



April 7, 2016

Dear Friend of Taylor,

In March I was privileged to take my second trip to Cameroon; I was there to advance our partnership conversations, and I taught a Christian Ethics class for the Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary. What an amazing experience! I was moved by the deep commitment to theological education we found in Cameroon. I was touched by the sacrifices students make in order to take the course – rearranging their lives, and traveling great distances to Kumba from around the country. I was blessed by their eagerness to learn and their excitement for what God was doing through their ministries.

I came away from this trip with a renewed sense of gratitude. Anyone who travels between the developing world and North America recognizes the great differences that exist between them. We take so much for granted in North America: highway systems, reliable utilities such as electricity and potable water, stable and safe systems of government—all evidence of just how advantaged we are. Cameroon was a firsthand reminder to me that many people in the world do not live with the conveniences we enjoy, and I returned to Canada with a commitment to “count my blessings,” as the old hymn goes.

First, I am grateful to have a part in **seminary education**. Graduate theological education plays an important role in shaping those who provide pastoral leadership for our churches and a host of other important ministries. We live at a time when the need for well-educated and spiritually well-formed leaders couldn't be more urgent or pronounced. The dramatic social and cultural changes we face demand faithful men and women who can draw deeply on the vast resources of the Christian faith. We need these resources to navigate these trying times for the witness of Christ in the world.

Second, I am grateful for the work of the **E P Wahl Centre** and its call to provide resources for lifelong Kingdom learning. Some of these resources are in **continuing pastoral education**, such as THRIVE!, Flourish, or the Sabbatical Preparation workshop through the Healthy Pastors Initiative, or free audit classes for alumni, or the annual E P Wahl Lectures. Other resources are **for local church ministry** such as the Church Administrative Professionals Symposium, or the new Turbulence workshop, which helps churches learn to “navigate conflict with grace.” The need for lifelong learning is as vital today as it has ever been. Even as I write this we are preparing to host an event that is bringing Christians and Muslims, building bridges through relationships and helping to foster understanding. Response to the event exceeded our most optimistic expectations forcing us to move to a larger venue. (You can access a recording of this event online at [www.Taylor-edu.ca/AudioArchives](http://www.Taylor-edu.ca/AudioArchives)). Theological education is critical for the ministry and witness of the church and I am profoundly grateful to be a part of it.

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Third, I am grateful to be a part of an institution with a long history of **ministry partners** through whom God has faithfully sustained His work. Your fervent prayers, keen insights, hard labors, and financial resources are evidence of God's faithfulness to us. For that we offer our deepest expression of gratitude and thanksgiving. Thank you for your partnership with us in this ministry.

At the recent E.P. Wahl Lectures, Dr. Norman Wirzba suggested to us that creation is rightly seen as a physical manifestation of the love of God. God didn't create out of necessity but out of freedom as an act of love, he said: God's act of love resulted in creation. Of course, that love was again profoundly and ultimately manifested in God's becoming a part of that creation, as "God so loved the world that He sent His only Son..." We recently celebrated that ultimate act of love as Jesus died on the cross for our sins. But death couldn't extinguish that love, nor could it hold him in the grave. Through his resurrection he broke the power of sin and death and reconciled us to God. Gratitude for that is beyond verbal expression, calling not only for words but also lives lived faithfully in the reality of His grace and love.

Our prayer is that you, too, will count your blessings. We live in a world that often blinds us to our blessings, creates only the desire for *more*. Let's remember that we are blessed in so many ways, and that's the gospel truth.

We see you as one of our blessings from God. May you continue to find joy in all the ways God uses you to be a blessing to others.

Shalom,

Dr. David Williams, President  
Taylor College and Seminary

P.S. One of my roles as the President of Taylor is to inform you of how Taylor is fulfilling our mission; another role is to work to raise the funds necessary for the work. If you believe in this educational ministry and would like to speak with me about being a financial partner, please feel free to call or write. My direct office number is 780-431-5207 (1-800-567-4988, ext. 207), and my email address is [David.Williams@Taylor-Edu.ca](mailto:David.Williams@Taylor-Edu.ca).