

**W.G. HULBERT**  
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September 27, 2012

President Michael Sweeney  
Emmanuel Christian Seminary  
One Walker Drive  
Johnson City, TN 37601

Dear President Sweeney,

Just a few years into full-time ministry I began to develop a deeper interest in the Old Testament. Soon after that, I started toying with the idea of teaching in a college classroom and began looking into graduate programs. Looking back, I realize now I was entirely clueless with how to proceed. I also realize just how apparent the Providence of God was in my life at this time. I considered an M. A. from Wheaton College but that required a semester of study in Jerusalem before beginning the program, hardly practical to someone with a wife and two children. I considered two seminaries affiliated with my church tradition, but I was unsure how helpful they would be with being accepted into a Ph. D. program later. Other schools simply were not financially feasible. It was the spring of 2003 and I was running out of hope that I would ever be able to pursue graduate work.

I recall at that time reading the most recent issue of Biblical Archaeology Review and noticing a caption for a transcription of the so-called "Jehoash Inscription" which had been done by a "Christopher Rollston, Emmanuel School of Religion." I remember thinking to myself, "Emmanuel? That sounds familiar . . . Is that 'one of ours'?" I yelled across the house to my wife Tammy, asking her if she recognized the name. We both had the slightest recollections of Emmanuel sending reps to Kentucky Christian University while we were undergrads there. You'll have to forgive me, spending most of my life in northern Ohio and Indiana I grew up thinking there were only two seminaries in the Restoration Movement. Suffice it to say, I had not only discovered a seminary affiliated with my church tradition, but one which included a faculty member published in a widely-read popular magazine.

I scheduled a campus visit immediately, and met with Dr. Rollston for the first time. He assisted me in setting goals for pursuing a Ph. D. and was also very upfront that there were no guarantees. I remember as he talked to me about potential Ph. D. programs, rattling off "top tier" schools and other good programs. "Baylor is a good school as well," he told me. "You might keep that in mind, it could be a good fit for you." Yes, in our very first meeting, Dr. Rollston recommended the school I find myself at now, in the dissertation stage of a Ph. D. program in Biblical

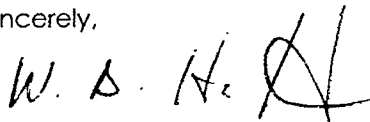
Studies. Needless to say, I enrolled in Emmanuel in the fall of 2004, and Dr. Rollston was my advisor. Let me be clear: not only did I attend Emmanuel because of Dr. Rollston, I *discovered* Emmanuel because of Dr. Rollston.

Dr. Rollston and the entire faculty at Emmanuel met all of my expectations academically. What I did not expect was how much I would learn from Dr. Rollston (and to be sure, the rest of the faculty) concerning ministry. As you know personally, ministry continued to be an important part of my family's life while at Emmanuel and still is. In all of his classes, Dr. Rollston always took time to help students navigate the difficult waters we often found ourselves in when studying the Bible at the seminary level. This was true both with helping students personally and with helping them with these issues within the context of ministry. I have heard from many recent students that this has not changed.

I was privileged to work for Dr. Rollston for three years, and I can assure you that these conversations took place outside of the classroom as well. Dr. Rollston and I discussed ministry nearly every day, and rarely in relation to classroom matters. I'm sure you are well aware of Dr. Rollston's continued commitment to located ministry during his time at Emmanuel. We frequently shared stories, discussed trials, and offered counsel to one another. He often encouraged me to continue to lead worship for Emmanuel chapel services, letting me know how much he enjoyed the worship. I also recall when Gary Knapp, our senior minister at West Hills Christian Church and an Emmanuel associate, asked if I thought Dr. Rollston would be willing to fill the pulpit one Sunday morning in Gary's absence. I fondly recall Dr. Rollston's sermon on the Lord's Supper, followed by Tammy and I leading the congregation in worship with songs focused on the atonement, and then concluding our service sharing the elements. I came to Emmanuel hoping to train with Dr. Rollston. I never anticipated working together in ministry with someone I so deeply respected as a scholar.

During our time here in Waco, my commitment to both ministry and academia has not changed, and I'm sure that neither has Dr. Rollston's. While continuing my studies I continue to play guitar nearly every week at our church, and I'm frequently asked to preach. I count myself blessed to be a part of church that isn't afraid to have a Ph. D. student in Biblical Studies share in these ministries. I also know I've earned their trust by demonstrating my commitment to ministry. To be sure, this commitment was important to me before I came to Emmanuel, but Dr. Rollston reinforced this commitment, and exemplified it for me in his own life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W. G. Hulbert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "H" that loops back.

W.G. Hulbert