

EDITORIAL

Theological education for the sake of the whole world has long been the heartbeat and mission of the institution known as the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1905, the founding president of our *alma mater*, Benajah Harvey Carroll, envisioned a Texas institution that would serve as a transformative educational agent for the worldwide dissemination of the gospel of Jesus Christ. At the time, he noted, a fifteenth of the Baptists in the world lived in the state. Texas was like a “breeding place for migratory fowls,” from which missionaries must go into the whole world. From all over “the prairies and plains of the West,” he said, preachers were being called by the Lord.¹ These migratory preachers had clearly heard “the moaning prayer of a desperate world, ‘Laborers, more laborers, Lord.’” They were answering the Lord’s call, and responding, like Isaiah, “Lord, send me.” Carroll continued, “They ask no question of the thither. Anywhere in the world where needed. The missionary nestling prepares for migratory flight to any destitute field in the wide world.” Southwestern’s first president saw these preachers and teachers heading off to Latin America as well as “Europe, Africa, Asia, the islands of the sea” and “as they swarm, they fill a thousand mission fields and three thousand pastorates in Texas.”²

This all-embracing global vision electrified Carroll’s contemporaries, and it has continued to shape the hearts and minds of the trustees, faculty, and students of Southwestern Seminary until today. The seminary’s second president, Lee Rutland Scarborough, wrote books with telling outward-looking titles like *Recruits for World Conquests* (1914), *With Christ After the Lost* (1919), and *A Search for Souls* (1925). The long-serving and founding seminary trustee, George Washington Truett, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, agreed with Carroll and Scarborough, contributing books like *A Quest for Souls* (1917) and *The Salt of the Earth* (1949).

¹*The Baptist Standard* (May 4, 1905); cited in Robert A. Baker, *Tell the Generations Following: A History of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1908-1983* (Broadman, 1983), 119.

²Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 119.

Throughout its history, Southwestern has continued its founders' global outlook and missionary passion, training tens of thousands of missionaries over 116 years and, more recently, establishing the Roy J. Fish School of Evangelism and Missions. Perhaps no greater visual reminder of our global vision exists than the world map that dominates the Rotunda of the B.H. Carroll Memorial Building, which itself dominates the campus.

However, both the world and the seminary changed in the intervening years, as the campus welcomed, trained, and returned thousands upon thousands of international students in the twentieth century. Then, with the advent of widespread digital communication technologies in the twenty-first century, the classrooms of the seminary also began to become worldwide platforms in themselves. For instance, the two of us as teachers interact constantly with students in our Doctor of Philosophy seminars and in our master's level courses who are themselves located geographically throughout the United States and across the continents. With the growth in pedagogical methods and plenty of personal and corporate effort, and assisted by highly trained staff, we have taken note of how contemporaneous digital means that involve students from multiple cultures present a ripe opportunity for global theological education. However, as the authors of the following essays demonstrate, the needs of the churches in the majority world are so massive, and the intercultural dynamics are so complex, that much more thought and even greater effort need to be put into the highly critical matter of global theological education, if we who are evangelicals, Southern Baptists included, are to help the churches with the greatest possible effectiveness.

The following essays dedicated to evaluating and advancing global theological education, written by six accomplished educators, have been arranged logically. Ralph Enlow begins by asking a question that should set us on our heels: "Should North American Seminaries Become Global?" In the next two contributions, the theoretical foundations for global theological education are explored. Dean Sieberhagen looks at global theological education from the perspective of global missions, while Daniel Sánchez exposes the cultural dimensions of theological education. While each article in this issue of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* offers ways to move forward with global theological education, the next two make dramatic proposals for educators to adopt. Michael Ortiz argues we must set about "Recalibrating Theological Education for the Church's Mission" and Perry Shaw draws upon deep crisis to demonstrate some ways we might engage

in “Transforming Theological Education.” Finally, the new provost of Southwestern Seminary, Madison Grace, outlines his compelling convictions and offers some relevant proposals in an enlightening manifesto titled, “Global Theological Education and Southwestern Seminary.”

Because we are passionate about helping the churches obey the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, the faculty and staff of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary are ready and willing, indeed eager, to educate ministers from around the world. However, we also know that we must change to meet the contours of this changing world even as we advocate the unchanging gospel. This is why we are passionate about engaging in global theological education. We know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the blessings that come by his Word and Spirit. We know there is a huge and desperate world that needs our students, whether they come from the cities and fields of the United States or the many nations throughout the world. We know that we must seek every venue possible and by whatever means possible, whether here on Seminary Hill or there on the field, to train our students. And we know we need to help growing ministers proclaim with passion, power, and precision God’s saving Word, for the Day of the Lord approaches and the needs are too great to remain complacent. The fields indeed are white unto harvest, and we are compelled to train the laborers which the churches are praying the Lord will send into the harvest. May the Lord grant our prayers, bless our efforts for his glory, and show us the way to bring theological education at its best to the world in its overwhelming need.

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