

## Do We Still Need Seminaries?

Reports of declining seminaries raise many questions about the future of the church

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<http://www.christianitytoday.com/parse/2013/april/do-we-still-need-seminaries.html?paging=off>

We all know how difficult it can be to carve out the time/funding for education once you are working and supporting a family. But what surprised me about many of these younger pastors was their complete lack of interest in seminary.

An article by Libby Nelson for *Inside Higher Ed* indicates seminaries are facing tough times. Enrollment is down, financial support from denominations is eroding, and the demand for seminary-trained pastors is weakening. (<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/03/29/luther-seminary-makes-deep-cuts-faculty-and-staff-amid-tough-times-theological>)

As denominations see loyalty and support decline, they are offering fewer financial subsidies to seminaries. Therefore the costs are passed along to students. Nelson reports: Long-term challenges existed for theological schools before the economic downturn. The damage to seminary endowments in 2008 threw those problems into sharp relief, and there has been little overall improvement as the economy improved, said Stephen R. Graham, senior director of programs and services at the Association of Theological Schools.

What do you think about this decline? Does the church still need traditional seminaries? Of course it is unfair to present this as an either/or issue. There are many ways pastors are trained beyond formal post-graduate study in a seminary.