

Bradley England

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Emmanuel Christian Seminary
One Walker Drive
Johnson City, TN 37601

To Whom It May Concern,

In the years following my short time at Emmanuel Christian Seminary, I have spoken with people across the restoration movement and other churches/ denominations about my time at ECS. I talk frequently about my experience at ECS, because my time there was so formative for my faith. When I speak about my experience at ECS to others the conversation always revolves around one main influence, Dr. Christopher Rollston.

I enjoyed all of my classes at ECS, each of them were challenging and beneficial, but none so much as Old Testament Introduction (OTI) with Dr. Rollston. I walked into my first day of OTI with Dr. Rollston fresh out of Johnson University with a Bachelors degree, confident that I knew everything I needed to know about the scriptures. I quickly received the dose of humility that I sorely needed and my faith began to be stretched and challenged in ways I had never imagined it would be. I was challenged in difficult, but wonderful ways. The influence that Dr. Rollston had on me during OTI brought the scriptures to life for me in ways that I had never seen them. It has impacted every area of my ministry to students and has been the most formative aspect of my ministry education.

I challenge anyone to tell me what the function of a Seminary professor is, if not to challenge, stretch, and help a minister in training grow his or her faith beyond what it ever has been. Not only did my interaction with Dr. Rollston help me grow in ways I needed to grow, his class gave me a thirst for knowledge about God and His scripture that can not be slaked. I will never again approach the Bible as I did before meeting Dr. Rollston, when I believed I knew all I needed to know about the contents of the Bible. For the rest of my life I will be a student of the Bible, communicating God's message of the restoration of all of creation to those who will hear it.

It is vital that seminaries of all shapes and sizes have professors like Dr. Rollston. ECS should be honored to have an instructor that is capable of challenging his students in the way the Christopher Rollston does. He teaches with great knowledge, but with equal approachability and accessibility to all students. He makes strong arguments about his views on scripture which reflect his years of intense study, but he brings the same intensity in his care of each student as they wrestle with the information he presents them with. As one of Dr. Rollston's students nothing was more clear to me than Dr. Rollston's desire to see my faith grow in healthy ways and to maximize my ability to study and teach the Bible.

I support Dr. Rollston. I am proud to have been his student, and I encourage all who function in an administrative capacity at ECS to allow Dr. Rollston to continue influencing students at ECS. I am just one voice, but I know that many have spoken up in support of Dr. Rollston. You must realize that you have someone special on your staff in Dr. Rollston. The combined voice of these letters prove that Dr. Rollston has a gift for reaching each student where they are and helping them grow in ways that they need to.

I am forever grateful to ECS for being instrumental in shaping my faith into what it is today, particularly for the opportunity to study under Dr. Rollston. What I learned from him truly sparked my academic and spiritual formation. His passion for the future spiritual leaders of this world is obvious, and he is more than worthy of his post.

Sincerely,

Bradley J. England
Youth Minister
Clarksville Christian Church