



NORMAN H. MARING, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY
DEAN OF THE FACULTY

May 8, 1975

MEMORANDUM TO: Professors Koch, McDaniel, and Vanderlip

FROM: Dean Norman Maring

RE: Withdrawal of Application by Prospective Students

The attached letter is being sent to you, because it reflects one of the problems encountered in recruitment efforts. It is sent not in an accusatory spirit, but in a spirit of perplexity experienced when we lose promising prospective students because of impressions received from our own students and alumni. In the light of faculty desires to attract a better quality of student, it is therefore discouraging to lose two brothers who have GPAs of 3.75 and 3.37. Another student of similar academic record from a good college withdrew recently to attend another seminary for essentially the same reasons.

Unless we keep in mind the context in which our seminary exists, we shall find it increasingly difficult to remain a viable institution. We recruit largely from conservative churches and colleges, or from Inter-Varsity groups at universities. These students are looking for a clearly conservative, evangelical seminary and are especially concerned about instruction in Bible. Although we expect them to be exposed to new ideas and to broaden their outlooks during the seminary years, I guess that we need to think further about the extent to which, and the approaches by which, we should attempt to effect changes.

Does any of you have suggestions to make pertinent to the issue raised by this letter? Should we discuss again the question of character and image in relation to our understanding of "conservative"? Would it be helpful to have the Bible professors meet with President, Vice President, and Dean? Much as I wish that the subject could be filed away in a drawer, there seems to be no way of avoiding further discussion of this recurring problem.

W.M.

May 1, 1975

Dear Sir:

Neither I, Tom Bennett nor my brother, Timothy Bennett will be attending Eastern Baptist Seminary next year.

Just previous to leaving the school after my visit April 3, I had the opportunity to speak with two students, one a junior and one a senior. The discussion revolved around the theology of the Biblical studies department, which was my main concern, and since initial remarks we made identified them to me as trustworthy and of a perspective similar to my own, I immediately knew their thoughts would be profitable to me. Neither of these men, though not dismayed by it, could understand how the doctrinal statement of the seminary could be signed by the members of the Biblical studies department. It is not sheer deception on their part. I am sure, rather a new orthodoxy which imparts new meanings to traditional phrases. This was no surprise to me, but confirmed what I had suspected.

It is because I do not believe this type of seminary education would be most beneficial to my theological development, that I choose, together with

my brother, to seek study elsewhere. If I
appear narrow for such a choice, so be it.
I firmly believe though, that of the battles to
be fought, the ones to be contended, those that
would be offered by your school are of less
importance to me, personally, than a host of
others, a department which needs to be increased
first in order to attain the historicity of the
resurrection of Christ deserves attention but not
at present, mine.

Very truly yours,

James J. Bennett

Post Script - If my last remark
is seemingly done, be assured I
would in no way want to
convey an attitude of disrespect
for these scholars. Neither would I
want to leave the impression that
my case stands or falls with the
veracity of that statement, which
may be subject to challenge and
explanation by those it concerns.