> Christian theology, Tennent argues, is not advanced only in the Global North. The rest of the world, in other words, has much to offer to the evangelical academy. Thus, linking these first two points is the sustained cross-culture experience of the Western researcher. The Western researcher, on the one hand, introduces new research methods and cultural worldviews that influence, challenge, and sharpen those of the indigenous scholars, producing new research ideas and advancements. On the other hand, the methods and worldviews of the indigenous scholars from the new host culture influence, challenge, and sharpen those of the Western researcher, producing new research ideas and advancements. In other words, I am not suggesting that Americans take scholarship to the Global South; rather, I am suggesting that American scholars go to the Global South and contribute to scholarship from

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<sup>44</sup> For similar examples from Asia, see the various publications, including articles, commentaries, and monographs, at the Asia Theological Association website (<http://ataasia.com/ata-publications>). Many other examples, especially in Africa, could be listed. See Orbis Books (<http://orbisbooks.com>), a publishing company whose mission is to bring scholarship in the Global South to English readers.

<sup>45</sup> Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity*, see esp. xvii–xviii.

and within an intercultural dialogue.<sup>46</sup> “It is Christian mission,” as Walls notes, “that most often creates the need for fresh theological activity.”<sup>47</sup>

A specific example of cross-cultural experience that advances a particular discipline is the work of Timothy Laniak, Professor of OT and Academic Dean at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC. His living with Bedouin in Israel and Egypt helped inform his biblical theology of leadership *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*.<sup>48</sup> Laniak elsewhere confirms how serving at length internationally gave him insights into Scripture that he otherwise would never have had: “Listening to Christian leaders in other parts of the world constantly challenged my interpretation of Scripture.”<sup>49</sup>

In a similar way, how might living in Latin America shed light on one’s understanding of justice in the OT prophets? How might living in Asia—where people are often consumed with “saving face”—shed light on honor and shame in the NT? How might living in Ethiopia heighten one’s awareness in Ephesians of Christ’s lordship over the spirit world?<sup>50</sup> How might living among Christians in the Global South, wherein a pervasive openness to supernatural events is assumed, advance our understanding of biblical and contemporary miracles?<sup>51</sup> One’s geographical context often “influences what we see and what we don’t see in a biblical text.”<sup>52</sup> Changing the scholar’s geographical locale will open new vistas of research possibilities on the landscape of a particular discipline that others have too long viewed from consistently similar angles. Tennent provides a timely encouragement for Western scholars who want to practice their vocations globally while at the same time advancing their discipline: “The apostle Paul was simultaneously the church’s greatest theologian and its greatest missionary.”<sup>53</sup>

## V. CONCLUSION

The central argument in this article is that academic missions, in spite of its significant global influence, is an under-utilized strategy within evangelical missions. Ott and Strauss in their recent assessment of missiology rightly argue that missions

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Walls, “World Christianity” 236.

<sup>47</sup> Walls, “Foreword,” in Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* xv. Cf. idem, “Christian Scholarship and the Demographic Transformation of the Church,” in *Theological Literacy for the Twenty-First Century* (ed. Rodney L. Peterson with Nancy M. Rourke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 166–83.

<sup>48</sup> Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (NSBT 20; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006), esp. 13.

<sup>49</sup> Idem, “My Journey: A Personal Word from Tim Laniak,” <http://shepherdleader.com/about.php>.

<sup>50</sup> See Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* 279.

<sup>51</sup> Craig S. Keener recently published his groundbreaking work on miracles that insightfully challenges David Hume’s longstanding methodological antisupernaturalism (*Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* [Grand Rapids, Baker, 2011]). Keener notes, among other things, how living cross-culturally influences the Westerner’s understanding of miracles (see esp. pp. 213–41). Keener’s work reopens in a fresh way a door to the research of miracles that has too long been forced shut by the prevailing Western epistemology—a field that many Western academic missionaries from various disciplines (e.g. Biblical Studies, Psychology, Medicine, and Sociology) can advance.

<sup>52</sup> Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* 278.

<sup>53</sup> Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* xvii.

is the most urgent task facing believers today.<sup>54</sup> This assessment certainly rings true in international scholarship. Jesus' famous words, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few," presently apply quite poignantly to universities and seminaries beyond the U.S. borders. The need is, indeed, great. As the inundated job market demonstrates, there are plenty of able-minded evangelical scholars in the U.S. to help meet this need. Evangelical seminaries, universities, and missions-sending organizations can partner together to more efficiently identify and to place potential academic missionaries in the strategic, international mission fields of academic life. In meeting this need, academic missionaries, in their long term exposure to different cultures, have the potential to advance scholarship in creatively new directions both in the U.S. and abroad.

In paying the price to leave the crowded corridors of evangelical scholarship in the U.S., I think that scholars will satisfyingly resonate with a quote traditionally attributed to John Keith Falconer, nineteenth-century missionary to Yemen: "I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out in a land of darkness than in one flooded with lights."

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<sup>54</sup> Ott and Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* 337–38.