

Tommy Hass

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I am a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ seeking a ministry among a people committed to the word of God. I have been married for twelve years and have five young children. My local church has trained me for gospel ministry through seminary education, biblical counseling certification, and a pastoral residence program.

Education

- ◆ **The Master's Seminary** – Master of Divinity Expected May 2023
Acquired a working proficiency in the Greek and Hebrew languages. Sharpened my ability to publicly minister the word of God. Studied church history, apologetics, systematic theology, and pastoral ministry.
- ◆ **Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC)** – Certification 2022
An ACBC fellow observed and reviewed fifty of my cases in order to provide detailed feedback on my counseling. Received focused training through a variety of difficult cases.
- ◆ **Berklee College of Music** – Bachelor of Music 2012
Studied guitar performance and music theory.

Ministry

- ◆ **Pastoral Resident, NorthCreek Church** 2022
Attended elder and staff meetings. Received personal mentoring from church staff regarding church administration and practical ministry issues. Gained experience organizing youth group events. Was heavily involved in the counseling ministry during this time.
- ◆ **Adult Sunday School Teacher, NorthCreek Church** 2019–Present
Taught in a variety of Sunday school classes, including junior high, high school, singles, young marrieds, and the elderly.
- ◆ **Biblical Counselor, NorthCreek Church** 2018–Present
Provided structured biblical counseling to people going through a wide range of difficult life situations and temptations. My wife, April, joined me for marriage counseling cases.
- ◆ **Small Group Leader, NorthCreek Church** 2019–Present
Led Bible study small groups at church and in homes. Some of these were part of a larger expositional series at church. Others were more discussion based at home Bible studies.

Employment

- ◆ **Staff iOS Developer, Venmo** 2020–Present
Developed internal tools to support the iOS team and mentored junior engineers. My most recent project involved breaking the codebase down into dozens of isolated units to improve developer efficiency.
- ◆ **Senior iOS Developer, VSCO** 2015–2019
Initially hired to maintain a photobook app, called Artifact Uprising. Later promoted and asked to develop new features for the company’s flagship photo editing iPhone app.
- ◆ **iOS Developer, Kifi** 2014–2015
Developed and maintained a social bookmarking app for an early-stage start up. Gained experience delegating tasks on a small team of engineers.
- ◆ **iOS Developer, Apple** 2013–2014
Worked on the iOS Media Team. Developed new features for iTunes and fixed issues with the native iOS movie player. Coordinated feature development with several different teams at various levels within the company.

Available Upon Request

- ◆ **References**

NorthCreek Church Statement of Faith¹

Article 3 of the Bylaws of NorthCreek Church, adopted by the congregation, May 16, 2021

Section 3.01 Systematic Theology

A. God – We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.
(Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

B. The Bible – We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.
(2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 4:12)

C. The Human Condition – We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.
(Romans 3:23, 6:23; 1 John 1:8-10)

D. Jesus Christ – We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.
(Isaiah 53; John 3:16, 14:6; Romans 5:9-11)

E. The Work of Christ – We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.
(John 1:12; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8-9)

F. The Holy Spirit – We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.
(John 3:5-8; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12)

G. The Church – We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's

¹ NorthCreek Church. "Who We Are." Accessed January 4, 2023. <https://www.northcreek.org/about-us/who-we-are>.

grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer. (Ephesians 1:22-23; 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19; 1 Peter 5:1-3)

H. Christian Living – We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed. (Ephesians 2:10; Romans 12:10; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Matthew 5:13-16)

Section 3.02 Practical Theology

In keeping with our commitment to the veracity of the Scriptures and their application to all areas of faith and practice as previously stated in this Article, we affirm the following:

A. Human Sexuality – We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

B. Marriage – We believe that marriage has been instituted and ordained by God, and that marriage has only one meaning: the exclusive covenantal union of one man and one woman for life (Gen. 2:18-25), uniquely reflecting Christ's relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4) and that no intimate sexual activity is to be engaged in outside of marriage as defined in this Article. Any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, cohabitation, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

C. Sanctity of Human Life – We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Ps. 139).

D. Tolerance – We believe that love and respect are due, and to be offered, to all people, as we're all created in the image of God. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Scripture (Matt. 22:35-40). However, when the Scriptures speak against other philosophies, belief systems, and behaviors, we will be true to the Scriptures and will speak the truth, but will do so in love.

E. Family – We believe that the roles of husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and children are clearly

stated in the Scriptures, including the principles of discipline, instruction, and correction (Eph. 5:22-6:4; Col. 3:18-21). When found to conflict with laws and/or social norms, we will follow the biblical principle.

Philosophy of Ministry

Tommy Hass

1. Introduction

This is my personal philosophy of ministry that I have drawn from the word of God. These are the key biblical principles that guide me in my approach to pastoral ministry. I acknowledge that the specific application of these principles may vary somewhat across time and culture, but nonetheless, these principles are the mold into which every God-pleasing ministry must fit.

2. The Rule of Ministry

I wholeheartedly affirm the statement that is often repeated in evangelical circles, that Scripture is the inspired, inerrant, authoritative, and sufficient word of God. The Bible contains everything necessary for life and godliness (2 Pet 2:3), and it fully equips the man of God for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17). Therefore, Scripture is the church's only infallible guide. Every tradition, whether a theological system or a church program, and every authority must bow in submission to Scripture. Since this is the church's first commitment, it demands a mindset of ongoing reformation. Everything in the Christian ministry must bend to conform with Scripture.

Furthermore, Scripture teaches the regulative principle of worship. This means that the church must restrict its form of worship to what God has mandated in His word. Stated negatively, this means that the church is not free to invent new forms of worship. This doctrine is taught clearly in Leviticus 10:1-3, 1 Corinthians 14, and Colossians 2:23. Nadab and Abihu were put to death for offering "strange fire...which He had not commanded them," and Paul rebuked the Corinthian church for turning the worship service into a talent show. Instead, Christians should focus on exercising their spiritual gifts for one another's edification when they gather (1 Cor 14:26). "All things must be done properly and in an orderly manner" (1 Cor 14:40). Since Scripture is the standard for what is orderly and proper, every ministry of the church must have a biblical warrant or else it becomes "self-made religion" (Col 2:23). But if the church is faithful to follow God's plan for Christian ministry, then she can depend upon God's acceptance and blessing. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).

3. The Goal of Ministry

All things exist to glorify God. He created the universe to reveal His power and wisdom (Psa 19:1), and the Trinitarian work of redemption is "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph 1:6,12,14). This means that we exist to praise God, but we can only praise Him if we possess a growing knowledge of His glory. This is why the Bible is so concerned about the believer possessing an ever-deepening knowledge of God. As theological knowledge increases in the soul, the heart is restored (Psa 19:7), subdued (Psa 37:7), strengthened (1 Thess 3:2), and filled with "joy inexpressible" (1 Pet 1:8). With such a heart, praise is the natural overflow, and the believer begins to delight in God's commandments (Psa 119:24). He becomes a beacon in a dark world that puts the glory of his Creator and Savior on display.

This goal, the glory of God, must saturate the church's ministries. Few would disagree with such a statement, but it is another matter when we come to particulars. For instance, biblical preaching and biblical counseling will inevitably offend some people because "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God" (Rom 8:7). The church exists "in the midst of a crooked and perverse

generation" (Phil 2:15). Because of this, the church who is faithful to her Lord will experience some measure of His sufferings. "I fill up what is lacking of Christ's afflictions in my flesh" (Col 1:24). "If you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed" (1 Pet 3:14). The church who truly seeks the glory of God must embrace the call to suffer (Phil 1:29).

But having said that, the God-glorifying church can and should expect God's blessing on her ministry. Christ has not commissioned the church in vain (Matt 28:18-20), and we are commanded to pray for the rapid spread of the gospel across the world (2 Thess 3:1). "The harvest is plentiful" (Matt 9:37). While some may be repelled by a God-glorifying ministry, the sheep of Christ will respond to the shepherd's call. "They will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd" (John 10:16). This frees the church from anxiously seeking to attract the culture around her. The sheep are gathered by issuing the shepherd's call, not by messages or programs that appeal to the natural desires of fallen people.

4. The Method of Ministry

4.1. Personal Cultivation

4.1.1. Heart

Love for Christ is the highest motive for pastoral ministry (John 21:15-17). Without a warm and expanding devotion to his Lord, the pastor will sink into discouragement, disillusionment, and sin. I am convinced that lifeless preaching and pastoral care is the result of a deficiency in this area. A cold heart cannot radiate warmth. This is why Scripture urges the priority of caring for one's own heart before all else. "Guard your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life" (Prov 4:23). "Pay close attention to yourself" (1 Tim 4:16). "Be on guard for yourselves" (Acts 20:28). These last two passages are explicit pastoral exhortations that put this matter beyond doubt. The pastor must cultivate his own heart. He must possess that which he longs to see in others.

The methods for growing in one's personal devotion to Christ are well-known: meditating on Scripture (Deut 6:6; Psa 1:2; 19:7; 119:11; 1 Tim 4:6; 1 Pet 2:2), prayer (Luke 18:1; Eph 6:18), occasional fasting (Matt 6:16-18), regular confession of sin (Psa 32:5), fellowship with God's people (1 Cor 12:7; Eph 4:16), and singing hymns of praise (Col 3:16). These spiritual disciplines are essential to effective pastoral ministry.

4.1.2. Head

In addition to the pastor's concern for his own soul, he ought to pay attention to his intellectual growth as well. This duty is spelled out in the pastoral epistles. The apostle Paul commanded his protegee to pay close attention to his teaching. Timothy, a younger pastor, was to "take pains," "be absorbed in," and "pay close attention to" his ministry of the word of God (1 Tim 4:13-16). His primary business was to be the systematic study of Scripture so that he would be fully equipped to minister to God's people.

The methods for growing in theological knowledge are two-fold. First, this requires direct contact with the word of God, preferably in the original languages. While the church enjoys excellent translations of Scripture, there is no substitute for reading the inspired text. This knowledge is essential for resolving theological controversies and navigating difficult passages. Therefore, the pastor must use whatever intellectual capacity and tools God has given him to consult the Greek and Hebrew text.

Second, the pastor grows in his knowledge of God by benefiting from other gifted men of God. "Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Prov 27:17). Christ has been giving teaching gifts to His church since His ascension (Eph 4:11), and many of these men have blessed the church by leaving behind valuable books. Therefore, the pastor ought to devote some time to theological reading outside of his specific sermon preparation time. The insights that have accumulated throughout church history are too valuable to ignore. For the same reason, the pastor should converse with shepherds and teachers in his own generation. He ought to esteem opportunities for pastoral fellowship and additional training (2 Tim 2:2).

4.2. Shepherding the Church

Christ instituted the pastoral office "to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Every Christian needs a shepherd because his heart is prone to wander from his Lord. The power of indwelling sin, the corruption of the world, and the devil are formidable opponents to the Christian. But Christ is a merciful and faithful High Priest who has provided everything necessary for the Christian to persevere to the end. He has designed the pastoral office so that His people may have a flesh and blood guide on their journey.

Every church goes through seasons. The church plant does not have the same challenges as the mature church. As such, how each pastor functions in his time and place will vary somewhat in the particulars. Yet, I am convinced that Scripture provides the framework for every pastoral duty. Christ has not only defined the office but has also defined how this office is to be fulfilled. I have not placed these in any particular order. I have only sought to define the high-level categories of pastoral labor.

4.2.1. Intercessory Prayer

The pastor is responsible to pray for the church. He mentions the church often in his private prayers to God (Col 1:9); he prays with the sick and suffering, that God would restore them (James 5:14); and he leads the church in public prayer (1 Tim 2:1-8). This is an essential element for any spiritual leader because everything depends upon the blessing of God. The pastor senses that he is insufficient in himself (2 Cor 3:5), and this drives him to earnest, regular prayer on behalf of the church. He knows that all spiritual fruit, whether the conversion of a sinner or the growth of a Christian, is a gift from God (Phil 1:29; Col 2:19). Therefore, he calls upon God to grant saving faith to the lost and maturity to Christ's sheep. Knowing the importance of this duty, he devotes significant time to it (Acts 6:4).

4.2.2. Leading in Worship

The faithful church regularly assembles for corporate worship (Heb 10:25; 1 Cor 14:26), and this service should be carried out in an orderly manner (1 Cor 14:40). This implies that someone is responsible for defining the content and structure of each worship service, and this duty naturally falls to the shepherds of the church.

1. Elements of the Service

This is where the regulative principle comes into play most visibly in the life of the church. As has already been stated, Scripture teaches the regulative principle of worship. The church has freedom to arrange the worship service only within the boundaries defined in the word of God. The biblical elements of the worship service include reading the Bible (1 Tim 4:13), expository preaching (2 Tim 4:2), prayer (1 Tim 2:1), song (Col 3:16), offering (1 Cor 16:1-2; Gal 6:6; 1 Tim 5:17), the

Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:17ff), and baptism (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41). Additionally, proper administration of the church requires some time for announcements (Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28).

2. Philosophy of Preaching

At this point, it seems best to summarize my approach to preaching. Most sermons should be part of a verse-by-verse exposition through some book in the Bible. This method is commonly referred to as expository preaching. Since the preacher is charged with heralding the word of God (2 Tim 4:2), his messages must focus on explaining and applying some portion of God's word to God's people. And since the context of each passage enhances its clarity, it is best to preach sequentially through books or at least through large portions of Scripture. Scripture does not forbid the occasional topical series, but each message in such a series still has the burden of being expositional.

Preaching should focus on the whole person. Otherwise, it cannot be truly called preaching. It should focus on illuminating the mind through explanation, description, and illustration; it should warm the heart by bringing the listener face to face with the grace of God in Christ; and it should move the will to act in accord with God's will. If any of these elements are deficient, preaching ceases to be preaching and devolves into either sentimental talks or dry lecturing. I am committed to continually sharpen my own ability to preach the word of God accurately, passionately, and pastorally.

3. Philosophy of Worship Music

Worship music should be reverent, theological, and congregational. It must be reverent because the church is singing to the high king of heaven. "Tremble, O earth, before the Lord" (Psa 114:7). It must also contain accurate and deep theology because God wants the church to worship "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). This means that worship must proceed from a sincere heart (in spirit) and a definite knowledge of God and His works (in truth). Finally, it must be congregational, meaning that the congregation is the primary instrument. We see this in the congregational worship in heaven (Rev 5:11). God wants every creature to participate: "Make a loud shout to God, all the earth" (Psa 66:1). Therefore, whoever is leading the congregation in song is the servant of the congregation and should not overpower it. Personally, I prefer the congregational singing of hymns with modest accompaniment.

I must also add at this point that I believe the principle of separation applies to worship music. Christians are to form no spiritual partnership with darkness (2 Cor 6:14). Therefore, the church is not at liberty to use music from Christian groups which undermine or contradict the essential claims of Christianity. The source in addition to the product must be considered before using resources from other groups.

4.2.3. Training Men

While the pastor is responsible for training the whole church for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12), he is especially responsible for the multiplication of teachers. Christ knew the pressing need for more preachers of the gospel, and His life is the perfect example of meeting this need (Matt 9:36-38). He taught many, but He chose twelve men in particular to be with Him (Mark 3:14). He spent considerable time with these men, and He let them observe His life and ministry. He lived with them, ate with them, travelled with them, and even went on retreats with them (Mark 6:31). From our Lord's example we learn that a wise ministry is constantly pouring into the next generation of leaders. Likewise, the words of the apostle Paul prove that this pattern of training must continue throughout all the generations of the church (2 Tim 2:2).

4.2.4. Pastoral Care

1. Caring for Every Sheep

Pastoral care is a broad concept that encompasses many specific duties. But in general, this category speaks to the pastor's responsibility to actually pastor the church, not just preach to it. Certainly, preaching is the primary thing (1 Tim 4:13), but the word of God also teaches that each sheep needs individual oversight and care (Heb 13:17; Acts 20:28). The apostles not only preached in the assembly but also ministered the word of God "house to house" (Acts 5:42; 20:20). Since the pastor will give an account to Christ for every sheep under his care, he must have some plan for shepherding them as individuals. He must visit them when they are suffering (James 5:14), admonish them when they are unruly, encourage them when they are fainthearted, and help them when they are weak (1 Thess 5:14). He should endeavor, as much as possible, to know every sheep and to labor until they are all complete in Christ (Col 1:28; Gal 4:19).

2. Church Membership

This responsibility implies that the pastor knows the names of the sheep, and this requires keeping some type of list. Many object to the practice of formal church membership, but there is really no way around this if the church reads the New Testament carefully. For example, Christians are commanded to place themselves under the oversight of faithful leaders (Heb 13:17). This command is impossible to fulfill without the Christian making a commitment to a specific local church. Likewise, the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are inseparably tied to the concept of membership. Baptism is synonymous with admittance into a local church's membership (Acts 2:41), and the Lord's Supper is a time when the church reaffirms her membership in the body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16-17). While Scripture does not explicitly command the practice of formal church membership, it is a natural application of these principles.

3. Church Discipline

Related to this is the duty of church discipline. This is the four-step process that Christ gave to restore straying sheep (Matt 18:15-20). This begins with private confrontation and then moves to public confrontation before the entire church if there has been no repentance (1 Tim 5:20). If this restoration process fails, then the church must remove that person from membership and exclude them from the assembly (1 Cor 5:13; 2 Cor 6:14). Christ has instituted this process to protect His people from the leavening effects of sin and to restore those who have fallen into its power (1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9; Heb 3:13).

4. Promoting Ministry Within the Body

Every Christian is called to serve and to be involved in the body of Christ (Rom 12:10; Gal 5:13). They should be in the habit of confessing their sins to one another and praying for one another (James 5:16). They should bear one another's burdens and encourage one another as they fight against sin (Gal 6:2; Heb 3:13). This lifestyle is characteristic of a healthy and growing Christian. Therefore, pastoral care involves helping Christ's people form these relationships. These provide a context for the Christian to discover and use his spiritual gifts. And since these relationships do not always form naturally, I believe that fellowship groups and other programs are a helpful method for fostering mutual upbuilding within the church. The early church seems to have met in smaller groups for mutual edification, although we aren't told if there was any kind of formal structure to these meetings (Acts 2:46).

4.2.5. Evangelism

1. Outside

The pastor is commanded to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim 4:5). Based on the example of Philip in the early church, we know that evangelistic work focused on preaching the gospel to unbelievers (Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11). Timothy, one of the pastors at Ephesus, was therefore responsible to bring the gospel to the unbelieving world around him. The method for carrying out this work is simple. It is accomplished by "proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12). That is, a heavenly kingdom is coming that demands repentance and faith in the person and work of Christ (Acts 20:21). Therefore, the "outreach" ministries of the church should focus on the proclamation of this message. Of course, the pastor cannot be a fulltime evangelist, but he must still be personally involved in evangelistic work to some degree. He must be an example of evangelistic zeal, and he must help the people take the gospel outside the church through local evangelism, church planting, and missions.

2. Inside

Evangelism also has a place within the walls of the church. Paul was eager to preach the gospel to the church in Rome because he knew that Christians were built up by continually exploring the riches of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:15; Eph 3:8, 16; Col 1:27). Moreover, the church is bound to have unbelieving visitors that need to hear the gospel (1 Cor 14:24). The preacher must never assume that everyone within earshot is saved.

4.2.6. Administration

The pastor is responsible for overseeing the entire life of the church, and this requires some measure of administrative work. This is similar to a husband's household responsibilities (1 Tim 3:5). He may be the shepherd of his wife and children, but he also needs to repair the home, keep a budget, and oversee the various commitments of the family. Likewise, though the church is primarily a spiritual enterprise, she must also be a faithful steward of her finances, legal responsibilities, and property. If the church has a staff team, that team needs pastoral care as well. In the ideal situation, the pastors of a local church would enlist the help of deacons to delegate some of these responsibilities (1 Tim 3:8–13). Nonetheless, the pastors are still ultimately responsible for everything that takes place within the life of the church. For this reason, the elders of the church should regularly meet together to coordinate the care of the whole church.