

Introduction: Bethel Church, Please Read for Context

As part of the interview process, James was asked to answer the following questions:

1. List 5 theological “non-negotiables” – 5 truths that you would not be willing to compromise.
2. List five “strongly held opinions” – though believing these would not be a requirement to become a child of God and even though others in the kingdom disagree, these five interpretations are strongly supported by your understanding of the Scripture.
3. List five preferences from your philosophy of ministry. There are other ways to do things, of course, but you’ve come to believe that these principles are a productive, good way to do things.

Below are James’ answers to these questions.

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5 “non-negotiable truths”

1. Trinity: The doctrine of the Trinity is critical to our faith and expresses our understanding of God as One, eternally existing as Father, Son and Spirit...each distinct persons and all one essence, each one fully Deity, undivided.
2. Jesus Christ: Jesus is fully God and fully man, yet a distinct person. Born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and paid our sin debt on the cross...resurrecting on the 3rd day.
3. Second Coming: At an appointed time, which no one knows, Jesus Christ is returning to earth to establish His Kingdom; bringing judgement and His reign
4. Salvation: Jesus is the only hope for salvation; it cannot be earned through any works or effort on the part of man, and only comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Sin sets us apart from God; therefore, we must believe that God sent His Son into the world, lived a sinless life, and his death on the cross atoned for our sins and made salvation possible; our required response is repentance of sin through confession, belief and faith in what Jesus did on our behalf, and following Him as a disciple.
5. Scripture: The whole of scripture, the Bible, is inerrant and 100% sufficient for both the faith and practice of the Christian life.

5 “strongly held principles”

1. Discipleship is at the heart of our missional calling and is our biblical mandate
2. The Church is critical to the life of a believer and essential for maturity in faith
3. Every believer is gifted and called to serve in ministry through the local church
4. Community and Small Group Life creates belonging and necessary Fellowship
5. Missions and evangelism is connected to the identity of the church not just a program

5 “principles in how we do ministry”

- 1. Relational Ministry:** We, as the church, provide a loving, redemptive community to help deepen relationships, leading us to family, discipleship, and small group fellowships where authentic spiritual growth may occur.
 - My leadership places relationship above programming and strives to connect people into biblical community.
 - Every ministry exists to connect people into relationship with others and with God.
 - Our Staff, consisting of loyal, honorable, DiscipleMaking servants that are passionate about helping Christians deepen their walk with the Lord, journey with other believers, and recognize and equip our church for her calling & purpose
- 2. Intentional Ministry:** I believe in developing the giftedness and leadership of a team that focuses on a common mission that cherishes people of all ages, backgrounds, and recognizes that discipleship is the heart of our calling.
 - We should be intentional in planning, resourcing, equipping, and implementing multi-generational worship and ministries of excellence, that lay a foundation of faith and community; building the church to full maturity.
 - I believe in empowering Staff, Lay Leaders and Ministry Teams to plan intentional ministries that strive to help believers connect in relationships, grow in their giftedness, and live out their faith where they work, live and play.
- 3. Strategic Ministry:** The local church is God's strategic weapon to bring hope to the world; by empowering this, and the next generation, of believers to live out their faith on mission in the world around them, we are faithful to our calling.
 - I love strategy; designing synergistic vision, goals, and targeted ministry planning that brings out the best in our team and leads our community towards reaching, teaching, and serving—the result being life-change.
- 4. On Mission:** Mission is the identity of the church, not simply a program.
 - Our aim is to grow and disciple Christians, sending them into, both local and global, communities to live out their faith, share their faith, serve, and cultivate relationships.
- 5. Creativity:** I believe we are made in the image of God, and God, as Creator, is the most creative Being in the universe. We want to encourage an environment that releases our community to be innovative using their spiritual gifts and talents to lead and serve in ministries that make an impact.
 - We capture this creativity through the giftedness of the church, using it to connect to others through technology, artistic expression in worship, creative programming in ministry, facilities, marketing and promotions.