

PROPOSAL FOR A
CONTEXTUALIZED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
FOR THE TRAINING OF
RUSSIAN SPIRITUAL LEADERS

by

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe a proposal for a spiritual training program contextualized to the Russian situation. It is in the form of a general proposal, since the program described is not in any stage of planning at this point. The impetus for the design of this program is described below. My purpose in making it generally available is twofold: First, I would like to get feedback from others who are doing serious thought on the particular kind of spiritual training described in this paper. Second, I would like others who are involved in any kind of spiritual training in Russia to benefit from comparing notes with me. If there are any ideas in this paper which are of any help to others, it may be that such cross-fertilization will be the full extent of the value of this paper (unless we do in fact move forward with the implementation of the proposal).

I. Program Rationale

A. Needs Assessment

1. Local Expressions of Need – Various church leaders in Russia have been discussing their need for a program that would provide spiritual training for Christian workers in their regions. They are concerned that the closest training programs available are usually in Moscow, which imposes a burden on prospective students. In addition, the programs in Moscow are not exactly suited to their needs. Several months ago I had a few preliminary discussions with a few of these leaders regarding what kind of program would be suitable for their regions, and began to think more seriously about their needs.

A few months later I described to these same leaders the idea for a spiritual training program that would be less oriented to classroom learning and intellectual development and more oriented to practical spiritual training. My proposal met with enthusiastic responses, and I was asked to develop an overall plan for this program. Since there is no other similar program available, according to these leaders, our program would be breaking some new ground (at least to their knowledge). There is a great lack of deeper spiritual training for Russian leaders, most programs being organized along the lines of an academic American Bible college or seminary model.

The local leaders didn't have a plan of their own for this kind of training, and left the contents of the curriculum mainly up to me. I was free to design the training from the ground up, with their input as I request it. I considered it to be a great opportunity for starting a new kind of training in Russia. This paper is an adapted compilation of my proposal to them in general terms.

2. Leadership and Planning Team – The primary team that would be involved in actually creating such a program would consist of several people. I would be responsible mainly for the curriculum development. Local leaders would be in charge of overseeing registration and other official acts of the center, logistics of the program and student recruiting.

As we would get further along in the planning, we would look for a few leaders from churches in other cities of their regions who would help us to think through a more refined overall plan than is set forth in this paper. They would bring to the table the particular needs of their own people, both spiritual and physical, that would influence how the first year of the program would look. These leaders would also help us to more carefully contextualize the program to the Russian realities.

3. Projected Planning Strategy – In order to refine our understanding of the needs of our students and the best ways to meet these needs, we would need to conduct some qualitative research. Our plan for research would involve at least the following stages:

a. Church Leader Focus Groups – We would meet with groups of church leaders in various cities of the regions and discuss their understanding of the needs of their churches. Many of these leaders have not had extensive training themselves, and could give us many good ideas regarding the areas where more specific training is needed. They could also be valuable sources of information regarding the lives of local churches, and could give us a clearer notion of the potential ministries available for young people who would complete our program. This is a very important step for "political" reasons also. One common problem in Russian churches is the tendency of older leaders to distrust the training received by young people from their churches. When these young people come back to the churches there are often no ministries open to them. We would hope to avoid this problem through close communication with all church leaders whose young people would be involved in our program.

b. Interviews With Prospective Students – It would often be the case that the existing church leaders would have some blind spots regarding the needs for training among their young people. We would conduct interviews with those who are candidates for study in our program in order to gain their perspectives of their own needs for training. In addition, we would probe to discover what kinds of training they have already had, what kinds of ministry experience they have gained, and what theology of ministry guides them when they think about a future life serving the Lord. Information from these interviews would aid us in testing whether our knowledge of the students deficiencies was accurate as we designed the course content.

c. Examination of Existing Programs – We are aware of some of the programs that are available in Russia for training prospective leaders, but we need much more information to be able to assess what is specifically being offered elsewhere. We would try to visit several of the main programs in Western Russia to examine their curriculum and to speak with faculty and students. We would seek candid evaluations of the programs strengths and weaknesses. We would especially probe into the issue of proper contextualization of the courses for Russian students, and would ask how students respond to the materials and the teaching methods employed by these programs. This would help us greatly as we aimed for our own contextualization.

d. Study of Available Research – Several dissertations and theses have been written over the past few years regarding the issues surrounding theological education in Russia. We would read these dissertations, make contact with the authors, and perhaps follow some of the qualitative and quantitative methods that we discovered in those products as we did our own further research. See the Bibliography at the end of this paper for a list of the current dissertations, theses, and other works of which we are aware.

B. Participants in the Program

1. Learners

a. Target Audience – The group that we would hope to reach with this program includes those training for any kind of spiritual leadership in churches. Since the program is designed to train for general spiritual maturity and leadership, it would be useful for anybody who is involved in ministry. Those who are heading for pastoral ministry in the future may come through this program, but it would not be designed to give them everything they need to be pastors. However, we would design the program so that any future pastor would be well served to use this training as a strong foundation for later, more focused pastoral training. We would invite those who would have various kinds of teaching ministries as well, at any level. Both men and women would be welcome, since we would not advertise ourselves as specifically training for positions that are reserved for men. We would especially look for those people who have little

foundation in training or ministry, hoping by this program to start them in the right direction for future leadership of new, more effective churches in Russia.

b. Identification and Selection – Consistent with our training philosophy, we would not have a rigorous set of requirements for those who would come into our program. However, since we would have limited enrollment, we would have a set of priorities for our students, and a procedure for selecting them. The primary requirement would be that students be spiritually ready and eager to serve the Lord in the context of local churches. We would try not to bind ourselves to a specific list that defines such a person, but would use the following procedures in order to ensure that this is the kind of student we would accept:

i. Pastoral Recommendation – We would look to pastors of local churches in the local region (or others from which some students may come) to provide a solid recommendation of students for the program. We would design a simple questionnaire that pastors could fill out, in which they would attest to the readiness of the student to enter such a training program (based on our description of what we were looking for in students, and the nature of the program itself). We would also discuss a prospective student with his or her pastor, to ascertain his confidence in the spiritual maturity of the prospect. The person should be seen as already exercising spiritual gifting to some extent, with an evident willingness to submit to authority and serve others faithfully.

ii. Educational Background – We would not require a high level of education for entrance into this program. The primary requirement being a certain level of spiritual maturity, however, means that the prospect would have to show some intellectual maturity. We would thus review school records to see how well a student has studied in the past – mainly as a way to weed out those who didn't seem to have the capacity for the concentration required for the Bible study, discussion and writing that would be required in our program. We would attempt to develop a means of ascertaining learning ability, and would apply this means in our selection process. This aspect of the selection process would also give us a method of deciding between students when all other factors seemed to be equal. But again, we would be careful not to make scholarship the focus of our requirements, as it would not be the focus of our training.

iii. Personal Interviews – Individual interviews with prospective students would be very important in our selection process. The leaders of the program would often be able to discern intangibles that would communicate to them whether or not a particular person would be a good fit for this kind of training. We would ask questions that would help us judge a person's general maturity and readiness for in-depth spiritual training. The prospect would have to be able to convince the program leaders of his or her personal desire to be trained, and not be coming to us simply because someone else behind the scenes is telling him or her "It will be good for you." We would also attempt to weed out those who seem to be only seeking a diploma or a position (a special problem in Russia, where diplomas can be more prized than the actual substance of the training received).

iv. Further Recommendations – In the case of married couples, we would definitely want to interview the spouse of any prospective student. Spousal agreement and support would be essential to students in our program, and marital strife would be taken as a warning against admitting students. In some cases we might want to interview parents or close friends, especially if there were any uncertainties about prospects after all the above procedures had been undertaken.

c. Expectations for Training

i. Our Expectations – We expect that our students would be trained in such a way that they would be ready and able to perform the fundamental tasks of

spiritual ministry. That is, they should be able to lead unbelievers to Christ and new believers to maturity in the faith. If married, they should have marriages and families growing in godliness. Furthermore, they should have demonstrated this ability in live situations, and not simply learned the principles involved in such ministry. We would thus not release students who had not internalized the biblical truth and expressed it in their lives while they were with us.

ii. Pastor Expectations – Pastors should have the right to expect that students returning to them could be trusted to carry out fundamental ministries in the evangelism and discipleship ministries of the church. They should be able to put such graduates right to work. In fact, they should be expecting to do this before they would even send us a member of their congregation. Close communication with a student's home church would ensure that the pastor's expectations were being met. If a pastor did not agree with our theology and form of training, it is unlikely that we would accept a student that was planning to return to his church.

iii. Student Expectations – The students should understand the expectations of the school administration and the expectations of his home church pastor, and be willing and ready to meet those expectations. But the students would also have the right to be expected to be treated with respect, as individuals, and not to be manipulated to fulfill the program of others. They should come to us with the expectation of finding joy in service, and fulfillment in the utilization of their spiritual gifts. They should expect that our training would be a foundation for future, more specific training in other areas of specialized ministry, should that be the next step. Everything in our program should be useful for the spiritual growth of our students, and they could expect to be satisfied with our care for them and their own progress.

2. Coordinators

a. Identity – The same individuals that were centrally involved in planning the program would be the ones who would be the primary initial coordinators. In the beginning, in fact, these would wear several hats, since the program would begin small and grow in size only after experience had been gained.

b. Expectations of Coordinators – The actual coordination of the program would evolve over time, but the tentative expectations of the coordinators would include at least the following: Student recruitment, location of Russian teachers, organization of training schedule, teaching of selected modules, overseeing of facilities and maintenance, interfacing with local government authorities, designing of curriculum, location of Western teachers, and raising of funds.

3. Teachers and Assistants – Our aim through this program would be not only to develop students who would be ministers, but also who would be capable teachers and mentors of others in this program. The teachers for the program would consist of the following:

a. Founding Instructors – The coordinators would be the primary initial instructors and mentors in this program. At this point in Russia, there probably aren't others available who would be ready to teach students in the exact way that we have planned. We might invite certain teachers for special seminars, but the core program would be specially developed, and would require trainers that were aware of the focus and goals of the program as a whole.

b. Specializing Graduates – One of the goals of the program would be to develop a corps of teachers who would be able to return to the center and teach selected modules, for which they would be expected to develop advanced mastery. Students who showed special affinity and capability in certain topics would be encouraged to deeply develop those topics, within the overall framework of this kind of a program, and would

return to lead modules in their specialty. Some of this could be done soon after the graduation of our first set of students, if certain graduates displayed the required maturity in their spiritual life and in their ability to lead students.

c. Long-Term Faculty – A major goal of the program would be to create an ongoing fellowship of ministers who would take the ongoing responsibility for teaching and mentoring in the program. Ideally these would be men involved in local church ministries, and who lived close enough to the program facilities to be closely involved in the lives and studies of the students. Students from the program could begin as assistants in churches pastored by these men, and women students could be taken under the wing of women in churches who specialized in training for women's ministries. But most of the faculty would not be full-time in the program, but rather full-time in the exact kind of ministries for which we would be training our students.

4. Teacher Assistants – So that teachers could focus the greatest portion of their time on instructing and mentoring the students, we would develop a group of assistants to the teachers that would help the program run in a smooth and orderly manner. We would need secretarial help for the teachers to keep and monitor files on each of the students, so that we could more easily track the growth of our students in biblical understanding and ministry skills (and be able to document this for others, if required). Some local people who are mature in spiritual discernment, yet who are not qualified to teach, could serve as spiritual mentors and encouragers of students, so that each person in the program always had someone to turn to for help in dealing with various spiritual life issues. Finally, in the beginning we would need to make use of translators and interpreters to help any Westerners who would initially teach some of the courses, and to aid us in developing our materials in Russian (some of which might be initially translated from English).

5. Resource People – In the infancy of the program, the coordinators would serve as the key resource people as well, unless other individuals could be located to carry this load. The primary resource positions that we would seek to develop would be as follows:

a. Fund Raiser – Funds would initially need to be raised from the West and from Russia to help with startup costs, development of the facilities, and to sponsor the initial students to the program. We would try to keep our costs to a minimum once the program began, especially by finding volunteers among local believers, as well as requiring our students to work in the facilities on campus as part of their contribution to the cost of the program.

b. Library Builder – Initially we would be able to build part of our English and Russian library through book donations, and the fund raiser would not be required to raise cash for this. There are many means to gain a core set of books already available in Russia, though the quality is not always the highest, and the translations are often poor. In the long run we would need a person dedicated to developing a high-quality local library that would serve not only the school, but surrounding churches as well.

c. Kitchen – If students would be living on a campus, the most efficient way to feed them would be through cooking done on site. We would need a resourceful person to find ways to acquire inexpensive foods, and perhaps to even get some donations. A clever person in this role could save the school much cash, and ensure that the students are fed well enough to support their rigorous training.

d. Facilities – In order to keep the cost of any utilized buildings to a minimum, students would be helping to keep the property of the center in good repair. A person would be needed to oversee this task, also helping to locate donated materials that would assist us in creating an environment that builds student morale.

6. Administration – The coordinators would be the initial administration team, but would be seeking Russians to fill key spots in administration as soon as that would be

feasible. We would try to keep record keeping to a minimum, especially since we would not be seeking any special accreditation that would require elaborate student records.

II. Logistics

A. Location

1. Accessibility – The program facilities should be in an easily accessible location in a key city of the region that we would hope to serve. Most regional cities do not cover many square kilometers, and just about any location within the city would work for our purposes.

2. Adequacy for Training Objectives – The facility should be adequate for the classroom portion of our training. Space may be needed for a dormitory for resident and visiting students, and for rooms for small group meetings when needed. On the weekends students will return to their home churches, which should be close enough so that their training and their service will coincide.

3. Comfort and Convenience – Some adjustments may have to be made in order to make the classrooms comfortable. We may need to acquire good desks for comfortable sitting and writing. We would want to create a few comfortable seating areas for small group meetings, and would acquire small sofas and chairs for this purpose.

4. Available Resources – We would try to keep our resource needs to a minimum with facilities, but we might need to acquire many things in order to make the space usable for our purposes. In addition to the furniture mentioned above, we might need to find bunkbeds for a dormitory. We would need classroom equipment and supplies, which we should be able to acquire locally. The main equipment that we would need would be computers, to assist the students in preparing papers. We would not look for modern equipment, since simple word processing does not require the latest technology. We should be able to find used equipment that would not be expensive.

B. Time Frame

1. Time Required for Meeting Objectives – The training program, as outlined below, would be divided into three main courses of study. The first course would focus on the personal spiritual life of the student, the second on skills of ministry, and the third on family life. The courses of study would consist of several modules each, and the modules would extend for varying lengths of time within the overall term of the program, which is initially estimated at two years. However, this time frame requirement is primarily looking at the group study modules. Extended time would be granted for each student to complete personal projects for each course, based on his or her own life and ministry.

2. Other Responsibilities of Trainees – The students in this program would be devoting their time to their study and application of the principles and skills they would be learning. Since practical ministry would be built into the program, this would not be seen as a competing responsibility, but as an integral part of their use of time. There may be a few other responsibilities that would involve some time each week for the students as well, however, as follows. First, each student might be involved in chores that assist the school to maintain its facilities without having to hire outside help. This work should take no more than an hour each day, and a few hours more on Saturdays. Second, there might be some work required to help operate a business, if one is connected with the school to supply funds to support the training program. Finally, married students in the program would be given time to minister to and to meet the special needs of their wives and children.

3. Times of Day for Training – Since this would be a semi-residential program (and possibly fully residential for some students), the training would not fit within any

rigid time frame. Both daytime and evening hours would be used for study and ministry. However, we would especially focus the morning hours on classroom work, since those are the hours that Russians are usually less busy. Much of the study would be flexible, with an attempt to avoid an overemphasis on classroom time. Personal study and ministry would be the central focus of the program, and we would allow the students a great deal of latitude to design their own study and ministry schedules.

III. Program Goal and Objectives

Up to this point the program has been described in the subjunctive mood ("we would" as opposed to "we will") because of the fact that there are no definite plans as of yet to go ahead with establishing this program. From this point on the writing takes on a different form, with the verb tenses switching to present and future tenses, for the sake of seeing the language that would exist in a formal proposal for this particular program.

A. Program Goal – Our overall goal in this program is to train and mentor students so that they will (1) Understand principles of spiritual life, family life, and ministry and (2) Demonstrate godly lives, godly families, and ministry effectiveness. We are concerned with very practical outcomes in the lives of our students, and not with the attainment of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. We want to provide for people the foundational training that will give them a deep and solid beginning for taking part in the building of churches in Russia, whatever further training they may add on to our training in subsequent programs.

B. Program Objectives – The program has three divisions: Spiritual Life, Family Life, and Spiritual Ministry. Each division has a set of principles to understand and a set of maturities and skills to demonstrate. A basic list of objectives can thus be described according to this scheme:

1. Spiritual Life

a. Biblical Principles – At the end of the program, the students will be able to clearly explain each of the spiritual life principles and the supporting scriptures.

b. Practical Application – At the end of the program, the students will have demonstrated a godly personal and devotional life, as measured by consistent and mature practice of the fundamental aspects of the Christian life taught in the program.

2. Family Life

a. Biblical Principles - At the end of the program, the students will be able to clearly explain each of the family life principles and the supporting scriptures.

b. Practical Application - At the end of the program, the students will have demonstrated a godly family life, as a husband or wife, as measured by consistent and mature practice of the fundamental aspects of the Christian family life taught in the program.

3. Spiritual Ministry

a. Biblical Principles - At the end of the program, the students will be able to clearly explain each of the spiritual ministry principles and the supporting scriptures.

b. Practical Application - At the end of the program, the students will have demonstrated a mature and effective ministry, in accordance with his or her spiritual gifting, as measured by consistent and mature practice of the fundamental aspects of the spiritual ministry taught in the program.

IV. Confronting Issues of the Russian Context

In order to maximize the effectiveness of our training program, we will need to deal wisely with several aspects of the Russian cultural and historical context. Many of these realities are in a state of flux, and the comments in this section relate to the situation at the

beginning of the year 2000. I have only selected those issues that seem to me the most critical ones, based on my own observations and reading, and make all my contrasts with the American context, from which most of the training for this program will be adapted.

A. Russian Culture and Religion

Some of the issues to deal with are general issues of Russian culture and religion that affect all aspects of the lives of our students, and not only their spiritual training. In each case I will briefly describe the Russian context, and then describe how we will try to respond to these features of the Russian culture in a way that will "leverage" them to the advantage of our students. The first two factors below come from a study by Geert Hofstede related to educational differences in cultures.¹

1. Collectivism - The Russian culture has a long history of collectivist thinking, even before the advent of communism and the Soviet Union. According to Hofstede, Americans are the most individualistic people in the world. This feature may show up in at least the following ways in our program.

a. Russian students will tend to see education as a way to gain prestige, and the receiving of some sort of diploma will become the basic issue for them. We hope to counter this problem by making it clear from the very beginning that the product of our program is a changed life, not a prestigious document. Students who are not looking for this will tend to avoid our program in the first place.

b. Russian students often feel little moral problem with some forms of what the American would call cheating and corruption in order to acquire these certificates. To the Russian students it is seen as a way to help each other along. Our form of teaching will encourage all kinds of group support, and individual competition will not be involved. Students are not competing against each other for grades, but assisting each other toward godly living.

c. Teaching that reflects Russian traditions will have more positive association than teaching that encourages inquiry and questioning of assumptions. We will stress that all of our principles must come from the Bible, and that the Scriptures are the only authoritative "tradition". Students will deal with the text of the Bible, and not with a list of unusual doctrines, and will not need to discard any traditional teaching unless it clearly goes against the Word of God.

d. Individuals in Russian classrooms are slow to stand out from the crowd, and will often only openly speak in small groups. This feature of Russian culture will not be a problem for our program, since most of our informal learning will take place in the context of small groups. Students that are reluctant to raise questions during lectures will always have a chance to raise those in the groups.

2. Power Distance – The extent to which students will accept inequality in power with their teachers differs between Russia and the USA. Americans tend to be on the lower end of the power distance continuum (accepting less distance), while Russians are near the top of the list. We will expect to deal with this feature in several ways.

a. The personal wisdom of a professor can be more important to Russian students than the objective information that is being taught, along with its relevance to their work. We will make sure that teachers are very well trained for the topic of their lectures, to gain respect of the students, and focus those lectures on key central biblical truths. Only then, in the small groups, will the teacher move the students to application, helping students them to think creatively about the principles.

b. The Russian student often expects to be passive in the classroom, and the teacher will be expected to initiate all communication. We will begin our courses with

¹ Geert Hofstede, "Cultural Differences in Teaching and Learning" International Journal of Intercultural Relations, Vol. 10, pp. 306-316, 1986.

lectures, involving students gradually over time. Students will be allowed to be passive in this part, but in the small groups, where they will feel no power distance from other students, they will be expected to be very active.

c. Respect for the teacher could prevent Russian students for receiving an approach that calls for the teacher and student to learn together as equals. We will not try to completely close the gap between teachers and student. At the same time, we will help them see that each topic is great enough to deserve a life-long study which the professor has not yet completed. Thus students will feel responsible and willing to help discover new facets of every truth.

3. Planning – Americans have found that Russians are not used to careful planning, and that this is not an educational value that they experienced in the Soviet Union.² We will take into account the common Russian distaste for Western planning by not being over-scheduled or rigidly planned in all of our activities. The students should feel that we have left adequate room in our schedule for the uncertainties of life. Since we are designing our training to be focused on spiritual life and ministry, this should be a natural attitude for us to take on.

4. Atheism – The last seventy years of Russian education has been a long war against the notion of God, along with a promotion of evolution and materialism. Although much of this has been counteracted since the fall of communism, there is still a sense in the culture, among a great many people, that life can be lived without God. This will be an important reality for us to deal with in our courses on apologetics and evangelism, and we will strive to contextualize our training accordingly.

5. Orthodoxy – Russian Orthodoxy has been the dominant form of Christianity in Russia for over 1,000 years. Orthodoxy had deeply influenced all Russian people when they think about the nature of God, the nature of worship, and the way of salvation. Even Russian Protestants have been affected by the deep traditionalism that is found in Orthodoxy. In our program we will need to deal with Orthodox perspectives in very many of our courses, since we will often be contrasting those with approaches that we will take based on our own understanding of the biblical teaching. Contextualization of each course will start with comprehending the Orthodox position on the topic, at least to a degree that will be required for our students as they minister in the Russian context.

B. Russian Theological Education Context

1. Outside Pressures

a. Orthodox Opposition – The Orthodox Church in Russia has been felt by many Russian Protestants to be opposed to pluralism of religions on Russian soil.³ Since we will not be seeking accreditation, this factor will not affect us in this way. However, we will need to be always conscious that our efforts will not be appreciated by many, and seek to find ways to be at peace, as far as this depends on us, with Orthodox leadership in Ryazan. We will need to demonstrate that none of what we do in our training can be interpreted as "cultic."

b. Foreign Influence – At times, Russian leaders have seen the foreign influence in theological training to be infectious and dangerous, as teachers from the West bring in strange culture and teaching.⁴ Much has been appreciated as well, but we will

² Miriam Charter. "Theological Education for New Protestant Churches of Russia: Indigenous Judgments on the Appropriateness of Educational Methods and Styles." Ph.D. diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1997, p.104.

³ David P. Bohn. "A Comparative Study of the Perspectives of Evangelical Church Leaders in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Russia on Theological Education." Ph.D. diss., Trinity International University, 1997, pp. 217ff.

⁴ Bohn, pp. 197ff.

want to become known as a school that focuses its efforts on developing spiritual leaders who are fit for their own context. Since we will do a great deal of informal and nonformal training inside the Russian context, we expect to find ourselves always reminded of these issues, and hopefully always close to the culture and needs of the Russian people.

c. Desire for Accreditation – Being the underdog to Orthodoxy for so many years has contributed to a feeling of disenfranchisement by Russian Protestants.⁵ There is a large move on to seek public recognition for church leaders, and in the opinion of many this is dangerous to the spiritual training of young Russian men and women. The desire for accreditation can lead to a curriculum that is more heavily theoretical, and which doesn't prepare people to serve effectively in churches. We will avoid this issue from the very beginning by rejecting the idea of accreditation, and thus dissuading students who may come to our center only for a diploma. On the contrary, we hope that our graduates will become our greatest "accrediting" force, as they present to churches a virile alternative to fact-gathering based theological training.

2. Deficiencies

a. Lack of Materials – A chronic shortage of good books has been reported by Russian theological educators, and even those few books that have been translated are often presenting a Western slant that is not helpful in the Russian context.⁶ We will be careful not to fill our library with books that are not helpful to our students within their own context, and will also try to develop our own materials for spiritual training that may help fill some of the gap in Russian spiritual literature.

b. Lack of Trained Leaders – Russian training programs have been heavily dependant on Western teachers, and this has had some negative effects on the attitudes of Russian pastors and students (along with the positive effects).⁷ Even when the positive effects counterbalance the negative, there is the underlying understanding that Russia needs Russian trainers. This will be one of our primary motivations – to develop a group of trainers who can quickly become the central mentors of our program. They can be trained to provide deep spiritual training, for which high level theological education is not, in our opinion, necessary. This, in turn, will help us to provide to theological training centers elsewhere people who are already mature in godliness and service, for whom the additional theological training will not be a hindrance to spirituality – and thus provide assistance in developing higher level theological leaders in Russia.

c. Lack of Cooperation – Denominational divisions and competition have resulted in little cooperation between centers of theological education.⁸ Since we are seeking to present an alternative to strictly theological training, we shouldn't have difficulty in cooperating with other schools. We hope to share resources and teachers when this is beneficial, and will accept students from different denominations, provided they are willing to study with us.

3. Theological/Educational Preferences

a. Arminianism – Russian Protestants have held to a theological position that has been labeled "Arminianism," but which is not necessarily well-developed. Most likely heavily influenced by Orthodox teaching, it mainly includes the ideas of salvation as a process, the importance of good works in this process, and the lack of eternal security.⁹

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 268ff.

⁶ Charter, p. 124.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 137.

⁸ Bohn, pp. 234ff.

⁹ Linda Eilers. "When Calvinist and Arminian Beliefs Collide: Facilitating Communication Between North American Professors and Russian Bible Students." M.A. Thesis, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 1998, pp. 54ff.

We will strive to be sensitive to this issue, carefully avoiding unnecessary conflict, but openly dealing with all the biblical texts that relate to salvation in Christ as we come across them in our studies.

b. Position of Women – Russian churches have had almost no movement toward acceptance of the idea of women as pastors,¹⁰ and with this we will concur. However, there has also been a tendency for women to be too passive in the churches. We will actively train women for roles as spiritual leaders, without defining specific "offices" in the church. Our students are being trained to lead godly lives, in godly families, and be skilled in ministering to others. In this, there should be no issue of altering any biblical or Russian traditions – although historical unbiblical passivity will be challenged (though we see little opposition to promoting active godliness in Russian women).

c. Closeness to the Church – Some theological education in Russia has been criticized because it has little accountability to the churches which it is serving.¹¹ We will strive for just the opposite of this, being completely accountable to the church through the ministries of our current students. To the extent that they minister effectively in the churches as a result of our program, we will gain trust and influence within a growing groups of churches (primarily, initially, in the local regions).

d. Admission Policies – One strategic concern of other Russian schools is problems with the kind of student received into the institutions. Some schools have been pressured by economic concerns to be less free to plan in this area.¹² We will have much more flexibility in this area, since we are not training for particular positions, and we see ourselves as providing spiritual training for people at different levels of maturity and experience. We will try to avoid, however, any admission decisions that are based strictly on economic factors.

V. Program Curriculum

A. Structure of Program – The program will be built around three fundamental courses that will be used to train students in the biblical theology of life and ministry. These courses will be used to provide students with the theoretical foundation, based only on Scripture, upon which all practical applications can be built. Each practical course will thus be integrated with the core course, allowing the student to build life practice on clearly understood biblical principles, and not to rely on tradition or presuppositions. There will be 18 total courses. In this section they will be shown within their divisions, and in the following section brief course descriptions for each course will be given.

1. Spiritual Life Division – In which the program will address the relationship of the Christian before God. There will be seven courses in this division of the program – a fundamental course that lays the foundation, and six practical courses that build on that foundation. The course descriptions will describe the course objectives and approaches to learning for each of the courses listed.

a. Fundamental Principles Course: (100) Theology of Spiritual Life

b. Practical Applications Courses: (101) Prayer life; (102) Obedience and Character; (103) Personal Worship; (104) The Word of God in Life; (105) Love and Relationships; (106) Gifting and Service.

2. Spiritual Ministry Division - In which the program will address the relationship of the Christian before other people. There will be seven courses in this division of the program – a fundamental course that lays the foundation, and six practical

¹⁰ Bohn, pp. 286ff.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 228ff.

¹² Bohn, p. 265.

courses that build on that foundation. The course descriptions will describe the course objectives and approaches to learning for each of the courses listed.

a. Fundamental Principles Course: (200) Theology of Ministry

b. Practical Applications Courses: (201) Leading People to Christ; (202) Leading Individuals to Maturity; (203) Group Leadership; (204) Ministering The Word of God; (205) Answering Critics of the Faith; (206) Ministries of Mercy and Compassion.

3. Family Life Division - In which the program will address the relationship of the Christian before his or her family. There will be four courses in this division of the program – a fundamental course that lays the foundation, and three practical courses that build on that foundation. The course descriptions will describe the course objectives and approaches to learning for each of the courses listed.

a. Fundamental Principles Course: (300) Theology of Family Life

b. Practical Applications Courses: (301) Godliness in Marriage; (302) Raising Godly Children; (303) Leading Family Worship and Devotion.

B. Course Descriptions

100. Theology of Spiritual Life

Basic Description – The biblical principles of the Christian life are studied from relevant biblical texts. The purpose of this course is to give the students a solid theological foundation upon which all the practical courses of this division of the program are based. This course is the most theoretical of the division, and will depend much more upon cognitive processes than on volitional or affective.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of the Christian life. **Skill:** The student will be able to apply the proper spiritual principles to various practical issues of the Christian life. **Attitude:** The student will accept and commit to these principles as the basis of his personal life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: This course will consist of formal lectures in which the principles are introduced, discussions in which they are debated and defended, and the assignment of papers in which the students will do more in-depth work on each principle. **Informal:** Students will form small groups in which they discuss these principles together and come to a common understanding, as well as bringing back to the lectures questions and challenges that will become part of class discussion.

101. Prayer life

Basic Description – The biblical principles of prayer are studied for understanding and then applied as each student develops a personal prayer life in his or her own unique way.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of personal prayer. **Skill:** The student will gain a mature ability to pray alone and in groups. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love for and commitment to prayer in his own personal life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will operate in prayer based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal prayer groups, where students will apply the principles in ongoing prayer for each other, and on the students' own personal prayer times. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, as will the personal prayer times, so the informal portion of the course has no end. Students will continue to discuss principles of prayer when they are together, and will bring to mentors issues and questions that come up in the course of prayer times, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in prayer. **Nonformal:** Consistent prayer for people to whom the students are ministering will be a nonformal part of the students' training.

102. Obedience and Character

Basic Description – The biblical principles of obedience and character are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her character into line with the biblical description of a godly person.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of personal godliness in character. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to respond in obedience to Christ in daily situations. **Attitude:** The student will develop a humble heart of obedience, in a manner consistent with the grace of God.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of obedience and character. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will operate in obedience based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal growth groups, where students will discuss and hold each other accountable for the development of the character traits studied in the classroom. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will continue to discuss principles of obedience and character when they are together, and will bring to mentors issues and questions that come up in the course of their meetings, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in obedience. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal relationships within the course of their involvement with the center. Personal time with their mentors will continue to focus on areas of character that need attention.

103. Personal Worship

Basic Description – The biblical principles of worship are studied for understanding and then applied as each student develops a life of worship of God in his or her own unique way.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of worship. **Skill:** The student will gain a mature ability to worship the Lord alone and in groups. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love for and commitment to worship in his own personal life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will worship based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal worship groups, where students will apply the principles of worshipping God together, and on the students' own personal times of worship. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, as will the personal worship times, so the informal portion of the course has no end. Students will continue to discuss principles of worship when they are together, and will bring to mentors issues and questions that come up in the course of worship times, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in worship. **Nonformal:** Consistent worship in the churches in which the students are ministering will be a nonformal part of the students' training.

104. The Word of God in Life

Basic Description – The principles of personal bible study, meditation and memorization are studied for understanding and then applied as each student develops a life of applying the Word of God in his or her own life.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the principles of bible observation, interpretation and application. **Skill:** The student will gain a mature ability to study the Bible for personal application. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love for and commitment to Bible study in his own personal life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will study the Word of God based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal Bible study groups, where students will apply the principles of Bible study together, and on the students' own personal times of Bible study. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, as will the personal study times, so the informal portion of the course has no end. Students will continue to discuss principles of Bible study when they are together, and will bring to mentors issues and questions that come up in the course of study times, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in Bible study. **Nonformal:** Consistent personal study, as well as evaluating the teaching of preachers in the churches in which the students are ministering, will be a nonformal part of the students' training.

105. Love and Relationships

Basic Description – The biblical principles of relationships are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her relationships into line with the biblical description of a loving person.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of loving relationships. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature and loving relationships, especially among other believers. **Attitude:** The student will develop a deep love for others, and a desire to grow in his ability to love.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of love and relationships. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will operate in relationships based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal growth groups, where students will discuss their relationships with each other and with others outside the group, helping each other apply the principles studied in the classroom. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will continue to discuss principles of loving relationships when they are together, and will bring to mentors issues and questions that come up in the course of their meetings, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in his relationships. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal relationships within the course of their involvement with the center. Personal time with their mentors will continue to focus on areas of the students' relationships that need attention.

106. Gifting and Service

Basic Description – The biblical principles of spiritual gifts and service are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her personal service into line with the biblical description of his or her spiritual gifts.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of spiritual gifting and service. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to use his spiritual gifts in service to others. **Attitude:** The student will develop a humble attitude toward his place in the body of Christ, and a passion for using his gifts to serve others.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of spiritual gifting and service. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will use his gifts and serve the body based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed church ministry opportunities, where students will utilize their gifts in particular church ministries. The church ministries will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will seek out mentors who are both gifted and mature in using the gifting the student has, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of ministry, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in using his spiritual gift. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal ministries within the course of their involvement with the center. Worship times and nonformal ministering to one another will allow mentors to continue to focus on areas of the students' spiritual gift development that need attention.

200. Theology of Ministry

Basic Description - The biblical principles of Christian ministry are studied from relevant biblical texts. The purpose of this course is to give the students a solid theological foundation upon which all the practical courses of this division of the program are based. This course is the most theoretical of the division, and will depend much more upon cognitive processes than on volitional or affective.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of ministry. **Skill:** The student will be able to apply the proper spiritual principles to various practical issues of Christian ministry. **Attitude:** The student will accept and commit to these principles as the basis of his ministry.

Learning Tasks

Formal: This course will consist of formal lectures in which the principles are introduced, discussions in which they are debated and defended, and the assignment of papers in which the students will do more in-depth work on each principle. **Informal:** Students will form small groups in which they discuss these principles together and come to a common understanding, as well as bringing back to the lectures questions and challenges that will become part of class discussion.

201. Leading People to Christ

Basic Description – The biblical principles of evangelism are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her personal evangelism into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of the gospel and its communication. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to share the gospel in various ways, always with wisdom, and often associated with his spiritual gifts. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love and a zeal for sharing Jesus Christ in various ways in his life and ministry.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of evangelism. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in evangelism based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed evangelism opportunities, where students will utilize their gifts in particular evangelistic efforts. The evangelism will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of evangelism, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in sharing Christ. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal evangelistic efforts while they are involved with the center.

202. Leading Individuals to Maturity

Basic Description – The biblical principles of discipleship are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her personal discipleship ministry into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of leading and mentoring others to maturity in Christ. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to lead others to maturity in Christ in various ways, through counseling, encouraging and exhorting, always with wisdom, and often associated with his spiritual gifts. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love and a zeal for inspiring and leading others to maturity in Jesus Christ in various ways in his life and ministry.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of discipling. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in discipling others based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed discipling opportunities, where students will utilize their gifts in particular discipling relationships. The discipling will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of discipling, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in leading people to growth in Christ. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal discipling efforts while they are involved with the center.

203. Group Leadership

Basic Description – The principles of group leadership are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her group leadership ministries into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the principles of group leadership. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to lead groups in various ways, for various spiritual purposes. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love and a zeal for leading small groups for various purposes.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles of group leadership. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in leading groups based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed group leadership opportunities, where students will utilize their gifts in guiding particular kinds of groups. Many of these groups will be the ones carrying out the informal portions of other courses. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of group leadership, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in leading groups. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal groups leadership efforts while they are involved with the center.

204. Ministering The Word of God

Basic Description – The principles of ministering the Word are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her Bible ministering tasks into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the principles of ministering the Word of God. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to minister the Word of God in various ways, for various spiritual purposes. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love and a zeal for ministering the Word of God.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles of Bible ministry. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in ministering the Word of God based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed Bible ministry opportunities, where students will utilize their gifts in ministering from the Word. These ministries will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of Bible ministry, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in ministering the Word. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal Bible ministry efforts while they are involved with the center.

205. Answering Critics of the Faith

Basic Description – The principles of apologetics are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her apologetic ministry into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the ministry of defending and the principles of answering critics of the faith. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to answer critics in various ways. **Attitude:** The student will develop humility, love, courage and confidence in the face of criticisms of the faith.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles of apologetics. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in answering critics based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal study groups, where students will discuss together the principles learned in the class, to develop strategies and answers to common criticisms of the evangelical faith. These groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of the groups, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in answering critics. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal apologetic efforts while they are involved with the center.

206. Ministries of Mercy and Compassion

Basic Description – The principles of ministering mercy and compassion are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to become involved in such ministries and bring them into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the principles of ministering mercy and compassion. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to partake in mercy and compassion works. **Attitude:** The student will develop mercy and compassion that will move him to actively minister to these kinds of needs in his life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles of ministering mercy and compassion. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in ministering mercy and compassion. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal study groups, where students will discuss together the principles learned in the class, to develop strategies for ministering mercy and compassion in his context. These groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of the groups, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in ministering mercy and compassion. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal involvement in mercy and compassion ministries connected with the center, as well as with his local church.

300. Theology of Family Life

Basic Description - The biblical principles of Christian family life are studied from relevant biblical texts. The purpose of this course is to give the students a solid theological foundation upon which all the practical courses of this division of the program are based. This course is the most theoretical of the division, and will depend much more upon cognitive processes than on volitional or affective.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of the Christian family. **Skill:** The student will be able to apply the proper spiritual principles to various practical issues of Christian family life. **Attitude:** The student will accept and commit to these principles as the basis of his family life.

Learning Tasks

Formal: This course will consist of formal lectures in which the principles are introduced, discussions in which they are debated and defended, and the assignment of papers in which the students will do more in-depth work on each principle. **Informal:** Students will form small groups in which they discuss these principles together and come to a common understanding, as well as bringing back to the lectures questions and challenges that will become part of class discussion.

301. Godliness in Marriage

Basic Description – The principles of Christian marriage are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her marriage into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of marriage and the place of marriage in the spiritual life. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to operate as a godly husband or wife, loving, respecting and communicating effectively. **Attitude:** The student will develop a strong love and respect for his or her spouse, and a deep desire to have a godly marriage and help others to have the same.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of marriage. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in his marriage based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal marriage enrichment growth groups where students will work together to help each other strengthen their marriages. These groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, either an older husband or wife, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course his or her marriage, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity as a husband or wife. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their marriage life while they are involved with the center.

302. Raising Godly Children

Basic Description – The principles of Christian parenting are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her parenting into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the biblical principles of child rearing. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to raise children in a godly manner, including training, disciplining, and showing affection and encouragement. **Attitude:** The student will develop a feeling of the priority of his or her children, and a deep desire to raise godly children and help others to have the same.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the biblical principles of parenting. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself as a parent based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal parenting enrichment growth groups where students will work together to help each other strengthen their parenting skills. These groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, either an older husband or wife who has raised children, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course his or her marriage, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity as a father or mother. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on how they raise their children while they are involved with the center.

303. Leading Family Worship and Devotion

Basic Description – The principles of leading family worship are studied for understanding, and then applied as each student strives to bring his or her family worship into line with the biblical principles.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge: The student will understand and be able to clearly explain the principles of family worship. **Skill:** The student will develop a mature ability to lead his family in worship. **Attitude:** The student will develop a love and a zeal for leading his family in worship.

Learning Tasks

Formal: Minimal formal lecture will be utilized, in order to introduce the principles of family worship. Class discussion will center on gaining a proper understanding of these principles so that students will apply himself in leading family worship based on proper knowledge. **Informal:** This course will depend mostly on informal, observed family worship times, where students will become involved in leading their own family or joining another family in worship. The groups will continue for the duration of the program, so the informal portion of this course has no end. Students will work with a gifted mentor, and will bring to that mentor issues and questions that come up in the course of family worship times, with the result that each student should continue to grow in maturity in leading his family in worship. **Nonformal:** The students will be evaluated based on their informal family worship leadership efforts while they are involved with the center.

C. Teaching Materials – The teaching materials to be developed will come from four primary sources, at least in the first few years of the program:

1. The Bible – The Bible will be the primary textbook for all of our courses, and mastery of the biblical teaching for each subject will be the primary cognitive objective of each course.

2. Acquired Library – Original materials are still scarce in Russia, but we will try to acquire the best available resources that are already translated into Russian, for our library. These will be assigned as supplemental reading for the courses.

3. Materials Written by Professors – Each professor will help to create materials that will be the primary workbooks for each course. These will be created on computer software and continuously updated and improved with the input of the students.

4. Materials Developed by Students – Good students working in real ministries will also be able to write some papers that will become the supplemental readings for particular courses. Some past students who specialize in particular ministries will be able to contribute to our collection even after they graduate.

D. Plans for Accountability – Students will be examined in three primary ways, in order to demonstrate that they have achieved the objectives of the courses:

1. Examinations – For the cognitive objectives of the courses, students will be examined on their comprehension of the biblical principles, and ability to explain them clearly. Some of this will be tested in written examinations, and some by oral examinations with the professors. A set of oral examinations at the end of the program will operate similar to ordination examinations, and will ensure that each student is not only learning concepts for courses, but for long-term retention.

2. Course Projects – Each student will create a project for each course in the program, adapted and contextualized to his or her own life and ministry situation. These projects will take many forms, but their basic function will be to provide the students with tools for future development in the context of life and ministry.

3. Life and Ministry Evaluation – Assigned mentors will be continually evaluating the lives and ministries of each of the students, and will provide a written evaluation of the student for each area of life and ministry represented by the courses. Those to whom the student is ministering will be continually consulted regarding the ministry effectiveness of the student. Students in the program will evaluate each other in the areas of spiritual life, to the extent that this can be done objectively and without putting any pressure on student relationships. Their evaluations will be primarily helpful in determining the spiritual gifting of each person, since their informal ministries to each other will not always be visible to mentors and professors. A final written evaluation of each student will be created at the end of the program, with input from all of the professors.

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