

Information for the Proposed Ordination of Timothy Michalek

The Red Brick Church of Stillman Valley
2016

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Dear Servant of Christ:

You are receiving this packet because we are asking you to play some part in the proposed ordination of Timothy Michalek to the Gospel ministry.

Ordination in this context references the final step in the formal appointment of Tim to gospel ministry. It is the “process of godly church leaders affirming the call, equipping, and maturity of new leaders to serve God’s purposes in the next generation. Ordination validates/authenticates God’s will for a fully qualified man to serve God and His people.”¹ Mayhue summarizes:

Today, the church recognizes ordained men when their ministerial desires, godly life, and giftedness for ministry match the biblical standards (both subjective and objective) that identify a man whom God has called to ministry.²

Notice that Mayhue says three things must match in order for ordination to take place for Tim:

1. He must desire to be ordained.
2. He must meet the character requirements for ordination.
3. He must have the gifts needed for pastoral ministry as well as the skill to handle the Word.

As Mahyue points out, the idea of ordination is present in both testaments. In the Old Testament, Moses ordained Aaron and his sons to the priesthood (Exodus 29:9, 29, 35; Lev 16:32, Num 5:3).³

In the New Testament:

- Jesus appointed his disciples (John 15:16, Mark 3:14).
- Paul was ordained by God to the ministry (1 Tim 2:7).
- Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church (Acts 14:23).
- Paul instructed Titus to appoint elders in every city (Titus 1:5).

In terms of the process of ordination, our church believes that ordination is the responsibility of the local church. Consequently, our ordination process will conclude with our church formally making a decision about whether or not to ordain Tim.

While it is the responsibility of our autonomous church to make a decision about the ordination of Tim, we recognize that we can only responsibly make this decision with the input of elders from other like-minded churches. Broadly, this is true for two reasons:

¹ Mayhue, “Ordination to Pastoral Ministry,” 134–36.

² Ibid., 134.

³ Ibid., 136–37.

1. **Some of those elders may have known Tim far longer than we have known him.** We rely on their input regarding observations across the years. We ask them to evaluate if they have seen Tim giving himself wholly to gospel ministry so that the appropriate progress is evident.⁴ (1Tim 4:15)
2. **We need the objective input of elders regarding Tim's theological competence.** The church has long recognized the advantage of including a number of studied and experienced ordained pastors when examining gospel candidates. Hence, a select group will examine Tim and then be allowed to make recommendations to our church.

Those experienced in these matters will recognize that, for the most part, we are following the model for ordination used for years by autonomous, baptistic churches.

Having said that, it is our goal for Tim's ordination examination to be broader in its scope than what many of our churches have done. Traditionally, our ordinations have focused almost exclusively on a summary of the candidate's call to ministry and a review of his positions on systematic theology. We will still evaluate those areas. However, in addition to these areas, we will also ask our council to evaluate Tim's competence as it relates to other areas of theology including:

1. Hermeneutics and Exegesis – How we study the Bible and live in light of its truth.
2. Biblical Theology – The storyline of the Bible and how do the parts fit with the whole.
3. Historical Theology – The orthodox understanding of how theology has developed and been sharpened across church history.
4. Pastoral Theology – The application of sound doctrine to the work of shepherding God's people.

More information about our understanding of what defines each of these areas, and how they relate to one another, is found in the "Curriculum Goals Overview for the Red Brick Church" found in the following pages.

This ordination packet that Tim has worked so hard to prepare will also fill in some of the information. We are asking for those on the ordination council to carefully review it prior to participation.

Our tentative date for Tim's ordination council is Friday, August 5, 2016 from 9:30-3:00PM at our church, [207 W. Roosevelt, Stillman Valley, IL](#).

Tim's ordination represents the culmination of years of God at work in Tim's life. Throughout that time, God has used many different people and institutions to prepare him for ordination. Of course, it is most appropriate to say, even at this preliminary stage, how thankful we are for his parents, John and Teresa Michalek, Tim's wife, Amy, and Tim's home church, First Baptist

⁴ See my article, Brauns, "Be Visibly Devoted to Be Pastorally Placed."

Church of Troy (Michigan). Below I have summarized some of the key moments in Tim's journey.

I pray that you can join us for both the council and ordination service.

On for the King,

Pastor Chris Brauns

Titus 1:5-9

Big Picture Overview of Pastor Tim's Journey to Ordination

1. 1990 – Tim prayed for forgiveness of his sins and asked God to save him.
2. 1994 – As a nine-year-old, Tim began to consider the possibility of pastoral ministry.
3. 2003 – Tim began Bible college at Bob Jones University.
4. 2007 – Tim graduated from BJU and began at Northland Seminary (Dunbar, WI).
5. 2011 – Tim graduated from Northland.
6. 2009 – Tim left for St. Vincent in the Caribbean.
7. 2010 – Tim and Amy are married; Amy is also open to ministry & goes to the Caribbean.
8. 2011 – Tim and Amy returned, began a sewing business and served at First Baptist in Rockford.
9. 2012 – Tim went to Morning Star as an intern and pastoral assistant. Tim began officially working on ordination at this time.
10. 2014 - Tim called to be associate pastor at the Red Brick Church in Stillman Valley.
11. November 2014 - Pastor Chris and Tim outlined the process for ordination and what Tim's ordination packet will include.
12. September 2015 - Preliminary ordination packets distributed to other ordained pastors for their feedback.
13. 2016 - Ordination council scheduled for **Friday, August 5, 9:30-3:00 PM** in adult classroom at the Red Brick Church. Lunch will be included. Coffee and doughnuts at 9:30 – council begins at 10:00 in the adult classroom. Lunch break from 12-1. Council will dismiss people and privately meet at 2:30 and issue recommendation to church.
14. **Sunday, August 7, 4:00 PM, Ordination Service.** Pizza, sandwiches, and refreshments at the church. We will have a nursery and, ideally, "children's church" during the ordination service -- something for kids to do.

Works Cited

Brauns, Chris. "Be Visibly Devoted to Be Pastorally Placed." *The Gospel Coalition*, July 7, 2011.
<http://thegospelcoalition.org/article/be-visibly-devoted-to-be-pastorally-placed>.

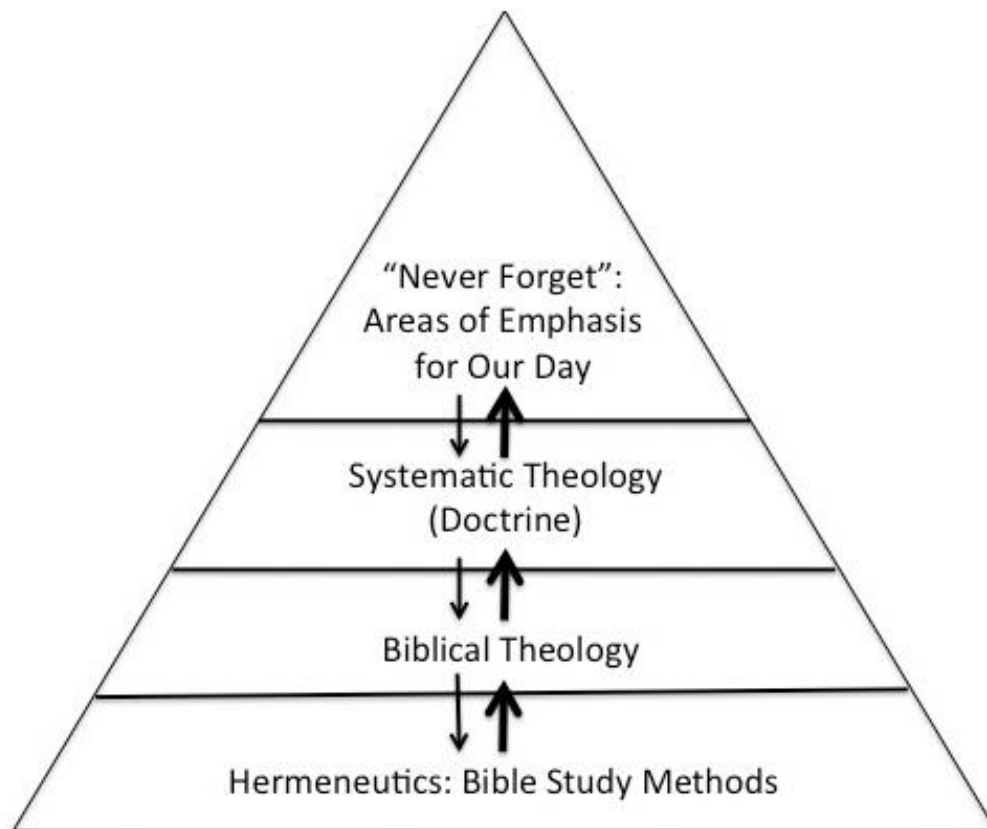
Mayhue, Richard L. "Ordination to Pastoral Ministry." In *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry: Shaping Contemporary Ministry With Biblical Mandates*, edited by John MacArthur Jr., Richard L. Mayhue, and Robert L. Thomas, 134–47. Dallas: Word, 1994.

CURRICULUM GOALS / OVERVIEW FOR THE RED BRICK CHURCH
September, 2015

The person who aims at “nothing” is sure to hit it. One of our goals for our local church is to clearly define what we are aiming at for flock’s understanding of truth. This document sets forth our curriculum target. These are the areas in which we aim to equip (Ephesians 4:12) our people. And we have in mind the [“great vision of Christian education.”](#)

Area to Know	Curriculum Goals
Faith Story: How did you come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?	Write out your testimony / story of salvation with the gospel applied to your life. When were you baptized? Understand why the Lord’s Supper is so important in the life of the believer.
Basic Bible Study Methods (Hermeneutics): How can I study the Bible and live in light of truth?	Everyone in our church should be equipped to study a passage of Scripture by learning to study the authorial intent, identify the timeless truth (s), and apply truth to life today. We should follow the example of the Bereans (Acts 17:11-12)! See 7 Arrows for Bible Reading
Biblical Theology: What is the storyline of the Bible and how do the parts fit with the whole?	Know the Big Story of Scripture and Overview of Biblical Theology . Avoid knowing Bible stories but not the Bible story. Know Bible stories summarized in The Jesus Storybook Bible . See also The Big Picture of What God Always Wanted . Consider reading: Chris Bruno 16 Verses . See Greg Thornbury def.
Systematic Theology / Doctrine - What does the whole of Scripture teach on central areas of doctrine such as the doctrine of Christ?	Church Doctrinal Statement , The Apostles Creed , The Nicene Creed , The Definition of Chalcedon , and Making Merry About the Trinity New City Catechism / New City Catechism Web Site / Bible Instruction Class (Junior High). X Hymns or Songs: Be Thou, In Christ Alone, It is Well, A Mighty Fortress, Notice the direct between central doctrines and the daily Christian life (Murray, vol. 1, 170.)
Never Forget: 7 Pastoral Emphases at the Red Brick Church - Given our time and place, what are the points our local church emphasizes? (Ongoing version being edited here)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know that Christ is Right and Best 2. Be Warned, Be Sure, Get Up 3. Understand that God makes “bricks” with a building in mind 4. Sharpen your wisdom with the word 5. Envision beautiful brides 6. Think deeply about life’s big questions 7. Know that God is love and we love you <p>See: Bible Verses to Memorize and Questions and Answers about “Never Forget”</p> <p>Questions and Answers at The Red Brick Church</p>

The areas build on what another. So if you think of this as a curriculum pyramid, then Bible study methods are at the base of the pyramid, then Biblical theology, then systematic theology, finally areas of particular emphasis.



Still there is feedback (represented by smaller arrows) from the higher levels of the pyramid to the lower ones. For instance, our systematic understanding of Scripture will help us study the Bible.

Note that a more detail version of this diagram is available [here](#).

Testimony & Calling

My parents were raised in Catholicism and became followers of Jesus Christ as young adults through the influence of friends and campus ministries. After a discouraging encounter with Jesuit missionaries and a priest, they stopped going to any church until my dad's dad passed away, prompting them to return to the Catholic church. After attending a Christian camp, they began to search for a church that truly taught the Scriptures. In 1985, they found a church in Troy, Michigan that emphasized the clear teaching and sole authority of the Bible. My family remains committed to that church and sent me and my siblings to its Christian school.

When I was five, I came home from AWANA scared of the eternal consequences of sin. I knew I deserved punishment and couldn't sleep. Plus, I was on the top bunk and was scared that I was closer to God than my brother. My mom helped me pray to accept Christ as my Savior, and I was baptized a few years later. When I was nine, a missionary presented his ministry at my church. "That's what I want to do when I grow up," I said.

In high school I began to struggle constantly with my sin. I knew a Christian was called to be holy, yet I continually sinned against God, even after numerous promises, contracts, and covenants to stop. I decided I couldn't be saved, and told my youth sponsor. We prayed together and I even got re-baptized only to discover that praying that prayer gave me no special power to resist sin.

I received excellent teaching and preaching in hermeneutics, doctrine, and philosophy while at First Baptist Church of Troy and Bethany Christian School. After graduating from Bethany Christian School in Troy, MI, I went to Bob Jones University for church music. The summer after I graduated, I counseled at Northland Camp, which began with a bitter breakup for me and Amy, but became one of the best summers of my life. I experienced a faithfully intimate walk with God week after week for the first time in my life.

I received my MA in Bible from Northland International University and then spent two years teaching at Baptist Bible College of the Caribbean. I learned how to work with national Christians in furthering their long term goals rather than insisting on my American culture.

We came back to the states and spent a year serving at First Baptist Church in Rockford, then received more diligent mentoring and pastoral experience at Morning Star Church for the next 2.5 years as worship leader and pastoral assistant. While serving at Morning Star, I was affirmed in my calling to ministry by the pastors there. "The closer I get to pastoral ministry," I said, "the more it scares me, but the more I can't imagine doing anything else with my life." They knew of my desire to explore foreign missions and recommended I visit the field.

Amy and I took a survey trip to Cambodia the summer of 2014 to visit Jeremy Farmer and JD Crowley. At the end of our visit, we were invited by both families to return to help minister the gospel to Cambodians. Upon returning, we believed God wanted us to find a way to move to Cambodia rather than applying for a position in Stillman Valley. After sitting down with the elders of our church, however, they recommended that we take the job at the Red Brick Church to get the training, experience, church financial support, and connections from a seasoned pastor. I began my job as Associate Pastor of Youth and Worship in November of 2014, receiving direct training from Chris Brauns with the long term goal to go as church planters to Cambodia.

Ordination Preparation

Verses I Am Memorizing 2014-2016

I am following Chris Brauns' system of memorizing Scripture, where I memorize by saying a verse 25x on day 1, then 20x on day 2, then 15x, etc. After saying the verse 75 times (see next page) the verse is written on a card and reviewed with my previously memorized verses. I most regularly use the app ScriptureTyper to review (as of June 2016) about 20-30 verses per day.

Titus 2:11-14 This passage points to God's global mission in salvation, and the purpose of that salvation: for Christ to establish a perfect eternal kingdom of true worshippers.

Titus 3:3-8 This passage consolidates the theology of salvation. It proceeds from total depravity, to the unconditional call of God, to regeneration by the Spirit, to adoption as heirs, and then to the continued sanctification process.

Acts 1:6-8 These are likely Jesus' last earthly words which emphasize his global mission, his future kingdom, and the power of the promised Holy Spirit to spread his good news.

Psalms 67 God's mission has always been a global one. His focus on Israel brought the Messiah, but his desire is for all the peoples to praise him and be part of his glorious kingdom. This passage mingles the Aaronic blessing in Num 6:24-26 with God's global mission to show the nations joy by worshipping him.

Ephesians 5:18-21 Ephesians 5 establishes the purpose of corporate worship: for Spirit controlled people to glorifying God by publicly declaring truth about him.

Romans 12:1-2 In light of the gospel we should offer our lives to Christ as living sacrifices. We must shape our minds according to Scripture.

Ephesians 2:8-9 Paul describes how God loved us and saved us by his grace even when we were in rebellion against him. We do not earn our salvation.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 When Jesus was asked what is the first and greatest commandment, he quoted Deuteronomy 6:4. This passage teaches us that there is only one God, that he must be central in all of life, and that our families should constantly strive to learn more about him.⁵

John 1:1-14 Few passages detail Christology better than the prologue to John's gospel. Jesus is God, a light to the world, witnessed by John, and incarnate. He offers the right of adoption to all who will believe and receive him.

Acts 2:42-44 The new church established the primary duties of a church: preaching, fellowship, the Lord's Table, and prayer, done as a unified body in the context of God's gifting.

John 10:10 Following Jesus is always right and best. Receiving him means choosing life. Rejecting him means absolute destruction.

Hebrews 11:6 God is accessible and ready to welcome and give eternal reward to everyone who seeks him.

Galatians 6:7 No one escapes judgment. The omnipotent and omniscient God will dispense justice to all.

2 Corinthians 13:5 This passage reminds us how important it is to walk in power of Jesus Christ as an assurance of our relationship with him. He is the source of our strength.

1 John 5:13 The purpose of John's book is to help his readers understand the source of our assurance of salvation. Chris Brauns summarizes our assurances of salvation (1) Present faith (2) The fruit or evidence of a changed life (3) The testimony of the Holy Spirit with our spirit that we are God's children.⁵

1 Peter 2:5 Our place in the people of God is unmistakable in 1 Peter. We are all vital parts of one spiritual body, bound together by the Spirit of Christ for the purpose of worshiping and dwelling with God.

Hebrews 10:25 Since Christ could come back at any time, we must meet together regularly.

1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul emphasizes the unity of all people not by appealing to their origin, but by their current condition: being baptized into the Body of Christ by His Spirit.

Psalms 119:9 I memorized this verse as a child, and it was my 'life verse' for many years. God reveals himself through his Word and blesses those who obey it.

Psalms 51 I love this passage for pointing me to the heart of worship: pursuing intimacy with God through repentance and praise. Every marriage needs the attitudes found here.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 Memorizing this benediction has been helpful in my bedside-manner. God not only will sanctify us, but He will bring our entire person to himself. It hints at the perfect body we will receive at His coming.

Proverbs 27:6 I generally quote this to myself when being exhorted. Personal growth requires being 'wounded' at times.

⁵ Brauns, Chris. Bible Verses to Memorize for Red Brick Curriculum. 2015

Songs for My Scripture Memory

I wrote these songs to help me and my teens memorize scripture.⁶

Hebrews 11:6

#1 Know That Following Christ Is Right and Best

A D G A D A
And with-out faith it is im - po - ssi - ble to please him, _____ for who-

6 D G A D G2
e - ver would draw near _____ to God must be - lieve that he ex - ists _____ and that

12 D G D A D
he re - wards those who seek him. He - brews el - ev - en verse six.

John 10:10

#1 Know That Following God Is Right and Best


D A D D A D D G D
John ten ten The thief come on - ly to steal and kill and de - stroy. I came that they

5 Em D G D Em A D
may have li - fe and have it ab - un - dant - ly.


⁶ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001).

Galatians 6:7


#2 Be Warned and Be Sure

Dm
Gm


 Do do do do do not be de - ce - ived God is not mocked. For ___ wha-

4
Dm
Am
Dm
Dm



 te-ver-one sows that will he al - so reap reap reap reap reap. Do no be de - ce - ived

7
Gm
Dm
Am
Dm


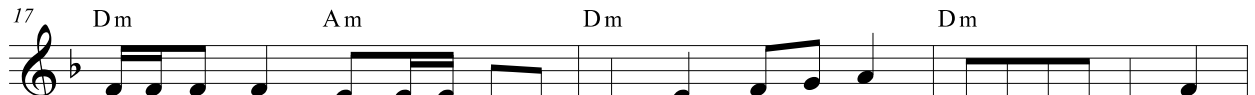
 God is not mocked. For ___ what - ev - er one sows that will he al - so reap.

10
Dm
Gm
Dm
Gm



 Ga-la-tians six se - ven Ga-la-tians six se - ven Ga-la tians six se - ven Ga-la-tians six se - ven

14
Dm
Gm


 Do do do do do not be de - ce - ived God is not mocked. For ___ wha-

17
Dm
Am
Dm
Dm


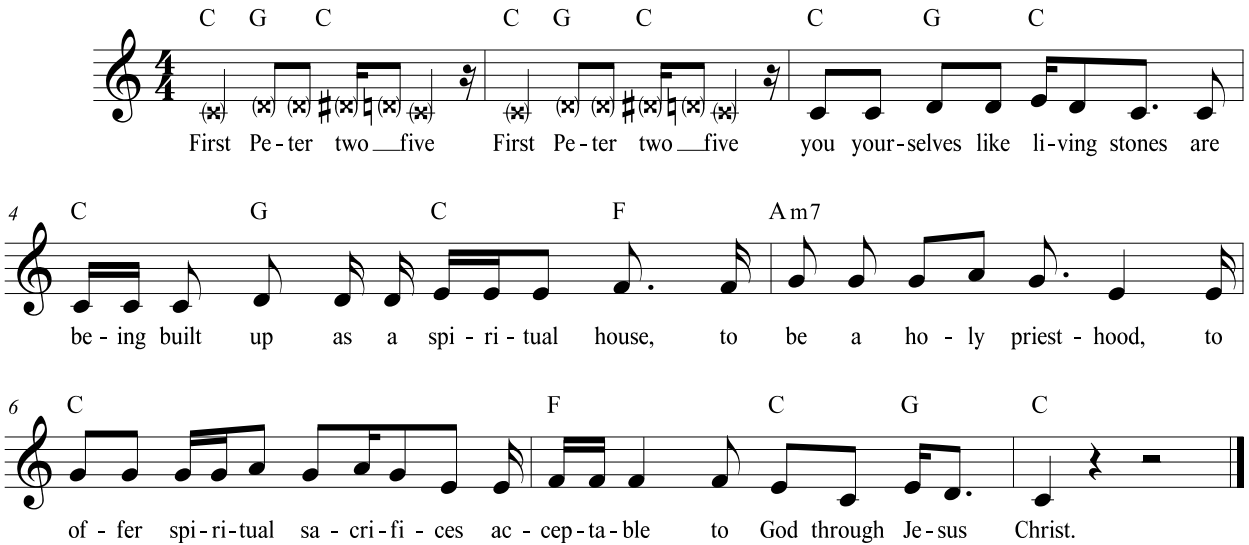
 te-ver-one sows that will he al - so reap reap reap reap reap. Do no be de - ce - ived

20
Gm
Dm
Am
Dm


 God is not mocked. For ___ what - ev - er one sows that will he al - so reap.

1 Peter 2:5

#3 God Made Bricks with the Building in Mind



C G C C G C C G C

First Pe-ter two-five First Pe-ter two-five you your-selves like li-ving stones are

4 C G C F Am7

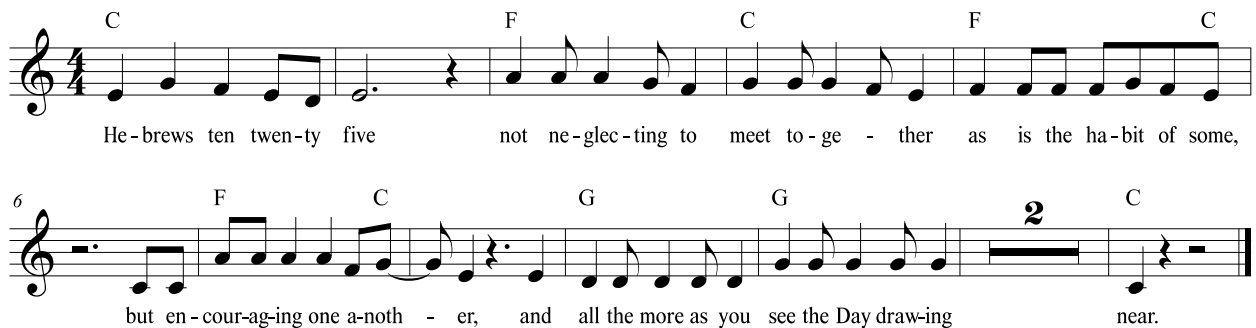
be-ing built up as a spi-ri-tual house, to be a ho-ly priest-hood, to

6 C F C G C

of-fer spi-ri-tual sa-cri-fi-ces ac-cep-ta-ble to God through Je-sus Christ.

Hebrews 10:25

#3 God Makes Bricks with the Building in Mind



C F C F C

He-bre-ws ten twen-ty five not ne-glec-ting to meet to-ge-ther as is the ha-bit of some,

6 F C G G C

but en-cour-ag-ing one a-noth-er, and all the more as you see the Day draw-ing near.

Romans 12:1-2

#4 Sharpen Your Wisdom Saw with the Word

A musical score for the hymn "Romans 12:1-2". It consists of five staves of music in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is written in treble clef. Chord progressions are indicated above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Am Am Em
Rom - ans twelve one and two I ap - peal to you there - fore, bro - thers, by the mer - cies of
4 G Am Am Em G
God, to pre - sent your bo - dies as a liv - ing sac - ri - fice, ho - ly and ac - cep - ta - ble to God,
8 Am Am Am
which is your spi - rit - ual wor - ship. Do not be con - formed to this world, but be trans - formed by the re - new - al
13 Em G Am
of your mind, that by test - ing you may dis - cern what is the will of God,
16 Am Em G Am
what is good and ac - cep - ta - ble and per - fect. Romans chap - ter twelve one and two

Deuteronomy 6:4-6

#4 Sharpen Your Wisdom Saw with the Word

A musical score for the hymn "Deuteronomy 6:4-6". It consists of five staves of music in 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is written in treble clef. Chord progressions are indicated above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Dm Dm Dm
Deu - ter - on - o - my Six Four through six Hear, O Is - ra - el: The LORD our God, the LORD is
5 Am Gm Dm Dm
one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your hea - rt and with all your soul and with
9 Gm Am Dm Am Dm Dm
all your might. And these words that I com - mand you to - day shall be up - on your
13 Dm Dm Am Dm Dm Dm
hea - rt shall be up - on your heart. Deu - ter - on - o - my Six Four through Six

Ephesians 5:31-32

#5 Envision a Beautiful Bride

G C G C F C G C
Eph - es - ians five thir - ty one and thir - ty two There - fore a man shall leave his fath - er and mo - ther

C G C F G C
and hold fast to his wi - fe, and the two shall be - come one flesh.

F C F G C
This myst - er - y is pro - found, and I am say - ing that it re - fers to Christ and the church.

F C D G
This myst - er - y is pro - found and I am say - ing that it re - fers to Christ and the church.

G C G C F C G C
Eph - es - ians five thir - ty one and thir - ty two There - fore a man shall leave his fath - er and mo - ther

Matthew 19:6

#5 Envision a Beautiful Bride

C F C F C G G
Mat - thew nine - teen six So they are no long - er two but one flesh.

7 F C F C
What there - fore God has joined to - geth - er let not man sep - ar - ate

11 F C D *rit.* G D G *a tempo*
What there - fore God has joined to - geth - er, let not man sep - ar - ate.

17 C F C F C G C
Mat - thew nine - teen six So they are no long - er two but one flesh.

Genesis 2:23

#5 Envision a Beautiful Bride

C F C F C D G F C F C

Gen-es-is Two verse Twen-ty Three Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;

7 F C D G F C G C F C G C

she shall be cal - led Wo - man, be - cause she was ta - ken out of Man." Gen - es - is Two verse Twe - nty Three

Matthew 28:18-20

#6 Think Deeply About True Answers

C Dm C G C Dm C G

Mat - thew Twen - ty Eight Eight - een through Twen - ty And Je - sus came and said ___ to them,

5 C Dm C G C G

"All au - thor - it - y in heav - en and on earth has been giv - en to me.

9 F C F 3 3 C 3

Go there - fore and make dis - cip - les of all na - tions bap - ti - zing them in the name of the Fa - ther

13 F C F Am7 Dm G

and of the Son and of the Ho - ly Spi - rit, teach - ing them to ob - serve all that I have com - man - ded


18 G Am7 C F C G C

you. And be - hold, I am with you al - ways, to the end of the age."

1 Peter 3:15


#6 Think Deeply About True Answers

C F C G C G C F




First Pet - er three fif - teen But in your hear - ts ho - nor Christ the Lord as Ho - ly,

C F C G Am G



7 al - ways be - ing pre - pared to make a de - fense to an - y - one who asks you for a rea -

C F C G C



14 son for the hope that is in — you; yet do it with gen - tle - ness and re - spect,

Philippians 1:9-10

#6 Think Deeply About True Answers

C F C F C



Phil - ip - pi - ans One Nine and Ten — And it is my prayer that your love may

6 G C G C G C F C F



— ab - ound more and mo - re Phil - ip - pi - ans One Nine and Ten

12 C G C



— And it is my prayer that your love may — ab - ound more and more, with

17 F C F C 3 C 3 F



know - ledge and all di - scern - ment, so that you may ap - prove what is ex - cel - lent, and so be

22 C D G C G C F



pure and blame - less for the day of Christ, — Phil - ip - pi - ans One

28 C F C G C



Nine and Ten — And it is my prayer that your love may — ab - ound more and more.

John 13:34-35

#7 God Loves You and We Love You

C C Dm Dm G C C

John (John) Thir-teen (thir-teen) Thir-ty Four and Thir - ty Five: _____ John (John)

6 Dm Dm G C G C G C Dm G

Thir-teen (thir-teen) Thir-ty Four and Thir-ty Five: A new (a new) com - mand - ment I give to

11 C G C Dm G C G C Dm G

you, (to you) that you love one an - o - ther: just as (just as) I have loved you, you

15 C G C Dm G G G F

al - so (you al - so) are to love one an - o - ther. (love one an - o - ther) By this (by this) all

20 C F C F C

peo - ple will know that you (that you) are my dis - cip - les, if you (if you) have love (have love) for

25 Dm G Dm G C C Dm Dm G

one a - no - ther. (one a - no - ther.) John (John) Thir-teen (thir-teen) Thir-ty Four and Thir-ty

32 C C C Dm Dm G C

Five: _____ John (John) Thir-teen (thir-teen) Thir - ty Four and Thir - ty Five.

1 John 4:10-11

#7 God Loves You and We Love You

D G D G D A
 First John Four Ten and El-ev - en In this is love, not that we have loved God

4 D A D Em D/F# A
 but that he lov - ed us a-nd sent his Son to be the pro - pi - ti - a - tion for our

7 D G D A7 D
 sins. _____ Be - lov - ed, if God so loved us, we al - so ought to love one a - no - ther

10 G D E A sus A
 First John Four Ten and El - ev - en In this is love,

13 D G D G D A
 First John Four Ten and El - ev - en In this is love, not that we have loved God

16 D A D Em D/F# A D
 but that he lov - ed us a - nd sent his Son to be the pro - pi - ti - a - tion for our sins.

Revelation 22:5

#7 God Loves You and We Love You

D G D D A D Em
 Rev - el - a - tion Twen - ty Two Five "And night will be no more. They will need no light of

6 G A G A/F A D A G D
 lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for - e - v - er and

11 D G A D G D D A D
 e - - ver." Rev - el - a - tion Twen - ty Two Five "And night will be no more."

Books List 2013-2016

Brauns, Chris. *Bound Together: How We Are Tied to Others in Good and Bad Choices*. Zondervan, 2013.

C. Brauns helped me recognize the category of corporate solidarity, illustrated by his “principal of the rope.” The universal body of Christ is bound together in the good and bad. Even as we worship, our faith deepens with an awareness of the thread that ties us back through history to Adam and presently to people around the world.

Bruno, Chris. *The Whole Story of the Bible in 16 Verses*. Crossway Books, 2015.

C. Bruno helped bring Biblical theology from a large concept to a brief list of specific passages. I would have affirmed several of them, but having a quick list will be very helpful in teaching through Biblical theology without having to teach through the whole Bible.

Craig, William Lane, and Lee Strobel. *On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision*. New edition. David C. Cook, 2010.

Craig and Strobel’s resource reminds me of the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity in our ongoing apologetics.

Dempster, Stephen G. *Dominion and Dynasty: A Biblical Theology of the Hebrew Bible*. Leicester, England: Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2003.

Dempster revolutionized my thinking of the Story of the Bible. God’s expectation for humanity to perfectly rule his perfect world became clear to me for the first time.

Dever, Mark. *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2013.

This has become my go-to resource for church purpose, polity and ordinances.

DeYmaz, Mark, and George Yancey. *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments and Practices of a Diverse Congregation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

DeYmaz helped me realize the importance of preaching the gospel that is universal, rather than a message so culturally specific that your church remains monolithic. Although I see pros and cons to a multiethnic church, DeYmaz convinced me of its necessity in every church.

DeYoung, Kevin. *The Biggest Story: How the Snake Crusher Brings Us Back to the Garden*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2015.

Although I didn’t find the text very engaging, or the chapter divisions very helpful, the brief and concise story of the Bible by DeYoung emphasized many of the Biblical themes and motifs often overlooked in a short book.

Hubach, Stephanie O. *Same Lake, Different Boat: Coming Alongside People Touched by Disability*. P&R Publishing, 2006.

A seminar I attended by Joni & Friends recommended Hubach's book. I learned so much about how to engage with people with disabilities, to emphasize their personhood, to not define them exclusively by their disabilities, to build respectful relationships, and to pray with them for God's healing on this broken world.

Keller, Timothy. *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*. 8.9.2012 edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012.

Keller helped me think through how the local church ought to engage and reach its culture.

Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God*. Reprint edition. Riverhead Books, 2008.

I've gone through this book multiple times, and each time I'm gripped with Keller's intelligent and coherent apologetics. This book remains my go-to resource when people are asking the primary questions about God.

Kim, G. K. Beale & Mitchell. *God Dwells Among Us*. IVP, 2015.

No other book I've read combines worship and missions as thoroughly as this one. Kim and Beale helped me understand the thread of the God's presence throughout the Bible, how parallel the themes and stories of the Bible are, and also the immense importance those themes are to missions. "A heart for mission grows out of a soul that finds satisfaction in God's presence, the riches of which can be seen in the imagery of Eden" (p 24).

Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*. Lea edition. Zonderkidz, 2012.

This book is hands down the best story-based study guide for children to understand Biblical Theology. My family has been through it several times and still enjoy the simple and beautiful stories that 'whisper his name.'

MacDonald, James. *Vertical Church: What Every Heart Longs For. What Every Church Can Be*. David C. Cook, 2012.

This book reminded me of the necessity for a church to be focused on worshipping Christ. I found it a bit surprising this book presents worship, preaching, witnessing and prayer as the tenants of the church, but doesn't dialogue at all about the ordinances.

McDowell, Josh, and Dave Sterrett. *Is the Bible True . . . Really?: A Dialogue on Skepticism, Evidence, and Truth*. New Edition. Moody Publishers, 2011.

McDowell and Sterrett have created a useful and easy-to-read resource to help readers engage in conversations with skeptics.

McPhail, Forrest, and Alan Benson. *Pioneer Missions: Meet the Challenges, Share the Blessings*. Forrest McPhail, 2014.

McPhail, a veteran missionary in Cambodia for almost fifteen years brings very practical advice to new missionaries on a philosophical level, highlighting the cultural differences and deficiencies that can taint or even distort the gospel completely.

Metaxas, Eric. *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy. A Righteous Gentile Vs. The Third Reich*. Thomas Nelson, 2010.

My thoughts on *Bonhoeffer* are below in newsletter article 15.05.01.

Mitchell, Matthew C. (2013-09-02). *Resisting Gossip: Winning the War of the Wagging Tongue* (Kindle Locations 1054-1058). CLC Publications.

I would have never have thought I was truly guilty of gossip until I read this book. It will likely be convicting to even the most circumspect Christian. This book may have been especially effective because I went to find out if someone else was gossiping and found gossip in my own speech.

Packer, J. I. *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1991.

The sovereignty of God both motivates and supports global evangelism.

Peterson, David G., and I. Howard Marshall. *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2002.

Platt, David. *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*. Multnomah Books, 2010.

Platt's message in this book has been extremely influential in our home in how we choose to spend money, support missions and *not* collect stuff. This book has played a key role in our choice to pursue dedicated mentoring to prepare for global missions.

Redman, Matt, and Mike Pilavachi. *The Unquenchable Worshipper: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship*. Reissue edition. Bethany House Publishers, 2001.

Although a bit more experiential and anecdotal than I was hoping, Matt Redman's book does have several 'nuggets' on worship philosophy. He emphasizes that the glory of God must motivate every element and every style of worship, and that our worship must effect our lives.

Rogers, Matt, and Donny Mathis. *Seven Arrows: Aiming Bible Readers in the Right Direction*. Equip to Grow Press, 2015.

Although the idea of seven steps could improperly impose an equality about each step, Rogers and Mathis provided me with a go-to teaching tool on hermeneutics.

Saccone, Steve, Mark Batterson, and Cheri Saccone. *Protégé: Developing Your Next Generation of Church Leaders*. IVP Books, 2012.

In thinking about ministry mentoring, Saccone excels in teaching the benefits and warnings for young men pursuing ministry, supremely emphasizing personal character,

and the importance of learning from others. Any young man interested in ministry should read this book.

Stendal, Russell. *Rescue the Captors: True Hostage Situation Involving Colombian Marxist Guerrillas and a Missionary Simply Using the Experience to Share the Gospel*. 4th edition. Abbotsford, WI.: LIFE SENTENCE Publishing, 2012.

Stendal's riveting autobiography stimulates the imagination to show faith and courage in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds. God demonstrates his powerful providence over and over again.

Swenson, Richard A. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. 1st edition. NavPress, 2014.

Swenson helped me realize a life without any margin could point to a subtle philosophy that God measures my success by my wealth, power or education rather than by my virtue, humility and meekness.

Tchividjian, Tullian. *Glorious Ruin: How Suffering Sets You Free*. David C. Cook, 2012.

Personal suffering is necessary to experience the glory of God's power.

Tiede, Vicki. *When Your Husband Is Addicted to Pornography: Healing Your Wounded Heart*. New Growth Press, 2012.

Tiede's book has become my go-to resource when addressing the wife of an addicted husband. Her writing is real, personal, and raw, and she always points to the power and love of Christ on the road to healing.

Wilson, Douglas. *Father Hunger: Why God Calls Men to Love and Lead Their Families*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

Father Hunger is an incredibly compelling guide calling to men to be good fathers. Wilson points to God as the example of what kind of leaders we should be.

Survey Trips:

Cambodia Survey Trip August 2014

Amy and I took this survey trip to visit Jeremy Farmer and J.D. Crowley in Ban Lung, Cambodia. We had very specific prayer requests: that God would reveal an unknown ministry to us to the unreached, that we would have good chemistry with the team (especially the Farmers), that we would feel called to go, and that they would want us to come.

After the trip, we did have the desire to go back. The team there wanted us to return contingent on some personal spiritual growth I needed to make. The Farmers were moving to a different province to learn Laotian and share the gospel to the unreached Laotians living in northern Cambodia. Having my prayer requests answered, I surround myself with counsel. I spoke to 8 or 9 pastors, and most encouraged me to go to Red Brick, pursue ordination, and to keep praying about Cambodia. Amy and I still hope to go Cambodia if God leads us there.

Togo Survey Trip November 2015

Probably my greatest philosophy shift as a result of the trip was the relationship between church planting and pastoral training. A missionary church planter needs to start a church with the goal of turning the church over to indigenous leaders. Rather than waiting for God to bring along a qualified man to shepherd, the church planter should be targeting leaders in the community for evangelism. Each situation obviously differs, but missionaries who only have a desire for evangelism and no vision for pastoral training are likely too short sighted.

Our missions committee sent me to survey the status of Christianity in Togo specifically through the mission board ABWE, and find how we can better engage with the work there. I found Christianity flourishing and reproducing church after church as they continue to reach the most remote parts of Togo. People are being saved. Churches are being planted. Pastors are being trained. It is exciting stuff. The influence of AWBE in Togo spans from hospitals to Bible institutes to Christian schools to health evangelism organizations and more. As a church, we can learn, pray, give and go.

LEARN about the needs and opportunities in Togo

PRAY specifically for the Togolese and missionaries

GIVE wisely by funding the effective and sustainable ministries in Togo

GO on a short term trip as a pastoral trainer or medical physician

See my Facebook Album with descriptions here: <https://goo.gl/yqW4lv>

My biggest lessons from the trip:

1. Large-team missions brings advantages and disadvantages

The work required to maintain a modern hospital in Togo is incredible. Numerous full-time missionaries are required for the extensive needs of the hospital compound, but these US missionaries may be spending little or none of their time building up the local churches. That

being said, the hospital specifically (along with the many other ministries) has had an incredible influence on building Christianity in Togo. The number of churches that have started out of the Bible studies begun after a hospital visit is staggering and beautiful.

2. Effective missions requires a long term commitment

The hospital sees thousands of decisions for Christ each year, but the Togolese people are very compliant, particularly with foreigners. With the added complexities of Togo's low literacy rates and being a developing nation, building healthy churches in Togo requires several generations of Biblical teaching that will grow into and revolutionize their culture. A simple prayer in a hospital bed is not enough.

3. Pastors must be well trained for their circumstance

The average village pastor may not need a PhD in Theology to effectively minister the Scriptures to his people. He will, however, need to be able to articulate the story of the Bible, the exclusiveness of Jesus the Christ, and what Christ-like living looks like in his culture. He must overcome several hurdles to learn how to study and preach, like getting time away from the family farm, improving his second language (French) enough to read theological resources, and raise enough money to pay for travel and tuition. A pastor remarked to me that Togo's greatest need is quality pastoral trainers.

4. The world needs to send more missionaries

Togo is a tiny country on the massive continent of Africa (about .18% of its area and .6% of its population). Two main pockets of the country are still considered "unreached." By continuing to raise up new pastors, God can reach those groups through nationals. The churches in Togo are already strategizing about how to send out missionaries of their own to the unreached in surrounding countries: Ghana, Benin, and Burkina Faso.

5. Mission boards have their place

The work God has accomplished in Togo through the influence of ABWE missionaries is simply astonishing. Togo has been healed physically, reached spiritually and trained pastorally through the coordinated efforts of this team. It has plenty of overhead and administrative oversight, but no one can doubt how thoroughly God has and is using ABWE to build a healthy Togolese church.

Biblical Counseling Training Conference February 2016

My wife and I attended Faith Biblical Counseling Conference in Lafayette, IN. The information was overwhelmingly helpful and has greatly focused and improved my counseling situations by following these steps after grounding all counsel in the Word of God.

- 1. Build loving involvement and trust.**
- 2. Share Biblical hope.**
- 3. Gather relevant data by asking specific questions.**
- 4. Evaluate the problem Biblically.**
- 5. Provide Biblical instruction.**
- 6. Assign practical homework.**
- 7. Rely on the Holy Spirit to change hearts.**

Hermeneutics

Matt Rogers and Donny Mathis' book, *Seven Arrows: Aiming Bible Readers in the Right Direction* (Equip to Grow Press, 2015) helped me clarify my hermeneutical method.

This model encourages us to think deeply about a passage, read it in context, and apply it accurately to our lives in a way that is simple and memorable. I summarize the method this way: Read the passage, get the author's intent, then understand and apply what he's saying about God and man to our relationships with each other. Be praying before, during and after.

This helpful illustration teaches how to approach the Bible asking seven questions:

1. What does the passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people?
7. What does this passage prompt me to pray?

What does this passage say?



What does this passage mean to its original audience?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage demand of me?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



Biblical Theology

Biblical Theology was not a term I engaged with until my post-grad work in OTBT with Jeremy Farmer. During that class, however, the story of the Bible deepened my urgency for missions and for preaching the Old Testament while avoiding moralistic application. Understanding the overall story of the Bible is vital to all Biblical interpretation and theology. Most Old Testament stories cannot be understood fully until they are put in context of the “biggest story.” Stories like God’s promise to the serpent in Genesis, Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, and Joseph saving his family from starvation all need to be understood in context of the larger plot.

In a nutshell: God made man to rule perfectly over His perfect world. Man sinned and brought death into this world, but God promised to send a seed of the woman to make everything right again. God chose men like Noah, Abraham, and David to preserve the lineage of the future king. God the Son became flesh and gave his life as a representative substitute to bear the consequences of our sin. God raised Jesus from the dead and offers new life and adoption to all who believe and receive Him as their Lord and Savior. Jesus promises to return for us and rule perfectly over a perfect world forever.

My Sermon of the Story of the Bible

Could I tell you a true story?

It begins at the very beginning of the Bible. Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Now look at how God created it, vs 3, vs 6, vs 9, vs 11, vs 14, vs 20 etc. See, And God said, and it happened. He created the entire universe in that one week. Now look at Gen 1:25

And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. “Good.” That means perfect. Without any bad things. Now look at what else he created: vs 27

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them;

God made man IN HIS Image. He was righteous just like God. Now look at what God gave Adam and Eve in vs 28.

And God blessed them and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

God gave man dominion over all things. God’s perfect ruler specifically designed to rule perfectly over the world.

But something terrible happens in chapter 3. The devil tempts the woman to sin, and man fails to subdue the serpent, and breaks God's Law. And when questioned about it, he blames his wife.

A chasm grows between this holy God and imperfect man that is irreversible. Man can no longer approach God as a friend.

Sin has devastating consequences, bringing curses upon the man, woman and serpent. Man experiences death--separation from God forever because of his sin. But the curse includes a promise of hope in 3:15.

And I will put enmity (or active hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Now understand that this promise was a big deal. God was saying I promise to bless Eve with a child that will restore the perfection of this world. He will set everything right. He will come and instead of giving into the devil's temptation, he is going to crush his head and defeat him.

So Adam and Eve begin looking for this promised seed to rescue them and be the righteous ruler they had failed to be.

Eve has her first child and declares that she has gotten a man from the Lord. But instead of being the serpent slayer, Cain murders his younger brother.

So the hunt begins for this perfect sin-bearer that would defeat the devil, rule the world righteously, and restore humanity to fellowship with God.

If we were to take the time to flip through this Bible, we'd see lists of names scattered throughout its pages. Sometimes the genealogies are very long. One of the reasons is to show us the search for the promised man. Generation after generation man waited for God to fulfill his promise.

We soon meet a man named Noah who God used to spare the human race physically, only to fail spiritually soon after he landed the boat.

His son Shem had sons and daughters until a man named Abraham came along. Abraham had two things going for him. God made a promise to him, and he believed God.

God promised him to give him more children than the sand on the shore, he promised to give him a special land, and that one of his children will be a blessing to the entire earth.

But Abraham and his wife were very old. God miraculously provided the promised child named Isaac. Within the first several years of Isaac's life, God commanded Abraham to take his son up to a mountain and sacrifice him.

Why would God make all these promises to Abraham, then command him to kill his own promise? Well, Abraham believed God so firmly, even to the point that he trusted that God would raise Isaac from the dead.

Just as Abraham was about to obey God and kill his son, God stopped him. He provided a substitute lamb in place of Isaac, as he would do many years later through his Messiah.

So the promise from the garden was still alive.

Isaac grew up to have a son named Jacob, whose family existence was threatened by a great famine. Instead of allowing them to starve, God had providentially sent one of Jacob's children to Egypt. He rose from slavery to second in command and stored up enough food for all the nations effected by the famine. So Jacob's entire family moved to Egypt and grew and grew, so large that the Egyptians got scared of their size and put them in slavery.

After 400 years of bondage to the Egyptians, God protected a child named Moses to lead his people out of bondage into the land God had promised to Abraham hundreds of years before.

On the way to the promised land, they stop at a special mountain where God enters into a solemn covenant with the entire nation.

The covenant contains two main requirements for the nation, that they needed a sacrifice to be right before God, and they had to obey God with all their heart.

The people immediately break God's covenant, but God spares them and brings them to Canaan.

Soon after conquering much of the land, their leader Joshua dies and they have no righteous ruler. So they demand a king, who proves to be far from righteous.

Thankfully, God chooses a young shepherd named David, who the Bible says was 'after his own heart,' and promises him an eternal dynasty. One of his children will righteously rule forever. But David does some pretty bad stuff, and the nation continues to look for a Messiah.

But none of David's children look much like David. None 'have a heart after God's own.' The nation spirals deeper and deeper into idolatry, abuse of the poor, and persecution of the prophets.

The kingdom divides and God's people are scattered by Assyria or deported to Babylon. What has become of God's promise to Adam of a serpent slayer, to Abraham of many children and a special land, and to David of an eternal dynasty?

But God sends Prophets to remind God's people of the covenant warning them to repent. God has not forgotten his promise, and will one day set right all the things in the world.

He brings Judah back from captivity before God seems silent for 400 years. World power flows from one conquering nation to the next, when one day during the height of the Roman Empire, and messenger of God visits a young virgin with amazing news. She will be the mother of the long-awaited child. He would save his people from their sins, and his name will be "Immanuel: God with us." God has come down and become human.

Jesus grows up and remains perfectly obedient to God, just like Adam should have done in the garden. Jesus begins his public ministry, but he doesn't call people to arms for his kingdom. He calls people to repent, and to love God and others.

It was strange to his followers, who didn't immediately understand that the sinful world needs a perfect sacrifice. An innocent lamb must die instead of us.

So God, in his richest mercies, allows Jesus to be wrongfully accused and beaten and tortured and murdered to pay the debt of man's sin, to bear the full wrath of God in our place.

But Jesus doesn't stay dead! On the third day, God makes Jesus alive again, giving the death-blow to the serpent. Jesus appears to hundreds, eating with them, talking with them, and being touched by them. He commissions them to go and make disciples of all nations, and promises to return to live with them forever.

The story that began in a garden where God dwells with man will end in a garden kingdom where God tabernacles with his people. He will eradicate sin and death, tears and pain, and will glorify Jesus forever and ever on the new earth as the eternal kingdom of God.

Doctrinal Statement

2016

Bibliology

- 101 I believe the sixty-six books of the Bible are God's special revelation to fallen humanity describing and enacting His plan to redeem and fellowship with them.
- 102 I believe the Bible is inspired. God "breathed" (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pt 1:21) his message through human authors' personality, research and style to communicate exactly what He intended in written form (Mt 5:18, 1 Cor 2:13, Rev 22:18-19). Although he reveals some of his attributes indirectly in nature (Ps 19:1, Rm 1:18-21), God reveals himself directly and authoritatively in the written words of the prophets and apostles.
- 103 I believe the original manuscripts are inerrant (without error) and infallible (incapable of error) as God himself is wholly true (Ps 19:7-9, Jn 3:33, 17:17, Tit 1:2).
- 104 I believe the canon was determined by God and recognized as His Word by the church through the corporate illumination of the Holy Spirit (1 Ths2:13).
- 105 I believe the sixty-six books of the Protestant Old and New Testaments have evidence of divine origin (Jer 1:9), are profitable spiritually (1 Cor 2:4,5,14; 2 Tim 3:16), are self-attesting (Jn 17:17, 1 Cor 14:37), and are recognized by other authors as Scripture (Mt 1:22, Ac 1:16, 2 Pt 3:16). These books maintain one testimony from the Spirit of Christ to the church, a connection with an apostle, and a doctrinal continuity with all Scripture. Although the apocryphal books may be helpful for cultural context, they are not Scripture, which is evidenced by their absence from the Hebrew canon and never being quoted as Scripture by a New Testament author.
- 106 I believe the Bible is Yahweh's singular communication for knowledge of who he is and how we relate to him (Jud 3, 2 Tim 3:16-17, Rm 1:16).
- 107 I believe the meaning of the Bible is clear (Ps 119:130) although not all is equally clear (2 Pt 3:16). Unbelievers merely understand Scripture as texts, but those illuminated by the Holy Spirit receive it as the powerful and life-giving Words of the Lord (Jn 5:37-38, 1 Jn 2:20, 27).
- 108 I believe God has preserved His Word through the transmission and distribution of copies and translations (Mt 5:18, Lk 21:33). The overwhelming manuscript evidence indicates we have the text of the autographs.
- 109 I believe translations are God's holy Word as much as they accurately convey the message of the originals.

Theology

- 201 I believe Yahweh as revealed by the Scriptures is the one true god. He is a personal living spirit (Jer 10:10, Zeph 3:17, Jn 4:24), intelligent (Isa 55:8–9), purposeful (Eph 1:9), free (Dan 4:35), and impassible (Ps 103:13). He is the sovereign creator who actively sustains and governs everything outside himself, which exists to bring him glory (Jn 1:3, Rm 11:36, Col 1:15-20, Is 43:6-7, Pro 16:33).
- 202 I believe God is one essence and exists in three persons each of whom are fully God (Mt 28:19, 2 Cor 13:14, Jud 20–21, Deu 6:4): Father (Jn 4:21–23, Rm 15:6, Eph 4:6), Son (Mt 16:6, Jn 10:30, Heb 4:14), and Holy Spirit (Mt 1:18, 12:32, 28:19; Jn 14:26). All three persons are coequal, coeternal, and coexistent (Jn 5:23, 26; Eph 4:4–6), and willingly operate in a hierarchy (Jn 14:26-28, Jn 15:26, 1 Cor 15:24).
- 203 I believe God is perfect in all of his attributes, which can be categorized as incommunicable and communicable.
- 204 **God's Greatness:** characteristics that cannot be attained by humans.
- Eternality:** He is everlasting, having no beginning or end, and unable to be measured by time although operating within it (Gen 21:33, Deu 33:27, Rev 22:13).
 - Majestic Holiness:** God is completely separate from all creation (Ps 86:8, Ex 15:11, Isa 6:1-3, Rev 4:8).
 - Self-existence:** He is completely eternally self-sustaining and self-determining (Ex 3:6, 13-16) needing nothing outside himself (Ac 17:24-25, Ex 3:14, Jn 1:3, 5:26, Job 37:16, Ps 18:30).
 - Immutability:** He is constant, never changing in regard to his essence, character, and decree (Mal 3:6, Jam 1:17, Heb 6:17).
 - Omnipresence:** He exists in all places simultaneously (Ps 139:7-10, Jer 23:24).
 - Omnipotence:** He is not limited by anything outside of himself, and is fully able to do anything consistent with his character and attributes (Lk 1:37, Gen 17:1, Jer 32:17).
 - Omniscience:** He knows all things past, present, and future—things both actual and possible (Ps 139:1-4, Isa 46:9–11, Mt 10:29, 11:21-23).
 - Infinite wisdom:** God does what is best (Rm 8:28, Eph 3:10, 1 Cor 1:20).
- 205 **God's Goodness:** His traits that humans should seek to emulate.
- Moral Holiness:** God is completely separate from all sin (1 Pt 1:15–16), maintaining absolute moral perfection (Lev 11:44-45) and complete righteousness in judgment (Deu 32:4, Isa 30:18, Ps 9:8, Rev 19:2) and wrath (Ps 5:4-6, Rm 2:5, 3:5).
 - Integrity:** God is faithfully true to his word and is the standard for all truth (Jn 17:17, Jer 10:10, Tit 1:2, Lam 3:23, Ps 100:5, 1 Ths 5:24).
 - Love:** God is love itself (1 Jn 4:8, Lam 3:22), and he is gracious (Ex 34:6) and merciful (Ps 103:8, 13).

Christology

- 301 I believe the historical man, Jesus of Nazareth, is the second member of the Godhead (Lk 5:17-26, Jn 20:28, Heb 1:8, Rm 9:5, Tit 2:13).
- 302 I believe He existed as the Son of God before the incarnation actively participating in the creation of the universe (Jn 8:55–59, Col 1:15–19) and its redemptive plan (1 Cor 10:4, Josh 1).
- 303 I believe He gave up the glory he shared with the Father and the independent use of his attributes to become a man and to die (Mt 24:36, Phil 2:6–11, Jn 17:1-5).
- 304 I believe Jesus was born of a virgin (Is 7:14, Mt 1:23).
- 305 I believe Jesus, though tempted, lived a sinless life as my representative (Jn 8:46, 2 Cor 5:21, Heb 4:15).
- 306 I believe that Jesus is one indivisible person with a human nature (1 Tim 2:5) and a divine nature (Jn 1:1, 10:30, Phil 2:5–7, Col 1).
- 307 I believe Jesus' physical bloody death and righteous life as man's representative was necessary to accomplish redemption (Mk 10:45, Jn 12:27, 1 Tim 1:15, Heb 2:10, 9:26).
- 308 I believe Jesus' death was substitutionary and total (Is 53:6, 2 Cor 5:21, 1 Pt 3:18), fully atoning for man's sin and expiating man's guilt (Heb 9:26). His atonement, though sufficient to redeem all men (Heb 2:9, 1 Jn 2:2) has only been applied to those who exercise faith in Christ (1 Tim 4:10).
- 309 I believe Jesus rose bodily from the tomb on the third day after his crucifixion (Mt 28:6, Ac 17:31, 1 Cor 15:12–14).
- 310 I believe Jesus ascended visibly into Heaven after revealing himself to many people (Lk 24:51, Ac 1:9, 1 Cor 15:6), is now sitting on the right hand of God as our mediator and High Priest (Col 3:1; Heb 4:15, 10:12; 1 Tim 2:5), and will return in glory (Rev 22:20).

Pneumatology

- 401 I believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity (Mt 28:19).
- 402 I believe the Holy Spirit is God. He is coequal and coeternal with both the Father and the Son (Ac 5:3–4) but subordinate to both of them in function (Ps 104:30; Jn 14:26, 16:7).
- 403 I believe the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the Trinity, is a person. Only a person (not a force) may be rebelled against (Isa 63:10, Ps 106:33, Heb 10:29), grieved (Eph 4:30), lied to (Ac 5:3–4), or blasphemed (Lk 12:10). He functions in a role distinct from both the Father and the Son (Mt 3:16–17, 1 Pt 1:2). This distinction is shown

- through his speech (Ac 8:29), intercession (Rm 8:26–27), knowledge, and will (1 Cor 12:10-11).
- 404 I believe the Holy Spirit was active in history through creation (Gen 1:2), inspiration (2 Pt 1:20–21), the incarnation (Mt 1:18), and in the Old Testament theocratic anointing of the mediatorial leaders of Israel (Num 11:17, 1 Sam 16:12-13, Jgs 3:10, Jgs 14:6).
- 405 I believe the Holy Spirit acts today by restraining sin (2 Ths 2:6), convicting of sin (Jn 16:8–11), regenerating (Tit 3:5), indwelling (Rm 8:9), sealing (Eph 1:13), illuminating (1 Cor 2:10), filling (Eph 5:18), baptizing (Ac 1:5), interceding for (Rm 8:26), and producing fruit in believers (Gal 5:22-23).
- 406 I believe the Holy Spirit is gifting spiritual abilities or talents to every believer to build up the church (1 Cor 12:4, 7, Heb 2:4). Miraculous sign gifts and special revelatory gifts such as healings, discerning spirits, prophecy (1 Cor 11:4, Heb 2:3,4), interpreting tongues, and speaking in tongues were given to the early church to validate the new revelation of God (Ac 14:3, Ac 5:16, 1 Cor 12:9, 28–30). Having accomplished their purpose, I believe we don't see those gifts active today (1 Cor 13:8).

Angelology

- 501 I believe angels were created by God (Ps 148:2-5). I believe they are spirit beings (Heb 1:14) with personality (1 Pt 1:12), but are not divine or worthy of worship (Rev 22:8-9).
- 502 I believe angels are an innumerable company (Job 25:3, Heb 12:22) the elect of which may function as messengers (Lk 1:19), unceasing worshippers (Rev 4:8), or ministers to believers (Heb 1:14).
- 503 I believe in the existence of Satan (Mt 4:10). He is the leader of evil in this world (Jn 8:44), but is not equal to God and must give account for his actions (Job 1:6, Jud 9) that are characterized by lying (Jn 8:44), deceiving (Rev 20:10), and accusing (Job 1:6-12). I believe he will be ultimately bound and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).
- 504 I believe angels were created in holiness that was forever lost to those who followed in Satan's prideful rebellion (1 Tim 3:6, Rev 12:4). The Bible refers to those angels as demons (Mt 9:32-33).
- 505 I believe demons can possess unbelievers (1 Jn 4:4) which can be witnessed by evidences such as mental derangement, blindness, dumbness, moral impurity, epilepsy, and superhuman strength (Mt 9:32–34, Mk 1:23–26, Lk 8:2).
- 506 I believe that believers are responsible to resist Satan (Eph 6:12-13, Jam 4:7, 1 Pt 5:8-9).

Anthropology

- 601 I believe God created man directly and immediately on the sixth day of creation (Gen 1:26-27), and that all humanity is descended from the original man and woman that God created (Ac 17:26).
- 602 I believe man was created to glorify God and fully to enjoy him forever (Ps 73:24-28, Jn 17:21-23).
- 603 I believe man was created in untested holiness (Gen 1:27, 31).
- 604 I believe man was created in the image of God, which enables man to use language, to reason, to make volitional choices, to have spiritual life, and to enjoy fellowship with God—all of which animals cannot do (Col 3:9-10, Eph 4:24).
- 605 I believe the image of God was marred but not destroyed by man's sin (Gen 5:3, Ecc 7:29, Jam 3:9).
- 606 I believe Adam's sin, as the representative for the entire human race, brought physical and spiritual death upon humanity (Rm 5:12-19). As a result of Adam's sin all men are born sinners, enemies of God, spiritually dead, and condemned (Col 1:21, Jn 3:18).
- 607 I believe in the bodily resurrection and judgment of all humanity (Dan 12:2, Jn 5:28-29, 1 Cor 15:21-24).
- 608 I believe that man has two basic parts, material and immaterial (Mt 10:28, 1 Cor 5:3, Jam 2:26, 2 Cor 5:1-4).
- 609 I believe men and women are equal in nature and status before God (Gal 3:28), but have different roles in marriage and picture Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-32).

Hamartiology

- 701 I believe sin is a lack of conformity to the nature and character of God. It extends to thought (Mt 5:27-28), act (1 Jn 3:4), omission (Jam 4:17), disposition (Rm 7:17-19), and nature (1 Cor 6:9, Eph 2:3). I believe one can sin in ignorance (Lk 12:48, Ac 3:17-19).
- 702 I believe self-autonomy is the root of all sin (2 Cor 5:15).
- 703 I believe Satan first sinned and introduced sin into the universe (Jn 8:44, 1 Jn 3:8). Satan became the tempter of all men and was instrumental in the fall (Gen 3:1-6).
- 704 I believe sin was imputed to the entire human race as a result of Adam's sin (Rm 5:12-19).
- 705 I believe all men are born totally depraved (Rm 3:23, Eph 2:1), and that depravity extends to their entire being both material (Rm 8:10) and immaterial (Col 1:21, Rm 1:26).
- 706 I believe unless God intervenes, the unsaved man will never move toward God, for in his heart he hates God (Ps 14:2-3) and is dead in sin (Col 2:13). He is even incapable

of doing positive righteousness in an ultimate sense. Although he is able to perform relatively good acts because of the common grace of God (Rm 2:14–15), he can never earn merit with God (Pro 21:4, Isa 64:6) or save himself (Mt 19:25-26).

Soteriology

- 801 **Salvation:** I believe salvation is a work of God. Man, being dead in sin and depraved in his entire person, does not initiate nor does he contribute to his own salvation (Mt 19:25-26, Eph 2:8-9, Rm 3:30). I believe salvation is the rescue of people from their sin and its penalty through Jesus Christ alone by grace through faith alone (Rm 10:9, Jn 14:6).
- 802 **Election:** I believe God, in his own sovereign wisdom in eternity, chose those who will be saved not based on any virtue found in them (Rm 9:18-20, Eph 1:4-5). The certain identity of the elect is ultimately known only to God; therefore, the gospel must be preached freely to all people (Mt 28:18–20).
- 803 **Call of God:** I believe God calls men to Christ through his Word (2 Ths 2:14) from two aspects. He generally calls all men to be saved (Mt 11:28, Jn 12:32). Through the working of the Spirit He effectually calls the elect to faith and repentance in such a way that they certainly will respond (Rm 8:28-30). Although it is true that all of the elect will ultimately be saved, it is also true that no man is saved against his will. Neither the sovereignty of God (Pro 16:1, 21:1) nor the responsibility of man (Rm 10:9-13) should be downplayed to alleviate the tension.
- 804 **Regeneration:** I believe God supernaturally and instantaneously gives spiritual life to the spiritually dead (Jn 3:3-5) enabling them to respond to God's Word in repentant faith (Mk 1:15, 2 Cor 2:4, 5, 14).
- 805 **Conversion:** I believe conversion is a turning away from sin (repentance) and turning to God (faith) (Ac 14:15, 1 Ths 1:9). Repentance involves a recognition of sin (1 Jn 1:8-10), sorrow over sin (2 Cor 7:9-10), a desire for forgiveness (Ac 2:38), and a new direction of obeying God (Ac 26:20, Heb 6:1). Saving faith is an unreserved trust in the accomplished redemption of Christ and is given to a person by God (Phi 1:29, 1 Cor 12:3).
- 806 **Justification:** I believe justification is a judicial act of God whereby he declares a sinner righteous based solely upon the active and passive obedience of Christ (Pr 17:15, Rm 5:8-9). It involves the forgiveness of sin (Rm 5:1, 2, 9) and the imputation of righteousness (Rm 4:5,11; 5:19; Phi 3:9).
- 807 **Union with Christ:** I believe Spirit baptism is a judicial act of God by which he places believers into union with Christ and his body (the church) (1 Cor 12:13, Rm 6:3).
- 808 **Adoption:** I believe adoption is God's judicial act which makes a believer a joint heir with Christ, with all the rights and blessings of God's children (Rm 8:15, 17, 23).

- 809 **Sanctification:** I believe sanctification is the ongoing process of the Holy Spirit making the believer more like Jesus Christ (1 Ths 5:23, Phil 1:6). The Holy Spirit effects this work through the Word of God (Jn 17:17), and will complete it at glorification (Rm 8:28-29).
- 810 **Preservation:** I believe the Father keeps believers secure in salvation (Jn 6:37-39).
- 811 **Perseverance:** Because of God's preservation, I believe God will equip the believer to persevere in faith, repentance, and good works until the end (Heb 3:14, 2 Tim 1:12, 1 Jn 1:8-9).
- 812 **Glorification:** I believe glorification is the final deliverance of the believer from the presence and power of sin, including its physical effects. Believers will be resurrected and given new incorruptible bodies (1 Cor 15:22-23, 44; Dan 12:2-3).

Ecclesiology

- 901 **Universal:** I believe the universal church is the Body of Christ (Col 1:18) and consists of all Spirit-baptized believers living between Pentecost (Ac 1:5) and the rapture (1 Ths 4:13-18). The church is God's primary vehicle for God's work on this earth (Eph 3:8-10).
- 902 **Local:** I believe the local church is visible portion of the Universal church made up of regenerate, Spirit baptized believers (Ac 2:47), baptized by immersion (Ac 2:41), and organized with the two offices of Pastor and deacon (1 Tim 3:1, 8). A proper local church also seeks to glorify God by edifying the saints (Eph 4:12-16), carrying out the Great Commission (Mt 28:19-20), meeting regularly (Ac 20:7), observing the ordinances, teaching, and praying (Ac 2:42).
- 903 I believe the local church should practice two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism symbolizes resurrection and Spirit baptism (1 Cor 12:13), and was always preceded by conversion. I believe immersion of professing believers is the proper New Testament method (Ac 8:38-39). The Lord's Supper serves as a memorial to the church and ought to be practiced regularly in anticipation of his return (1 Cor 11:24-26).
- 904 I believe the church should pursue holiness through discipline of the disobedient (2 Ths 3:14-15, 1 Cor 5:5, Mt 18:15-20).

Eschatology

- 1001 I believe Jesus will soon return (Rev 1:1, 2:16, 3:11, 22:6-20)
- 1002 I believe Jesus is physically coming again (Ac 1:11), to claim his church (1 Ths 4:16-17), destroy his enemies (Rev 20:10), and rule the universe forever with his saints (2 Tim 2:12).

- 1003 I believe Christians should be diligent in Great Commission living until Jesus returns by making fully devoted followers of Jesus (Ac 1:6-8), living holy lives (1 Ths 5:5-8, 2 Pt 3:11-12), and encouraging other believers to do the same (Heb 12:24-25).
- 1004 I believe all people will be resurrected physically and face judgment at their time of death (Heb 9:27).
- 1005 I believe all believers will be resurrected to eternal life to spend eternity with God on a New Earth (Rev 21:3-5), while unbelievers will face eternal condemnation in Hell (Mt 10:28, 25:46, Jn 3:36, 2 Ths 1:9, Rev 14:11, 22:8-10).
- 1006 After growing up in dispensational circles, I've wrestled with the primary eschatological views and remained convinced of premillennialism. I believe it is preferable to interpret the Bible as literal as possible and to view Old Testament prophecy as specifically as possible.
- 1007 However, the relationship between Israel and the Church maintains constant tension for me, and I find the arguments for both pre and post tribulation compelling. I gravitate toward dispensational premillennialism when discussing the eminency of Christ's coming (Ac 1:6-8, 1 Thes 4-5), the specific promises to Israel (Hos 3:4), the sparing of the church from the great wrath of God (Rev 3:10), and the mention of specific tribes in Revelation (Rev 7, 21:12). When thinking about Paul's strong emphasis on the unity of God's people (1 Cor 12:13), the exhortation to endure trial (Jam 1), and the return of Christ in judgement (Mat 24:29-30), I find the arguments for historic premillennialism very reasonable.
- 1008 For the sake of this ordination paper, I hold to a pretribulational view with this order of last things: rapture, bema seat, tribulation, second coming, millennial reign, final judgment, and eternal reign.

Writings

Newsletter Articles

Articles from the Red Brick Church Monthly Newsletter

14.12.01 On Music Philosophy

I love singing. You can ask my wife and daughter. I've taken voice lessons since early ninth grade and have done fairly well in more than one voice competition. I've sung numerous genres of music and have been in numerous choirs led by some of excellent directors. But after taking an inventory of all the music and groups I've experienced during my life, one type of music and one group stands out as my favorite: singing worship music with my church. Now you may be aware that the professionalism and musicality of church music may seem curiously absent from a service at times. But I don't love singing with my church because the tight harmonies and perfect rhythms. I love to sing with other believers because through singing, I engage with God, with others, and myself. Worshipping God takes hard work. It requires knowing the truth, affirming the truth and applying the truth. Worshipping with others demands unity, humility, and communication. And the prerequisite for worshipping in spirit and truth is having a real relationship with God. But when God's people sing together, it gives us a little taste of glory.

Ephesians 5:18-21 addresses all of these things. ¹⁸"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." So make music together!

15.01.01 On Ministry Philosophy

Reasons I'm excited about 2015: (1) New beginnings. It's not difficult to be excited about the new year and a fresh start. I have an unusually 'new year' this time around. I have a new church family, a new house, a new job, and a new community (along with a new baby coming in a few months). All of these things I love and am looking forward to settling into each one of them. (2) I'm excited about seeing the youth group grow and mature in their knowledge and love of God. I can't wait for the many activities we have with the youth, especially the senior high youth conference at Trinity's 360 Leadership Conference April 17-18. (3) I'm excited to see our worship services deepen in theology, musicality, community, and energy as we engage with God and each other each week. (4) I'm thrilled to build relationships with my church family and community to follow Jesus' command to equip each other to be "disciple-making-disciples." God has given me so much to be thankful for, and I'm excited to see how he leads this year.

15.02.01 On Worship Philosophy

Worship is more than just a warm feeling or coming to church on Sunday. In David Peterson's book *"Engaging with God"* he explores the subject of worshipping God, and explains that we generally use the term *worship* too narrowly. Here are some of his other points. Worship is homage or grateful submission. It may not always mean bowing down, but "whatever the

situation, it was a recognition of the total dependence of one party on another for the provision of some need.” Worship is also service, implying “that God is a great king, who requires faithfulness and obedience from those who belong to him.” Worship also involves reverence and respect. “From one point of view, worship...could be expressed in silence or by a simple gesture...[but] in a final analysis, it is the attitude of the heart that really matters.” But when we narrow the idea of reverence to our demeanor in church services, we misunderstand that reverence, or the fear of the Lord, “was normally to the honoring of God by total lifestyle.” The worship of God is indispensable in the life of a believer, and “involves homage, service and reverence, demonstrated in the whole of life.”

15.03.01 On Ministry Philosophy

There are few things I love more than seeing young people doing gospel work and loving it. This past month several teens in the youth group devoted several hours on two separate days to giving several of the widows and shut-ins in our church a happier valentine’s day. Three of our teen girls came over our home on Friday night to bake cookies, decorate vases and hand-make valentines. Saturday morning, eleven people in three groups, including my two year old, delivered the valentines, cookies, flowers, hugs and smiles to thirteen ladies from our church. Jacob M and Ben B were on my delivery team when we gave valentines to one of the widows. She laughed that it was the first time she had received flowers from a handsome man in a long time. All of the ladies were so grateful for the gesture, saying how wonderful it was to be thought of and loved. The activity represented the kind of youth ministry we want to build here at The Red Brick Church, and we’re hoping to do more service-related activities in the future.

15.04.01 On Youth Ministry

The youth had a blast at our combined activity, CLUE. After dinner and a devotional, the teens split up into small groups and traveled around the church building in search of the Clue characters. The lights were turned off, candles and flashlights were used, and a thunderstorm was played over the auditorium speakers. Upon finding the ‘suspects’ the teens asked ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions to narrow down the “who, where, with what” required to win the game. The characters, made up of college students, parents of teens, and parents with older children, came dressed to the hilt. Miss Peacock (Aileen Gatz) wore the most memorable costume, with real peacock feathers in a big plume behind her. Michael Arnold (the Butler) had an extra clue hidden in one of the hymnbooks in the auditorium. After each round, he would give the teens a new clue on how to find the ‘getaway car.’ Before the game, we sang “The Gospel Song,” which we’ve been learning as a youth group, and I brought a devotional to the teens about *Identity in Christ*. No matter what anyone says to you or about you, I said, no matter what people think about you, Jesus loves you and values you. Only a relationship with Jesus can bring true happiness.

15.05.01 On Ministry Philosophy

As I continue to prepare for a potential ordination next year, I’m doing lots of reading, scripture memory and study. Over the past several months, I’ve been listening to and reading a biography of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 – 1945) by Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer, Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*. Bonhoeffer was a German pastor executed by Hitler just before the end of WWII,

whose writings, particularly *The Cost of Discipleship*, have been widely influential. Although I haven't been able to read much he has personally written, and understand there would be some points of disagreement, I learned several things from his life.

Here are some snippets from the book.

Bonhoeffer didn't grow up in a religious home. In fact, when Dietrich announced his choice to study theology, his brother Klaus called the church a "poor, feeble, boring, petty bourgeois institution." "In that case," said Dietrich, "I shall have to reform it!" (p. 38)

The racism he saw inside the church against Jews in Germany, and then toward blacks in parts of America appalled him. In America as an 18-year-old, he visited a church racially diverse in clergy and attendants. He commented that this day was "the first day that something of the reality of Catholicism dawned on me, nothing romantic or the like, but rather that I am beginning, I believe, to understand the concept 'church.'...The universality of the church was illustrated in a marvelously effective manner. White, black, yellow members of religious orders—everyone was in clerical robes united under the church. It truly seems ideal." (p. 53)

His hope for the church rested in its commitment to the Bible. "The church still has the Bible, and as long as she has it we can still believe in the holy Christian church. God's word will never be denied (Isa. 55:11)..." (p. 57)

His theology needed to be personal enough to communicate simply to children. "[H]e often said that if one couldn't communicate the most profound ideas about God and the Bible to children, something was amiss. There was more to life than academia." (p. 64) In 1932 He told Hildebrandt, "A truly evangelical sermon must be like offering a child a fine red apple or offering a thirsty man a cool glass of water and then saying: Do you want it?" (p. 272)

He loved and treasured "negro spirituals." (p. 108)

He thought hard about his Christianity. One of his students remembers, "he did not indulge in cheap apologetics which from their lofty base fire upon the battlements of natural science. We must think with the doubter, he said, even doubt with him." (p. 125)

He loved Children. Shortly after his ordination, he taught a confirmation class to 50 boys in a notoriously tough neighborhood in North Berlin. Unlike in America, confirmation class was effectively mandated by the state. To quiet the boys on the first day, he almost whispered a story about teaching in Harlem, promising them more the next time if they listened. "What helped the most was that I simply told the stories from the Bible with great emphasis, particularly the eschatological passages." He visited each of their homes, and instructed his landlord to allow the boys into his room even in his absence. (p. 130-134)

He loved reading the Bible. "And I would like to tell you now quite personally: since I have learnt to read the Bible in this way—and this has not been for so very long—it becomes every day more wonderful to me. I read it in the morning and the evening, often during the day as well, and every day I consider a text which I have chosen for the whole week, and try to sink deeply into it, so as really to hear what it is saying. I know that without this I could not live properly any longer." (p. 137)

Meditation, prayer and communion are vital parts of ministry. When a church leader told him, "We have no time for meditation now, the ordinands should learn how to preach and to catechize." He replied "That seems to me either a complete misunderstanding of what young theologians are like today or a culpable ignorance of how preaching and catechism come to life. The questions that are seriously put to us today by young theologians are: **How do I learn to**

pray? How do I learn to read the Bible? If we cannot help them there we cannot help them at all.” (p. 271)⁷

15.06.01 On Prayer & Worship

In 1975, Arthur Bennett published “The Valley of Vision,” a collection of puritan prayers and devotionals. For me, the book can sit on my shelf for months until a crisis moment of life. Whether it’s stress in my marriage, with my children, at work, I find myself coming back to these prayers. They remind me that I must be broken to be healed, and have a contrite heart to gain a rejoicing spirit. Sovereign Grace, one of my favorite worship-music organizations adapted and recorded several of these prayers in their album “Valley of Vision.” “In the Valley” has become one of my favorites because the lyrics and music remind me God’s sovereign hand of mercy. Here’s the first verse and chorus: When You lead me to the valley of vision, I can see You in the heights. And though my humbling wouldn’t be my decision, It’s here Your glory shines so bright. So let me learn that the cross precedes the crown, To be low is to be high, That the valley’s where You make me more like Christ. [CHORUS] Let me find Your grace in the valley. Let me find Your life in my death. Let me find Your joy in my sorrow. Your wealth in my need. That You’re near with every breath, In the valley.

15.07.01 On Youth Ministry

We’ve already had a great summer with our Youth Group. We had a great opportunity just being together at the Byron Forest Preserve, and the Mrozek’s pool, and have also spent good time in the Word studying the book of James. The teens brought several insights to the table, how our Christianity effects the way we treat our peers, how we see people who are mean to us or bully us, and how we see people who are always chosen last for sports. We learned that loving your neighbor as yourself means that they are important, no matter who they are, and that they need God’s merciful justice just like we do. We’ve learned that being kind to people, especially those less fortunate than you, is an essential part of our Christianity.

16.04.01 On Youth Ministry

The Youth Group meets every month on the first Sunday for lunch, games, and a challenge from Scripture. We’ve been studying the Gospel by teaching through the seven things our teens should never forget (Know Christ is right & best, be warned and sure, you’re a ‘brick’, wisdom from the Word, envision beautiful brides, think deeply, and God & we love you.) In March, we challenged the teens to think deeply about true answers. Christianity isn’t a cult of misinformed, ignorant followers. We study all the historical and scientific evidence and find greater basis for our faith. We tell our teens all the time, “If Christ rose from the dead, then it’s all true, everything He said about himself, God and the Scriptures. If He didn’t rise again, then we are wasting our time doing this ‘Christian thing’ and are in fact miserably deceived.” We all must decide personally to follow Christ or to reject him as our Lord.

⁷ Metaxas, Eric (2010-04-20). Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy. Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

Philosophy of Ministry

Philosophy of Missions

The eternal theme of the sovereign God dwelling with His true worshipers motivates global missions.

In the garden, God walks with Adam until sin curses the entire world. God promises to restore his relationship with man through a child of Eve. He communicates to various figures in the Scripture revealing the path to worship, and even tabernacleing with them. Psalm 67 reveals God's global intentions to "let all the peoples praise you." When Jesus arrives on the scene, his mission to be a sacrifice for many was confusing to Jews looking for an earthly Messiah. He did not come to set up an earthly political kingdom, but rather open the way to God's eternal kingdom through repentance. When he gives the great commission, he assigns all Christians to the task of making disciple-making disciples of Jesus. In his perfect timing, he will finish the death-blow dealt to Satan and establish his kingdom of true worshipers on a new heaven and earth. The glory and renown of Jesus must be the driving force of missions. All other motivations will fail, but one day people from every people group and language will be counted among those worshipping in spirit and truth (Rev 7:9). God will do this. His sovereign hand of providence works in and through the lives of men to bring sinners to the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ. And all who call on his name in belief and repentance, will be forever saved (Acts 16:31, Mark 1:15).

Philosophy of Worship

drafted 1/31/09

Christians cannot take the worship of God lightly. Every aspect of our lives must be saturated by this very thing.⁸ Everything we say and do must be done for Christ as an offering of worship.⁹ When looking at the Old Testament, some may interpret the intricate commands regarding worship as the means to true worship. Does worship require these things? Is God pleased only with the Levitical system of sacrifices? How must a Christian worship God? What are his requirements for pleasing worship? Christ himself clarifies that acceptable worship does not occur at a certain *place*, but worship requires knowing who God is and what he has done and then responding in the way that he desires.

When Jesus meets the woman at the well, she realizes that he is a prophet. Naturally, she immediately asks the greatest question in her mind, where are people supposed to worship? Jesus corrects her thinking when he answers the question by declaring that neither place¹⁰ is correct. For he says, “an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”¹¹ From Jesus’ words we glean two things: those who know God must worship him, and those who worship must worship God’s way. Hendriksen explains that “it is not the *where* but the *how* and *what* that is all-important.”¹² Although the definition of *spirit* and *truth* has seen much debate, the context allows us to draw definite conclusions: 1. worship is not restrained by *physical* considerations, and 2. worship operates in the realm of *truth*: clear knowledge of God derived from his special revelation.¹³ Whether one prays at this place or that makes no difference, but what *does* matter is that God wants those who will worship *his* way from knowledge of him.

Biblical worship requires seeing God for who he is and responding in the way that he desires. The Person of God must be the first stop when exploring worship. His character is revealed

⁸ 1 Cor 10: 31 “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” All Scripture verses taken from the *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995) unless otherwise noted.

⁹ Paul writes to the Colossians that everything that is done in word or deed must be done in the name of Jesus Christ. His name and glory is the motivation for all our actions and especially our worship.

¹⁰ Jerusalem nor Mount Gerizim

¹¹ John 4:23-24

¹² William Hendriksen. *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to John*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1976), p. 166.

¹³ Ibid. p. 167. Hendriksen sees Jesus comment about the Samaritans worshipping what they do not know gives us a better understanding of the *truth* he is talking about.

through his Word and is often divided into communicable attributes that we are commanded to imitate and incommunicable attributes that are not shared by humans. But these attributes cannot be understood independently, says Erik Thoennes, like petals on a flower to be plucked and viewed in isolation. Rather, “the unity of God requires [us] to pursue a holistic understanding of Him...He never expresses certain attributes at the expense of others.”¹⁴ God is worthy of worship because of *who* he is. The character of God is formed by the unity of His holiness, independence, immutability, eternity, omnipresence, spirituality, omniscience, wisdom, truthfulness, goodness, love, mercy, peace, righteousness, jealousy, wrath, beauty, and glory. His full perfectness cannot be described with words, for although His is knowable, He is incomprehensible.¹⁵

God’s attributes have surrounded his marvelous works throughout eternity.¹⁶ As the Creator, Savior, Sustainer, Keeper, Comforter, Sovereign, and Ultimate Judge, God demands our worship. The elders fall down before the Lamb in Revelation 4:10-11 and worship.¹⁷ They cry out that Christ is worthy to receive glory and honor and power because He created all things, and for His pleasure they are and were created. Then elders “cast their crowns before Him” and proved the conviction that they owed all their honors to Christ.¹⁸ This awesome picture of Christ’s throne with throngs of creatures and men shouting in worship to Him reveals the worth of God. Worship is our response to a worthy God.

¹⁴ Erik Thoennes, *ESV Study Bible: Biblical Doctrine* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), p. 2513.

¹⁵ David Peterson, *Engaging with God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 285. David Peterson further emphasizes the necessity of the conviction that God manifested himself in the person of Christ. Christ made a new relationship with God possible through his death, resurrection, ascension, and subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is through the ministry of the Son and Spirit that the Father obtains true worshippers. Thus, says Peterson, “the doctrine of the Trinity lies at the heart of a truly Christian theology of worship. Each person in the Godhead plays a significant role in establishing the worship appropriate to the new covenant era.

¹⁶ In John’s vision of the future, he recounts seeing a vast crowd composed of those who had opposed the beast. Revelation 15:3-4 They sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and marvelous are Your *works*, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your *ways*, King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For all the nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.

¹⁷ Rev 4:10-11

¹⁸ The Pulpit Commentary: Revelation, ed. H. D. M. Spence-Jones (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2004), p. 162.

God commands his people to worship him, and with those commands come very specific guidelines. The worshipper must worship God alone;¹⁹ the worshipper must come with purity in God's way;²⁰ and the worshipper must come offering his whole being.²¹ Peterson explains the opening of twelfth chapter of Romans uses the aorist tense of *paristanai* to indicate the decisiveness required in presenting ourselves to God, who requires the giving of the *entire* being. "The life that is truly acceptable to God is the life consecrated to him through *self-abandonment* to the saving work of Jesus Christ."²² What we *do* will not automate acceptable worship, but who we are because of what we believe. Worship flows from the heart, which must come to God as God demands: in spirit and truth.²³

Worship is possible and commanded for the New Testament believer through obedience to the commands of God. These commands are aimed at the "*place*" worship happens, the heart.

¹⁹ Exo 20:3-5 Worship must be an allegiance to God. He leaves absolutely no room for any other gods, and we want to be on *his* side. In Robert Webber's book on Worship, he emphasizes our allegiance to our King. To understand worship, one must understand that worship expresses a transcendent allegiance, expressed in prayer: "Our Father in heaven." In our allegiance to Jesus Christ, we celebrate His victory over sin and death because of His work on the cross. Since Christ has risen and now reigns above, we worship in anticipation of His final judgment of all sin, when He will return to completely vanquish all evil. We fight on, however, a war against this world, and also against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Our worship declares our allegiance to Christ and thereby invites the affliction of the enemy. Robert Webber, *Worship Old and New* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Co., 1982), p. 187.

²⁰ God's displeasure with Hophni and Phineas eventually brought their death. 1 Sam 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the LORD. God also demands worship His way. In the case of Aaron's sons who offered strange fire before the Lord, God immediately consumed them because of their wicked hearts. God requires holy living from his worshippers. 2 Corinthians 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

²¹ Rom 12:1

²² Peterson, p. 178.

²³ Peterson, p. 283. Throughout the Bible, acceptable worship means approaching or engaging with God on the terms that he proposes and in the manner he makes possible. It involves honouring, serving and respecting him, abandoning any loyalty or devotion that hinders an exclusive relationship with him...Although some of Scripture's terms for worship may refer to specific gestures of homage...worship is more fundamentally faith expressing itself in obedience and adoration...it is shown to be a personal and moral fellowship with God relevant to every sphere of life.

When the knowledge of God reaches the heart, and that individual realizes how worthy God is of all glory, he cannot help but respond in genuine worship.

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Philosophy of Success

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In a Christian world where worship styles and church sizes differ more than Jelly Belly varieties,²⁴ one is faced with some questions. Which churches are 'doing church' right? Which churches are not? Which churches are truly being successful? How can you tell? For the mega-church movement success is often associated with size, and marketing becomes the most vital issue to growth. The Bible, however, has numerous things to say about what makes a successful church and how

Success is the natural goal of any ministry, but the definition of their success must be taken from Scripture. The biblical definition of ecclesiastical success must be the accomplishment of the goals set up by God for the church. Paul makes it very clear that the church is to gather together to practice the ordinances, particularly the Lord's Table and baptism. In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul is appalled that the church is gathering together for gluttonous dinners instead of meeting for the edification of communion.²⁵ There was no unity, but only selfishness.

Purposes for the assembly of the believers is also for edification²⁶ and the use of one's gifts.²⁷ Paul argues that God has gifted leaders in the church for a very specific purpose: to equip the saints for the work of service to the building up of Christ's body. This exalts the

²⁴ Jelly Belly, a producer of more than 34 million pounds of candy yearly, makes 50 official flavors with special seasonal additions. They currently produce 10 sour beans, 20 BeanBoozled flavors, 6 Soda Pop flavors, 20 Sweet Rocks, 12 Sugar-free beans, 4 flavors of Sports beans (which contain electrolytes, caffeine, carbs, and vitamins B and C), 2 Extreme Sports beans (w/ 50 mg of caffeine), 5 Cold-Stone beans, (totaling 129) and a variety of non-jelly bean products ranging from super-hot gummy bears to chocolate candies similar to M&M's.

Jelly Belly Candy Company. Jelly Belly Flavor Guides.
http://www.jellybelly.com/fun_stuff/flavor_guides.aspx (accessed January 15, 2009).

²⁵ 1 Cor 11:20-22 "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you." All Scripture is taken from the *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995), unless otherwise noted.

²⁶ 1 Cor 14:26 "When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification." Eph 5:19-20 and Col 3:16-17 speak of teaching and admonishing one another in psalms hymns and spiritual songs always with thanks and worship to God the Father.

²⁷ In Eph 4:11-16 Paul is arguing that God has gifted leaders in the church.

ministry of preaching to the church.²⁸ A successful church will be a church that is fulfilling the mission given of worship through the ordinances, encouragement, and preaching. The marketing strategy of this world, however, has so infiltrated our view of church that success is measured differently.

Bill Hybels, the pastor of the model mega church in America, saw the marketing strategy of the world to be so effective that he led the original survey research team to discover how to market Christianity.²⁹ He actually hired the leading advocate of the evangelical use of marketing, George Barna, to do a massive survey of Willow Creek.³⁰ Barna is quoted as saying, “My contention, based on careful study of data and the activities of American churches, is that the major problem plaguing the Church is its failure to embrace a marketing orientation in what has become a marketing-driven environment.³¹” Could it be that this market-driven environment has defined success for us? Any business’s success demands results, whether financially or numerically, but the growth of a church numerically does not mean that it is a successful church. In Paul’s second letter to Timothy, he warns him of the coming false teachers who will bring all sorts of ‘new ideas’ into the church. “Endure hardship...fulfill your ministry.” “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away from the truth.³²” Paul almost seems to be describing the church movement of today where marketing has leaked into the church and the sound doctrine that would confront, challenge, and rebuke is set aside for more ‘relevant’ teaching. The success of a church is not based on “great numbers” but instead on the commitment to God’s Word in all aspects of life. If the church is designed to accommodate pagans week after week,³³ is the purpose truly being accomplished?

The importance of church membership is a hot topic, especially for mega churches that don’t want to offend anybody. Lester Heinze gives some of the benefits of church membership.

²⁸ John Calvin, *Commentary on Galatians and Ephesian*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1999), p. 190. When speaking of the production of the true and complete perfection of the church, Calvin states that “No language more highly commendatory of the ministry of the word could have been employed, than to ascribe to it this effect.”

²⁹ G. A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services: Evaluating a New Way of Doing Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), p. 66.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³¹ George Barna, *Marketing the Church: What They Never Taught You about Church Growth* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1988), p 23. Barna, while he was attending Willow Creek, had his eyes opened to the meaning of evangelism and church growth. If he had his way, there would be 100,000 Willow Creek Churches in this country, p. 7-8.

³² 2 Tim 4:5

³³ Pritchard, p. 24. Willow Creek’s ultimate goal for the “unchurched Harry” is his response to the Gospel, but the high-jacking of the purpose of church for the sake of evangelism seems to contradict the Scriptural model.

Membership of a church identifies persons as genuine believers.³⁴ Membership seeks to provide a spiritual family to support and encourage the believer's walk. It is the only way to discover and use their gifts in ministry. It also provides spiritual protection and accountability. To succeed as a church by accomplishing the commands that God has given, church membership is an excellent way to obey by worshiping, fellowshiping, being disciplined and discipling, being active in ministry, and evangelizing the lost.³⁵

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³⁴ Lester Heinze, *Building a Balanced Church*, PhD Dissertation (Dunbar, WI: Northland Baptist Bible College, 1997), p. 15.

³⁵ Heinze, p. 15.

Philosophy of Separation

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In a day where preaching against things like dancing, going to movies, and rock music has gone out of fashion,³⁶ has the issue of separation also become a matter of opinion? So many Christians see this issue as unimportant or unnecessary. Although times have definitely changed from when the apostles were walking the earth and when Moses was leading the people of Israel out of Egypt, throughout these ages God has shown his people that they must be separate from evil.

God's character requires the believer to be separate. He is holy and is not defiled by any 'darkness' or sin.³⁷ The Bible speaks often about God's holiness and says that there is *none* like God.³⁸ The holiness of God can be understood in two senses. 1. God is holy in the more general sense of separation from all that is human and earthly. It implies the absoluteness, majesty, and awfulness of the Creator in His distinction from the creature. In this sense, holiness could be used as an equivalent general term for "Godhead," and the adjective "holy" is almost synonymous with "Divine."³⁹ 2. God also maintains holiness of character in the ethical sense. He is totally separate from sin and therefore calls all mankind to be ethically holy as well.⁴⁰ For a believer to be holy, he must engage in separation from evil. Walvoord explains that though absolute holiness can never be achieved in this life, all areas of life should be in the process of becoming completely conformed to God's perfect and holy will. Holiness is the quality that sets the Lord apart from all others and we ought to follow him.⁴¹

Before the author of Hebrews described the activities of our Christ, he defined our Savior's character: holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. The holiness of God the Father and God the Son is revealed throughout the Scriptures, but for

³⁶ David Whitcomb, *True Worship*. (Greenville: Ambassador Emerald Intl., 2004), p. 47.

³⁷ 1 John 1:5; Exo 26:33 In the plans for the tabernacle, God's detailed numerous elements to show separation. The Holy of Holies was even *separated* from the rest of the temple by a thick elaborate curtain. All Scripture verses taken from the *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995) unless otherwise noted.

³⁸ Ps 77:13; 2 Sam 7:22 "For this reason You are great, O Lord GOD; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You."

³⁹ James Orr, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia: holiness*. (Chicago: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939).

⁴⁰ Lev 11: 44 "For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy." The law of Moses draws extreme lines of separation from the surrounding cultures in areas of worship, food, social activity and dress. 1 Peter 1:16 reiterates the practice of holy living for the NT believer. Ernest Pickering highlights two main examples of God's emphasis on separation. He points to the consistent fury of God's wrath against pagan Israel and to the apostles' emphasis on sound doctrine in 1 Corinthians 2:9-12. Ernest Pickering, *Biblical Separation* (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1979), p. 182.

⁴¹ John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985), p. 861.

the third Member of the Trinity, his very name reveals his character.⁴² Since the character of our God is holy, separation from sin becomes an automatic for those who seek his righteousness.

For the New Testament believer, the Word explains three general areas of separation: a believer who refuses to separate from false teaching, this evil world, and disobedient brothers. The application of these categories, however, varies greatly among theologians. Ernest Pickering notes that the struggle for purity of doctrine and practice will be fought by imperfect people until Christ returns. Although there are 'good men' on different sides, and sometimes separatists are accused of being reactionary or overzealous persons with unrealistic aims, separatism rests on clear scriptural mandates.⁴³

The commands from God to be separate from the world abound. We are commanded not to love the world in 1 John 2:15 and to shine as lights in a dark world in Matthew 5:14.⁴⁴ We have also been chosen out of the world that now hates us.⁴⁵ Paul even describes the relationship to the world as being crucified to the world and the world to him.⁴⁶ But one of the strongest passages on separation is found in 2 Corinthians 6 where Paul elaborates on the importance of separating from unbelievers.⁴⁷ When believers are disobedient, they are to receive the same treatment⁴⁸ only with the goal of this separation is restoration.⁴⁹

When considering the areas of life that require separation, worship should be on the top of the list. Our method of worship must follow the clear mandates in Scripture to be separate. Mark Whitcomb asks, "What causes people to change their mode of worship?"⁵⁰ As he

⁴² The Holy Spirit, first mentioned in Genesis 1:2, is referred to directly as the *Holy Spirit* only 3x in the Old Testament compared to the almost 100x in the New.

⁴³ Pickering, pgs. 10, 159-161. He defines apostasy as a serious, pervasively progressive, irremediable evil that awaits judgment.

⁴⁴ Phil 2:15 "So that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you *appear as lights* in the world." The separation of light (holy) and darkness (evil) is very clear in scripture.

⁴⁵ John 15:19

⁴⁶ Gal 6:14; Timothy George, vol. 30, *Galatians*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 437. "To be crucified to the world, then, means to walk in the light, to bear the fruit of the Spirit, and to live in the freedom with which Christ has set us free." Anyone who is freed from the bondage of something would never choose to join again in communion.

⁴⁷ 2 Cor 6:14-15, 17a "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? 'Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,' says the Lord."

⁴⁸ Matt 18:15-20 Although the arguments against separation usually include the New Testament emphasis on love, separation must be practiced to allow God to restore them.

⁴⁹ Gal 6:1

⁵⁰ Whitcomb, p. 48.

compares the Hebrew people after they left Egypt with the current cultures of today, he finds them “no different than we are today.”⁵¹ We tend to distrust God, but when we seek and know him, we find that he faithfully practices and honors separation.

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⁵¹ Whitcomb, p. 48.

Philosophy of Leadership

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Leadership is the necessary element for the success of any group of people. "Everything rises and falls on leadership."⁵² This colloquial phrase points to the incredible influence people have on the actions and thought process of other people. John C. Maxwell describes leadership as influence, which occurs at every level of life.⁵³ If influence is the key to good leadership, the right kind of influence will be vitally important to every leader. Each leader must judge his quality of influence from the Scriptures, which are far from silent in regard to the issue of leadership. The church is in need of good leaders.⁵⁴ Good leaders are men who reflect the humility of Christ through character bound by a tenacious commitment to the Word.

Jesus speaks often to the disciples in regard to the desire to be great. Instead of telling them that they should not want to be great, he redefines greatness and commands them to strive for it. One cannot avoid his model of true leadership in Matthew's Gospel. He says, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."⁵⁵ Servant leadership is the most important element of influence. Christ's words prescribe that anyone who wants great influence over people, that person must not think like a typical ruler or lord, but like a slave. Great leadership in the mind of Christ was great service.

Three principles can be extracted from the life of Christ about the mindset of a leader: Be a minister, wash dirty feet, and have the mind of Christ.⁵⁶ Christ was the greatest example of

⁵² Maxwell, John C. *The 360 Degree Leader*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005, p 269. Maxwell's motto is 'everything rises and falls on leadership.' He even uses this phrase four times in this 300 pg book.

⁵³ *ibid*, p 73.

⁵⁴ Dever, Mark. *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004, p 219. Dever lists leadership as something Christianity has always recognized the need for in society, the home, and the church. It is particularly important, given the increasingly poor models of authority we seem to have around us today (p 220).

⁵⁵ All excerpts taken from the *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995) unless otherwise noted.

⁵⁶ Collier, Ken, and Matt Williams. *Biblical Leadership*. Greenville: Ambassador Pub., 2004, p 52-55. Williams hones in on the idea that leadership is not how many serve you, but how many you serve. He also expounds on the idea that leadership is really not about you, but about God. Leadership, he says, is being excited about seeing the Master successful in the lives of other people. The value of God's success in a life helps one understand the purpose and worth of leadership.

servant leadership. His ministering attitude evidences itself in his continual compassion for and ministry to the enormous crowds that followed him. More than fourteen times in the gospels, Christ is associated directly with having compassion on others immediately preceding an act of mercy. In the example of the feeding of the 5,000 men from Matthew 14, Jesus' compassion for their souls drove him to preach,⁵⁷ and his compassion for their needs caused him to heal their sick and satisfy their hunger.

Christ's final moments with his disciples before his death include his washing their feet. Christ says, as I have done, so you also ought to wash one another's feet.⁵⁸ Touching feet was regarded as menial slave work and as such was primarily an assignment given to Gentile slaves and women.⁵⁹ Yet Jesus' command was much fuller than just a filthy activity, it was a command to think like a servant.

Christ's humility, as described by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians, creates an excellent model of true leadership. Paul however, does not focus on the actions of Christ but rather on his mindset. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ."⁶⁰ This mindset included the three main ideas of humility: being selfless, demanding no reputation, and being obedient no matter what it costs. His obedience to death was his greatest action of servant leadership, his willingness to lay his life down for the sake of others. The mindset of a servant is necessary for biblical leadership, but having a mindset of a servant doesn't necessarily qualify you for a leadership position.

There are several qualifications given for the church leadership by Paul in his letters to Timothy and Titus. Many would say a woman would be able to fulfill all of these responsibilities.⁶¹ Paul, however, doesn't only include qualifications for a pastor; he details the responsibilities of the women of the church in 1 Timothy 2:9-15, which are incompatible with being a pastor. The woman is not to be in a position of leadership over a man. David Whitaker argues that this restriction is not due to competency but is in place because of the established order from the beginning.⁶² The order places the woman in subjection to a man, for "it was Adam who was first

⁵⁷ Mark 6:34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

⁵⁸ John 13:14

⁵⁹ Gerald L. Borchert, vol. 25B, *John 12-21, The New American Commentary*, New International Version (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2002), p 79.

⁶⁰ Phil 2:5 KJV

⁶¹ The woman would obviously be the wife of one husband.

⁶² Whitaker, David. *The Development of a Disciplemaking Church*. PhD Dissertation, Dunbar: NBBC, 2000, p 37.

created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman.⁶³ This is not to say that women should not be given any responsibility in the church, for it is clear that God has gifted all the saints for a special place in ministry.⁶⁴ God has, however, built a “supracultural” principle in the world.⁶⁵ It incorporates every level: the home, church, government, and even the Trinity. In each area, a central leader is placed by God to lead the others, a leader that ought to be a man who reflects the servant mindset of Christ.

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⁶³ 1 Tim 2:13-14a

⁶⁴ Rom 12:6-8

⁶⁵ Whitaker, p 37.

Philosophy of Education

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Every believer will argue that teaching children about God is important.⁶⁶ Few, however, will agree upon the methodology of those lessons. Since major legal decisions were made in the early sixties forcing the Bible and prayer from having a part in tax-supported schools, the gap between public and Christian schools has grown wider every year.⁶⁷ Some believers may hail Christian schools as the answer to the spirit darkness of the next generation, but where is God's focus of education? Does He prescribe a method? a purpose? How can this be accomplished? These questions are answered by God's treatment of the nation of Israel and his prescriptions to His people throughout the Scriptures.

Three of the most vital elements of Christian education are the motivation for education, the importance of home-education, and the philosophy of discipleship. The children of Israel knew well the importance of home education because of the very specific instructions they were given by God. "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up."⁶⁸ Moses reveals the supreme priority God puts on His commandments and works. They should saturate the life so much that they are expressed and applied in every area of speech, thought, and deed. God emphasizes the impact on the children. The word for diligently, *shanan* means "to whet, or sharpen." Driver explains it further, "to prick in, to inculcate, to impress."⁶⁹

The responsibility of introducing children to the Lord and teaching His commandments falls upon the parents. Their motivation for 'diligent teaching,' however, does not lie in the commandments themselves, but lies rather in the heart of an individual. The motivation for Christian education must be one's love of God.⁷⁰ Loving God with all the heart, soul and

⁶⁶ John Cionca, *Solving Church Education's Ten Toughest Problems* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990), p. 47.

⁶⁷Roy Lowrie Jr., *Leadership Handbook of Outreach and Care*, Edited by James D. Berkley (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), p. 429.

⁶⁸ Deut 6:6-7 All Scripture verses taken from the *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update* (LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995) unless otherwise noted.

⁶⁹ S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2006), p. 92.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 91. The love of God must consume the individual in heart, soul, and might. Driver indicates that here, is a peculiar emphasis as the fundamental motive of human action. It follows naturally in grateful response to Jehovah's mercies, it involves fear and service, and conscientious observance to all of God's commands. It appears as the most inward and comprehensive of all religious duties, the chief commandment of all (Mk 12:30). An idea that

strength will motivate one's actions and teaching, and compel one to diligently teach his children.

God's clear prescription for His people was that the teaching of the next generation is not only a good idea but an absolute necessity. In Psalm 78, Asaph recounts Israel's history to teach his readers that they cannot conceal the things they have been told from their fathers; but rather they must tell the generations to come about the praises, strength and wondrous works of the Lord. Generation after generation must be told so "that the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, that they may rise and tell them to their children."⁷¹ The purpose for this spiritual education is laid out in the following verse, that they should put their confidence in God and not forget his works, but keep his commandments.⁷² Asaph's history lesson describes leader after leader who did not believe God nor were they faithful to Him. To avoid the same attitude about God, the educator must teach *the heart* of the next generation by turning it away from wickedness toward the things of God in belief and obedience. This kind of teaching maintains the necessary difference from other kinds of teaching: discipleship.

Collins explores discipleship through the need for a change of heart. He explains that the process of education for obedience does not bring benefits in any "automatic" way. Each member must take the provisions of the covenant as his own, embrace God's grace, set their hope in God, and keep his commandments. Sadly, far too many generations of Israelites, received the covenant as an "external arrangement" but did not embrace it from their hearts; thus they were "stubborn and rebellious," their heart was not steadfast, and their spirit was not faithful to God.⁷³

The core of discipleship is the agreement of the heart with the law of God. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he makes it clear that we are to walk as Christ walked,⁷⁴ renewed in the spirit of our mind.⁷⁵ Paul draws the distinction between the way we should walk and the way Gentiles walk in ignorance and hardness of heart. To avoid this evil walk, God gave some leaders to educate⁷⁶ us against this heart condition by equipping us until we mature to the fullness of Christ.⁷⁷ The actions of this "new man" are detailed throughout the book, but Paul brings those actions back

occurs almost twenty times in Scripture is strengthened here by the addition of *and with all thy force*.

⁷¹ Ps 78:6

⁷² Asaph warns his readers so that they would not mimic their fathers who were stubborn and rebellious (Deuteronomy 78:8).

⁷³ C. John Collins, *ESV Study Bible: Psalms* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), p. 1033.

⁷⁴ Eph 5:2

⁷⁵ Eph 4:23

⁷⁶An education of the mind/spirit is required. Paul references this when he tells us not to be deceived (5:6) or foolish (5:17).

⁷⁷ Eph 4:11-14

to the main focus of obedience. “Not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.”⁷⁸ True obedience to God requires love for God.

Teaching must include not only the ‘practical’ application, but must begin with the knowledge of the truth, an absolute necessity to belief. The knowledge of God always precedes faith,⁷⁹ and must be taught. Paul reminds Timothy that from childhood Timothy *knew* the sacred writings, and they enabled him to have the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.⁸⁰ Paul immediately continues to exhort Timothy that all he knew and had learned (Scripture) is given not just for knowledge, but for change.⁸¹ This change must be rooted in a change of heart as Paul says to Timothy in the previous letter. “The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”⁸²

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⁷⁸ Eph 6:6

⁷⁹ Rom 10:14, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?” Paul is explaining how pagans did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God because they did not know Him (10:3).

⁸⁰ 1 Tim 3:15

⁸¹ 2 Tim 3:16-17, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

⁸² 1 Tim 1:5

2014 Questions For Cambodia Survey Trip

General

1. What does the average day look like for you?
2. What kind of impact has Cambodia made on your wife/family?
3. What is your opinion of the current state of sending American missionaries?
4. Has there been an experience on the field that has impacted the way you do ministry or the direction you are going to pursue there?
5. What does your weekly worship look like?

EMU Team

6. What does the EMU Cambodian teamwork look like and how does it work together?
7. What is the primary mission of the team?
8. What is the reputation of EMU in Cambodia?
9. What kind of relationships do you have with the local/regional governing authorities? Is making these relationships a priority for you?
10. Would we be advised/expected to be sent by EMU?
11. Can you describe the unique personality of the team and what persons would make the team even better?
12. What is the 5-10 year plan of the team?
13. With the amount of young families as the main component if the team, what impact would another one have to the chemistry?
14. What does the team do for schooling? High school?
15. In the book publishing JD is working though, are there links in the chain that would be helpful to have living in Cambodia?

Philosophy/Theology

16. Musically, how has the team interacted with the culture and how much of an impact do you hope to make?
17. What are some of the weaknesses, Socially, Financially, Spiritually, Musically, Culturally?
18. What are your views on evangelism methodology?
19. What is your view of sanctification?
20. What is your view of baptism and how strongly do you hold to these views?

The Country/Language

21. What does the average Cambodian family look like?
22. What kind of hospital facilities should we expect?
23. Would you recommend travelling outside of Cambodia for birthing children, and does that choice carry cultural stigmas about Americans?
24. Are Americans appreciated and welcomed by Cambodians?
25. Is the American superiority complex known to them?
26. What are the difficulties from culture shock? Tempo of life? Relationship expectations? Food?

27. What economic struggles do the people have in Ratanakiri? How does the typical American respond to them? How has the team handled them?
28. What is the average learning time to get around the country in Khmer?
29. What will it take for a young couple to stay in Cambodia term after term?
30. Is the 4 year term a workable model for Cambodia?

Financial/Support

31. What is the value of having fewer (~6) supporting churches instead of ~50 understanding the benefits of losing 1/50th support vs 1/6, but being able to spend quality time with each supporting church while on deputation particularly with the regular change in church members?
32. What thoughts do you have on being bi-vocational? I am considering expanding our embroidery business that can be done completely online and would require several flexible hours a week to maintain and expand.
33. I've heard of many missionaries today raising a large portion of their support from individuals, what do you see as the pros/cons?
34. What kind of accountability comes from the supporting churches and what ways can churches be encouraged to think differently?
35. How would you describe the ideal relationship between you and your supporting churches?
36. Do you pay Cambodian taxes on missions support?
37. What is the expected income level for the first term? (\$4600?)
38. "Would you be willing to tell us plainly that you do not think it is a good thing for us to join you? Perhaps after we return to the States and have prayed about it for several weeks, would you be willing to give us a straightforward answer even if it might contradict our zeal? We want you to WANT us to come, not just accept us!"
39. Is there any pizza?