

## Cover Letter

Over the past eight years, I have served as an associate pastor for the English ministry for two Korean churches. And in the last year and a half, I have been a bi-vocational pastor, working a full-time job and pastoring the English ministry at Grace and Peace Church. During my time as the associate pastor, the Lord has blessed me with an education at the Master's Seminary and years of pastoral experience in a local church.

But after eight years of ministering as an associate pastor, I believe that the Lord is now leading me to pursue a senior pastor position of a local church to preach His Word and shepherd His people. The following resume will provide you with the details of my education and pastoral experiences which will be valuable for shepherding the people of God.

I look forward to hearing from you.

In Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Ko', written in a cursive style.

James Ko

## **Personal Information**

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*I am a 33-year-old follower and servant of Christ, husband, father, associate pastor of Grace and Peace Church, and customer service representative at Gupta Insurance and Financial Services.*

### **Family:**

- Wife: Kylie Ko (married since June 20, 2015)
- Children: Greyson Ko (6) and Harrison Ko (7 months)



## **Education**

### **The Master's Seminary | Sun Valley, CA | 2013-2016**

- Master's Degree in Masters of Divinity
- Graduated in December of 2016

### **University of California, Merced | Merced, CA | 2010-2012**

- Bachelor's Degree in Psychology
- Graduated in December of 2012

### **Barstow Community College | Barstow, CA | 2007-2010**

- Associates Degree in Natural Science/Math
- Associates Degree in Social Science
- Graduated in May of 2010

## **Work Experience**

### **Gupta Insurance and Financial Services | Northridge, CA | February 2020 – Present**

#### *Customer Service Representative*

- Take calls and assist clients with document requests, payments, and other customer service related tasks
- Make calls and follow-up with clients in regards to insurance proposals, claims, and billing
- Process auto, home, earthquake, and umbrella quotes for clients and prospects
- Properly maintain sensitive records of clients

### **Koi Design | Santa Monica, CA | September 2019 – February 2020**

#### *Sales and Planning Assistant*

- Setup and input product information for a variety of products in the warehouse
- Track the quantity of incoming products and the quantity of products in the warehouse
- Coordinate with sales representatives by providing product price lists, sales samples, and other necessary sales merchandise
- Work with various departments within the company to ensure the timely process of orders from customers

### **Family Clothes | Merced, CA | September 2010 – December 2011**

#### *Store Associate*

- Assisted customers by helping to find and recommending clothing, shoes, and other accessories
- Coordinated the logistics of newly arrived shipments
- Regularly cleaned and organized store inventory

**Defense Commissary Agency (Agency of the DoD) | Barstow, CA | April 2008 – August 2010**

*Store Associate*

- Daily interacted with many military customers by helping them find products
- Regularly operated a computerized cash register system in the check-out stand
- Maintained product price tags by replacing labels when needed
- Checked the expiration of products to ensure the sale of fresh products
- Replenished the stock of products from the warehouse, freezer, and refrigerator

**Sunset Cellular | Artesia, CA | September 2006 – July 2007**

*Sales Representative*

- Daily interacted with customers to help them choose mobile devices and plans
- Utilized the Verizon Wireless activation website (Eroes) to activate and upgrade phones
- Prepared contracts and receipts for customers to read and sign
- Assisted customers with technical support for troubleshooting issues

## **Ministry Experience**

**Grace and Peace Church | North Hills, CA | December 2014 – Present**

*Associate Pastor of the English Ministry Department*

- Shepherd and minister to the English-speaking members consisting of young adults, college students, high school students, and middle school students
- Preach on a weekly basis
- Lead Bible studies on Friday nights
- Counsel members in the English ministry
- Lead worship and praise
- Plan and execute English ministry retreats
- Attend meetings with pastors and elders
- Lead education department meetings
- Experience in officiating weddings
- Participated in several mission trips to Mexicali

**Helendale Korean Mission Church | Helendale, CA | January 2013 – December 2014**

*Associate Pastor of the English Ministry Department*

- Shepherd and minister to English-speaking members
- Preach on a weekly basis
- Counsel members of the English ministry
- Lead worship and praise (when the praise leader was unavailable)

## **Salvation Testimony**

The Lord drew me to salvation through an illness that I could not find the cure for. Back in 2008, the Lord struck me with a skin and digestive disorder that was very painful and very uncomfortable. The doctors could not figure out what it was. To this day, I still do not know what it is. The skin disorder disrupted my home life, school life, and work life. There would be times when the pain was so bad that I did not want to get out of bed. For the next three years, I spent countless of dollars on doctors' appointments, topical medications, outpatient surgery, and other modalities of treatment. I even sought out a hot spring to see if it could relieve my symptoms. But despite all of my efforts, I could not find any relief. In fact, the pain and discomfort became worse with every consecutive year.

In January of 2011, at the age of 23, I was at the end of myself and this led me to seek the Lord for my healing. I went up to a prayer mountain where there were small cabin-like rooms that were built for one person. While I was in this little cabin, I fervently prayed to the Lord and read the Scriptures. After that day, I began to read the Bible much more. Every day I was reading the Scriptures whenever I had the chance. On top of that, I began to incorporate other books to supplement my reading of Scripture such as the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

Several weeks after coming down from the prayer mountain, I finally came to understand the gospel and my desperate need for the Savior. As I was reading and studying Scripture, I learned that I was a sinner that was dead in my trespasses (Eph. 2:1). As a result, I was headed for the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:14). But a way of salvation was made by the substitutionary atonement that was accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). And I learned that by putting my faith in him, Jesus Christ would rescue me from God's wrath (John 3:16; 1 Thess. 1:10).

Through this realization, I came to understand that there was something infinitely more important than my physical healing. And what was more important than my physical healing was my spiritual healing from the mortal wound that was inflicted upon me by my sin (Isa. 53:5). As a result of this realization, I fully put my faith in Jesus Christ and surrendered my life over to him in order to follow him (Mark 8:34). To this day, I still deal with my physical ailment. Although the intensity of the pain has somewhat reduced, the physical ailment has not gone away. But despite the pain that I feel, “the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

## **Call to Ministry**

I felt the call to ministry while I was attending The Master's Seminary. Before I attended The Master's Seminary, I was doing my undergraduate studies at the University of California, Merced. While I was attending UC Merced, I was going through my physical struggles which ultimately led me to Christ. After I was saved, I continued to read and study the Bible. Reading and studying the Bible was a consuming passion. This passion led me to want to attend a seminary because I wanted to know more.

Around that time, I found Dr. John MacArthur's interview with Larry King on YouTube. His clear and concise Biblical answers to the problems and issues of the world led me to GTY.org where I found a treasure trove of expository sermons. As I was listening to his sermons, I learned that he was the President of The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley. When I learned about The Master's Seminary, I wanted to attend it. So in the final year of my undergraduate studies at UC Merced, I applied to The Master's Seminary and was accepted.

After attending The Master's Seminary for one semester, I felt a strong conviction and call to the ministry. Although my original intent for going to The Master's Seminary was to study Scripture, I became fully convinced that I wanted to do ministry for the rest of my life.

# **Doctrinal Statement**

## **The Holy Scriptures**

I believe that the Bible is God's written revelation to man and, thus, the 66 books of the Bible constitute the Word of God, inspired in all of its parts (2 Samuel 7:28; Psalm 119:89; Proverbs 30:5; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

I believe that the Word of God is objective and verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant and infallible. (2 Samuel 22:31; Psalm 12:6; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16).

I believe that God spoke through His written word by a process of dual authorship: God the Holy Spirit working through the human authors, composed and recorded His Word to man. Thus, God used the human authors' individual personalities, writing styles, and backgrounds to compose His Word. (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:21).

I believe that God's Word is absolutely authoritative. God's Word stands in judgment over men; never does man stand in judgment over it (Psalm 138:2; Hebrews 4:12-13).

I believe that the Bible explicitly and clearly reveals the person and attributes of God, the way of salvation, and what God requires of man. Thus, it is the only infallible rule for faith and practice (Psalm 19:7-11, 119:9, 11; Romans 10:17; 2 Peter 1:3).

I believe that there is one, true interpretation of any given passage of Scripture. Whereas there may be multiple applications of a passage, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of a passage is to be found as one diligently applies a straightforward, grammatical, and historical approach, as the Holy Spirit enlightens the interpreter (Nehemiah 8:8; John 16:12-13; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

I believe that it is the responsibility of believers to ascertain and apply the intent and meaning of the Scripture (Joshua 1:8; John 7:17; 16:12-17; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20).

## **God**

I believe in one, living, and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; Joel 2:27; Matthew 16:16), eternally existing in three Persons (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14): God the Father, the fountain of all being (1 Corinthians 8:6), God the Son, without beginning (John 1:1, 14, 18; Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:5-6), being of one essence with the Father (John 10:30; Colossians 2:9); and God the Holy Spirit, proceeding in the full, divine essence as a Person, eternally from the Father and the Son (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Ephesians 4:30). Each person in the Godhead is fully and completely God.

I believe that God possesses all life, goodness, and glory in and of Himself (Psalm 119:68; John 5:26; 17:26); and is alone all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He made, manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them. To God is due from angels, men, and



every other creature, the worship that He is pleased to require of them (Psalm 150:1–6; Philippians 2:9–11; Revelation 5:12–14).

### **God the Father**

I believe that, as the first person of the Trinity, God the Father ordains and accomplishes all things according to His will (Psalm 135:6; 1 Corinthians 8:6). His fatherhood involves His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind (2 Corinthians 6:18; Ephesians 4:6).

I believe that God the Father is the source of all existence, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things (Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16). He possesses absolute sovereignty over all creatures to do by them, for them, and upon them whatsoever He pleases (Psalm 115:3; Daniel 4:35; Revelation 4:11). In His sight, all things are open and manifest; to Him, nothing is contingent or uncertain (Psalm 147:5; Romans 11:33; Hebrews 4:13).

I believe that God the Father sent His only Son into the world to save those who would come to Him for life (John 3:16–18; Romans 8:32). All who come to the Son are those whom God the Father has graciously chosen from eternity past (John 6:65; Ephesians 1:4) to receive the free gift of salvation and become adopted sons of God (John 1:12–13; Romans 8:15; Gal 4:5; Hebrews 12:5–9).

### **God the Son**

I believe that, as the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ is coequal, consubstantial (of the same essence), and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9). In Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead (Colossian 1:19; 2:9).

I believe that God the Father sent His only Son (John 3:16; Galatians 4:4), Jesus the Messiah (Matthew 16:16), who was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34–35), and born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18–23).

I believe that in the incarnation, the eternal Son of God took on a fully human nature, yet without sin (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14, 17; 4:15), so that two, whole, perfect, and distinct natures were inseparably joined together in one Person. Thus, the Person, Jesus Christ, is truly God and truly man (Philippians 2:6–8). Not God *and* man but, rather, the God-man, representing humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (John 5:23; 14:9–10; Colossians 2:9).

I believe that by His perfect obedience to God (Romans 5:18–19) and by His suffering and death (Romans 3:24–25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 1:18–19; 3:18) as the Lamb of God (John 1:29), Jesus Christ obtained forgiveness for sins (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14) and the gift of perfect righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9) on our behalf. The redemptive work of Christ applies to all believers prior to the cross who, by faith alone, looked forward to God's Messiah (Romans 4:3) to come. Likewise, His redemptive work applies to all believers post-cross who, by faith alone, look back to God's Messiah who has come (Romans 3:26; Galatians 3:26).

I believe that Jesus Christ made atonement for our sins (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18–19), absorbed our punishment (Isaiah 53:5; Romans 8:1–3), appeased the wrath of God against us (Romans 5:9; Ephesians 2:3–6; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9), removed the condemnation of the law that was against us (Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:13–14), and demonstrate the righteousness of God in our justification (Romans 3:25–26).

I believe that Jesus Christ was physically resurrected from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4), ascended to the right hand of His Father (Mark 16:19; Acts 7:55–56; Hebrews 1:3), and intercedes for us as our Advocate and High-priest (Hebrews 2:17; 7:25; 1 John 2:1). By the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, God the Father gave proof that He had accepted the work of Christ on the cross (Romans 4:25; 6:5–10) and guarantees the future resurrection life of all believers (John 5:26–29; 14:19).

I believe that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9–11; Revelation 20:1–6), and judge all who refused to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Psalm 2:12; Matthew 25:14–46; Acts 17:30–31; Revelation 20:11–15).

### **God the Holy Spirit**

I believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person. He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3–4; 28:25–27; 1 Corinthians 12:4–6; 2 Corinthians 13:14). As the third Person of the Godhead, He possesses all of the attributes of personality and deity (Psalm 139:7–10; Isaiah 40:13–14; Romans 8:26–27; 15:13; 1 Corinthians 2:10–13; 12:11; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 9:14).

I believe that apart from the work of the Spirit, none would come to faith. Since fallen man is by nature hostile to God, dead in trespasses and sins, and morally incapable of submitting to God (Ephesians 2:1–6), the Spirit triumphs over resistance (Romans 8:7–9), awakens the dead soul, removes blindness (2 Corinthians 4:4–6), and magnifies the beauty of Christ so that Christ becomes irresistibly attractive to the regenerate heart.

I believe that the Holy Spirit does His saving work in conjunction with the Gospel of Jesus Christ because His aim is to glorify Christ (John 15:26; 16:14). Therefore, we believe that there is no salvation by any other means than by receiving the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:12; Romans 3:19–22; 1 Timothy 2:5).

I believe that the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son (John 14:16–17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the Church (1 Corinthians 12:7–10; Hebrews 2:4). The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; He magnifies Jesus Christ, indwells and transforms believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7–9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

I believe that a Christian, filled with and sealed by the Holy Spirit at the moment of their salvation (John 14:23; Romans 8:9–11; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13). Furthermore, the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts to believers for the edification and building up of His Church. Tongues, prophecy, and the working of sign miracles during the foundation-laying process of the

church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine Truth and were never intended to be characteristic in the life of the church (1Corinthians 12:4–11; 13:8–10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:20).

### **The Creation**

I believe that God created the universe (Genesis 1:1), and all that is within it (Psalm 24:1–2), out of nothing, by the Word of His power (John 1:1–3; Hebrews 1:2; 11:3).

I believe that God directly and immediately created man, male and female, which establishes biological sex and gender. Both male and female were created in God's image and likeness, without sin (Genesis 1:27; James 3:9), and created to glorify God by enjoying fellowship with Him, trusting in His sufficient goodness, admiring His infinite beauty, and living in His will (1 John 1:3, 5–6; Revelation 7:9–10).

I believe that man was created with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, and a moral responsibility to God. As reasonable and immortal souls under the law of their maker, man voluntarily sinned against God and fell from their holy and happy state (Romans 1:18–32).

### **The Fall**

I believe that in Adam's disobedience to the revealed Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to and the object of God's wrath, inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God (Genesis 2:16–17; 3:1–19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1–3; 1 John 1:8).

I believe that, as the head of the human race, Adam's fall became the fall of all his posterity. Thus, corruption, guilt, death, and condemnation belong properly to all men of every age (Romans 5:12–19; 6:16, 20).

I believe that man is positively inclined to evil and, therefore, under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse (Deuteronomy 29:4; Romans 3:19–20; 8:7–8). The salvation of sinners is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that mankind is sinful by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration, Jesus Christ being the only exception (Psalm 14:1–3; Ecclesiastes 9:3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9–18, 23; 5:10–12).

### **Salvation**

I believe that salvation is wholly of God and not based on human merit or works (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 3:21–24; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 1:4–7; 2:8–10; 1 Peter 1:18, 19). Sinful man is made right before a holy God by His sovereign grace alone (2 Timothy 1:9), on the basis of the Person and work of Jesus Christ alone (Isaiah 53:1–12; John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

I believe that salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15). In its broadest sense, salvation includes election, regeneration, justification, and sanctification (Romans 8:29–30).

I believe that the saved are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37–40; 10:27–30; Romans 5:9–10; 8:1, 31–39; 1 Corinthians 1:4–9; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:4–5; Jude 24). The redeemed can rejoice in the assurance of their salvation, however, this assurance is not a license to sin. The Word of God clearly forbids the use of Christian liberties as an excuse for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15–22; 13:13–14; Galatians 5:13, 16–17, 25–26; Titus 2:11–14)

### **Election**

I believe that God elects, in Christ, those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (John 15:16; Romans 8:28–30; Ephesians 1: 4–17; 2:8–10; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1–2).

I believe that God's election is an unmerited, unconditional act of sovereign grace (John 6:37–39; 10:25–29; Romans 8:28–30; 9:11–18; 1 Corinthians 1:26–31; 2 Timothy 1:9). The salvation that is freely given to sinners is not related to any initiative of their own nor to God's anticipation of what they might do, but is utterly of His sovereign grace (Deuteronomy 7:7; Romans 9:11–16; Ephesians 1:4–7; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Peter 1:2).

I believe that election does not contradict or nullify the responsibility of man to repent and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Isaiah 55:1–3; Ezekiel 18:23, 32, 33:11; John 3:18–19, 36; 5:40). God ordains both the means by which a sinner receives the gift of salvation and the salvation itself. Salvation is wholly of God, through and through (John 6:37–40, 44; Acts 13:48; Romans 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:6; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Philippians 2:13).

### **Regeneration**

I believe that, in order to be saved, a sinner must be regenerated, or born again (Deuteronomy 30:6; John 3:3–8; Titus 3:5). Regeneration is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in which the sinner is given new life through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24). This new life consists of the creation of a holy disposition: being given a new heart, mind, and affections (Jeremiah 31:31–34; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

I believe that only after regeneration is a sinner enabled to respond in repentance and faith to the gospel (Psalm 19:7; Romans 8:6–11, 1 Corinthians 2:14–16).

### **Justification**

I believe that God justifies sinners (Romans 5:10–11; 8:30, 33), unites them to Christ (Romans 8:1), and counts them as righteous and acceptable before Him by faith in Christ alone, apart from works (Genesis 15:6; Romans 3:23–24; 28; Galatians 2:16).

I believe that faith is the sole instrument by which sinners are united to Christ, whose perfect righteousness and sacrifice for sin is the only ground for forgiveness and acceptance with God (Romans 5:18–20; Philippians 3:8–9). This union to Christ and acceptance with God is complete and permanent (Romans 5:1, 9–11) when a sinner, through faith, repents of their sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 7:10) and confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9, 10; Philippians 2:11).

I believe that the righteousness, which God requires and freely gives to sinners, is accomplished by Christ and imputed to sinners apart from works (Isaiah 53:1–12; Jeremiah 31:33–34; Romans 4:4–5; Philippians 3:8–9). This righteousness involves the placing of our sins on Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

I believe that sinners are justified by faith alone (Romans 8:29–30; Ephesians 2:8–10). Faith will produce, by the Holy Spirit, the fruit of love to God (Galatians 5:6; 1 John 3:14; 4:16), which leads to sanctification (John 14:15–21; Galatians 5:22–25). This relationship between justifying faith and sanctification expresses the critical truth that a faith that does not yield good works is dead and is thus not true faith (James 2:17–20, 26).

### **Sanctification**

I believe that justification and sanctification are both the work of God (Psalm 51:2–7; Jeremiah 33:8; Romans 8:29–30). Justification is the act of God, in which the sinner is declared righteous, by faith alone. Sanctification is the act of God, in which the sinner is progressively conformed into the image of His Son, by faith alone (Romans 8:29; 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Though distinct, justification and sanctification are inseparable (Romans 8:29–30; Galatians 1:4; Titus 2:14).

I believe that those who are truly justified are being sanctified (John 14:15; James 2:17–20, 26). The faith that justifies is also the faith that sanctifies. Sanctification is a process that is initiated at conversion and effective throughout a Christian's life (Philippians 1:6) of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God (Romans 6:1–21; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

I believe that progressive sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 2:13) who enables believers to understand and obey the Word of God (Psalm 19:7–13; 119:9–11; John 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:10–16) as they exercise faith in Christ. Christians will be sanctified as they continue to grow in the knowledge of God's will through the Word, prayer, meditation, and the accountability of believers (Romans 12:1–21; Ephesians 6:10–18).

I believe that sanctification is imperfect and incomplete in this life. Though slavery to sin is broken and sinful desires are progressively weakened by the superior power of a growing love for God, there remains a remnant of corruption in believers that gives rise to a life long fight with sin (Romans 6:1–23; 8:1–17). Thus, every Christian is involved in a daily conflict with sin but, by the power of the Holy Spirit, provision is made for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16–25; Ephesians 4:22–24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9–10; 1 Peter 1:14–16; 1 John 3:5–9).

## **Ordinances**

I believe that baptism is an ordinance of the Lord by which those who have repented and come to faith (Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26–27; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21) express their union with Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–4), by being immersed in water (Matthew 28:19; John 3:23; Acts 8:36–39; Romans 6:4). Baptism is a sign of belonging to the Church of Christ, symbolic of burial, cleansing, and signifies death to the old life of unbelief and purification from the pollution of sin.

I believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Lord in which gathered believers eat bread, signifying Christ's body given for His people, and drink the cup of the Lord, signifying the New Covenant in Christ's blood. We do this in remembrance of the Lord, and thus proclaim His death until He comes (Matthew 26:26–30; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26). Participation in the Lord's Supper should always be preceded by solemn self-examination for it is an actual communion with the risen Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16).

## **Marriage**

I believe that God instituted marriage to depict Christ's love for His church and is defined solely by Scripture. (Ephesians 5:31-32; Revelation 19:7; Genesis 2:18-22; Matthew 19:6).

I believe that marriage is the union between one man and one woman in covenant commitment for life. (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:10, 3; Mark 10:5-9).

I believe husband and wife are of equal worth before God. They are created in God's image with distinct and complementary roles. (Ephesians 5:22-30; Genesis 1:27-8; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:3).

## **Angels**

I believe that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Heb. 1:6, 7, 14; 2:6, 7; Rev. 5:11-14).

I believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Is. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11- 19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1-15).

I believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Is. 14:13, 14; Matt. 4:1-11; Rev. 12:9, 10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 16:20) and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Is. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

## **Last Things**

I believe that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Rev. 6:9-11), that there is a separation of soul and body (James 2:26), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23), and that for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-17). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:8).

I believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Rom. 8:10, 11, 19-23; 2 Cor. 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Rev. 20:13-15). We reject any notion of conditional immortality, or annihilationism.

I believe that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Rev. 20:13-15; also Rev. 20:6), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28, 29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matt. 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

I believe that the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal and visible. This is the believer's blessed hope and is a vital truth, which is incentive to holy living and faithful service. (Matt 25:1-13, 1Thess 4:16, Titus 2:13).

# **Philosophy of Ministry**

## **Expository Preaching**

Expository preaching can be simply defined as preaching which involves explaining the Scriptures. Certainly, preaching also involves reproving, rebuking, and exhorting (2 Tim 4:2). But the fundamental center of expository preaching mainly consists of explaining the meaning of God's Word. We see this exemplified in the life and ministry of the apostle Paul when he said to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:20, "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house." In Acts 8:35, when Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch, he "opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture (Isaiah 53:7-8), he told him the good news about Jesus." In Neh. 8:8, Ezra and the other Levites "read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading." Expository preaching is preaching that involves the explanation of God's Word so that people can understand it. As Dr. John MacArthur once said, "The meaning of Scripture is the Scripture. God's message is not known unless it is understood." Expository preaching is the method we see in Scripture and, therefore, pastors and leaders must heed Paul's command in 2 Tim. 4:2 to "preach the word."

## **Edifying Believers**

The church is to be engaged in the edification of believers (1 Cor. 14:12, 26; Eph. 4:12; 4:29; Jude 20). Believers are to be constantly and progressively being built up into "mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). This is accomplished through the ministry of the Word (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:2), the training and mentoring of godly leaders (Eph. 4:11-12), the selfless exercise of various spiritual gifts by believers (1 Cor. 12:7; 1 Pet. 4:10), and practicing a wide variety of "one another" commands that are found throughout the New Testament (e.g. Rom. 12:10, 16; 15:7; 1 Cor. 12:25; Gal. 5:13).

## **Evangelize the Lost**

The last command that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to his disciples was the Great Commission which is a command to evangelize (Matt. 28:19-20). Believers have been given the specific command to be a witness for Christ (Acts 1:8) and to preach the message of the Gospel to the world (Luke 24:46-48). For those who respond to the Gospel, our responsibility is to instruct and train them to be disciples of Christ (Matt. 28:19-20). Therefore, the church must be engaged in evangelism.

## **Exalting God**

Pursuing the glory of God is an all-consuming desire of the saint (1 Cor. 6:20; 10:31; Eph. 1:5-6, 12-14; 3:20; 2 Thess. 1:12). But although there are many ways to give God glory, one of the primary methods of glorifying God is through praise and worship (e.g. Ps. 29:2; 95:6; 99:5). As a result, whenever the church gathers in the name of the Lord, the main priority is to engage in the praise and worship of God.



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