

CURRICULUM VITAE

Reverend Mark L. Booker

EDUCATION

- 2003 to 2004 **University of Oxford**, Oxford, England
Master of Studies, Theology, with Distinction
Thesis: "The Use of the Fear of the Lord in Paul and the Background of the Jewish Wisdom Tradition"
- 2001 to 2003 **University of Oxford**, Oxford, England
Master of Arts, Theology, First Class
Award: Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar, \$25,000, 2001-2002
- 1994 to 1998 **Rhodes College**, Memphis, Tennessee
Bachelor of Arts, Economics, *magna cum laude*
Minors: Philosophy, Math
Award: Bellingrath Scholar, Full Tuition, Room & Board for 4 years

MINISTRY AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2009 – present
Boston, MA **Rector and Co-Church Planter, Church of the Cross**

Planted and currently lead an Anglican congregation in the heart of Boston. Developed a 10-month discipleship cohort to equip church members with biblical knowledge and the ability to engage sensitive cultural issues. Developed a 1-year catechesis program to train church attenders in the foundations of the Christian faith. Lead monthly meetings of our Parish Council and monthly gatherings of a larger group of ministry leaders. For the past two years, have been leading the church in a ministry of racial reconciliation. Led a 10-person discussion group for senior pastors in Boston in 2014-2015 on the issue of sexuality. Member of the Greater Things for Greater Boston Steering Committee. Advisory Board Member for Young Life Boston. Monthly teacher at the Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study. Regular chapel speaker at Park Street School.
- 2016 to 2019 **Regional Missional Strategy Leader, Diocese of Christ Our Hope Boston, MA** Oversee the mission strategy of the New England / New York region of our diocese. Work with the bishop and other pastors to develop strategy for using diocesan funds for church planting and church health/expansion in our region.
- 2007 to 2011 **Network Leader, Northeast Network, Anglican Mission** Northeast United States Under the Bishop's oversight, exercised administrative and pastoral leadership over the churches in this network. Served on leadership council at national level of Anglican Mission. Managed and oversaw executive team of clergy that led the network.
- 2005 to 2009 **Assistant Pastor, The Church of the Resurrection Washington, DC**
Responsibilities included general pastoral duties, regular teaching and preaching, administration of the sacraments, oversight of small groups and ministries of justice and mercy to our city. Designed and co-authored an 18-

STATEMENT OF FAITH

My goal as a follower of Jesus is not to be original but to take my place in the communion of saints, to believe what Christians have always believed about God and his work in the world—as this was taught and lived by Jesus, then the Apostles, and then preserved for us through their Spirit-inspired writings, i.e. Scripture. The Apostles' and Nicene creeds are shorthand, abbreviated, condensed summaries of Scripture that have the consensus of the universal church. They are a biblically-generated tradition that helps us to read and understand Scripture, bringing focus and attention to the key points that Scripture communicates about God and his work. This is who God is: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is what the triune God has done and is doing in Christ and by the Spirit: creating, ruling, redeeming, and renewing (re-creating) the world. I like to think of creeds as a highlight reel. They hit the high points but they themselves point to and derive from the broader and more complete narrative (Scripture) which they are summarizing.

I understand the creeds to be self-involving. To say, "I believe," is to assent to the truths that the creed communicates about God and his work. But it's more than that. To say, "I believe," involves yielding to and trusting in this God and his work. His story is my story. My life belongs to him and I trust him with my past, my present, and my future. And, "I believe," includes dimensions of allegiance and obedience. This God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is my God. Jesus is my lord, and that means I seek to follow him and to live consistently with his teachings and his redemptive work in the world. The creeds were never meant to be dry compilations of truths about God. They were intended to be self-involving statements of faith, a kind of pledge of allegiance to God and his kingdom that entails trust and ongoing participation in that kingdom.

I offer the following as an articulation of unoriginal but beautiful truths about God and his work that shape my life and the lives of all who confess Jesus as Lord—in the form of a brief commentary on the Apostles' Creed. In short, I affirm trinitarian orthodoxy without qualification as the truth about God that he has revealed to us through the person of his Son and through the God-breathed words of Scripture (2 Tim 3.16). It grieves me when Christians depart from the beauty, depth, and richness of orthodoxy, and it is a particular passion of mine to teach this faith to younger believers that they might be deeply rooted in the word of God, able to withstand the wind and waves constantly crashing around them (Eph 4.14).

I believe in God...

First, there is one God existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28.19, 2 Cor 13.14). That is to say that God is triune. We see this in the structure of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty...in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord...in the Holy Spirit." The three persons of the Trinity are distinct in personality, equal in divinity, and unified in being. The heart of the Christian gospel is that, through Christ and by the Spirit, we are privileged to share in the life of the triune God. The metaphors of adoption and marriage are both used in Scripture to communicate this kind of intimate sharing in God's life.

the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Second, God is the omnipotent Father, the one for whom nothing will be impossible (Gen 18.14, Jer 32.17, Lk 1.37). By his Word, God created matter and God will redeem matter, as first witnessed in the resurrection of Jesus. The gnostic tendencies of the modern church (as experienced in a radical sacred/secular divide or spiritual/physical divide) need to be rejected as sub-Christian understandings of the world. As Abraham Kuyper famously remarked, "There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign overall, does not cry: 'Mine!'"

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

Third, there is one Lord, Jesus, the Messiah, who is fully God and fully man. He is the Word who was with God in the beginning and who was God (Jn 1.1-2). This Word became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn 1.14). He is the sole and perfect mediator between God and humankind (1 Tim 2.5), uniting in his one divine person the divine and human natures for the sake of our redemption and salvation.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.

Fourth, this Jesus actually and truly died on a Roman cross in the days of Pontius Pilate. This death was for us and for sin. Jesus dies as our perfect substitute and he atones for our sins, propitiating the wrath of God (Jn 3.36, 1 Jn 2.2). For all who have faith, who believe in him (Jn 1.12), this death (and resurrection —we cannot separate the two) brings about cleansing (i.e. forgiveness) and liberation, thus dealing with the great problems of sin (guilt and bondage), making us right with God (Gal 2.16), and bringing us from death into life, both present (Eph 2.5) and eternal (Jn 3.16). This saving, redeeming work is by God's grace, a gift we did not earn or deserve in any way (Eph 2.8-9, Gal 2.21).

On the third day he rose again.

Fifth, Jesus rose from the dead. This was a bodily, physical resurrection. I generally refer to the cross as the moment of victory and to the resurrection as the victory lap. The devil and sin were defeated at the cross and the resurrection is "exhibit A" that the cross was, in fact, a victory and not a defeat. Life conquers death. The resurrection is the first act of the new creation, promised long ago (Isa 11 and Isa 65) and to be consummated in the future (Rev 21-22), but that new creation is already upon us (2 Cor 5.17, Gal 6.15).

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Sixth, Jesus ascended into heaven and he is presently (and bodily) seated at the right hand of the Father. The priests of the Old Testament stood to offer sacrifices, but, having finished his sacrificial work, Jesus, our great high priest, sits down (Heb 10.11-12). To be seated also implies royal rule, as a king sits on his throne. And Jesus sits down as the one who is now lord over the cosmos, exalted above all powers and authority (Eph 1.20-23). Peter's first sermon at Pentecost finishes with the affirmation that "God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2.36). Consequently, my shorthand summary of the gospel is "Jesus is Lord" (1 Cor 12.3). As priest, Jesus continues to make intercession for us and he brings us, in himself, into God's presence. As king, Jesus directs and informs his mission by the Holy Spirit, a mission into which every believer is enlisted.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Seventh, Jesus will return to be the judge of the living and the dead. In his first coming, he came to save the world (Jn 3.17). In his second coming, he will come to judge the world (Acts 17.31, 1 Cor 4.5, 2 Cor 5.10). This judgment will expunge from the world all that is evil and wicked and opposed to Jesus's rule, including those who have rejected him. This is an integral and necessary part of the renewal of creation. This will also be a day of vindication for those who have walked faithfully with him by grace through faith (Ps 135.14).

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Eighth, the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father and the risen and ascended Jesus, is an agent of life for the church and for individual believers. The Holy Spirit gives life to "the holy catholic church." To these two adjectives, holy and catholic, the Nicene creed adds "one" and "apostolic." It's this corporate body that the

Spirit creates, animates, and sustains. It is *apostolic* in that it is built on the foundation of the apostles and their Spirit-inspired/enabled witness (Eph 2.19-20). It is *one* in that there is only one body with many members (1 Cor 12) and there is only one head, who is Jesus (Col 1.18). We must strive to maintain this unity (Eph 4.3). It is *holy* in that it is to be like God who is holy (1 Pt 1.15-16) and not like our sin-saturated world (Rom 12.2). The creed speaks of the communion of “saints,” i.e. the *holy* ones. We are, in fact, made holy by Christ’s death, and this holiness is now to be expressed in a life characterized by self-giving love for God and love for neighbor (Mk 12.29-31). It is *catholic* in that Jesus is lord of all and overall, and this church includes people from every tongue, tribe, nation, socio-economic class, etc. (Rev 7.9)

The Spirit also gives life to individuals, enabling us to be born again to a living hope (1 Pt 1.3) by bringing us into Christ, in whom we have the forgiveness of sins (Col 1.14) and empowering us to live in accordance with God’s life-giving will (Rom 8.4). This Spirit gives us life in Christ now and life in Christ forever, on into the future—the resurrection of the body (Phil 3.20-21, not anti-matter!) and the life everlasting. The Spirit is the guarantee of the fullness of life to come (2 Cor 1.22, Eph 1.13-14, Rom 8.23).

On Scripture:

I affirm Park Street Church’s Statement of Faith: “We reverently receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and believe them to be the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.” I also affirm the statement of the Park Street Church bylaws as follows, “We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God and the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice.” Scripture is God’s inspired word, given to us to hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest for the sake of God’s life being formed more deeply in us. Scripture reveals God and his works to us, primarily in the person of Christ, and it reveals God’s will to us, in terms of how we are to live as children of God in response to his grace.

That is to say, Scripture is primarily about gospel (i.e. God) and guidance.

My entire ministry is built upon the conviction that Scripture is the primary means by which the church is strengthened to know, love, follow, and worship the triune God. As Jesus says, quoting Deuteronomy 8.3, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Mt 4.4). The Spirit will never lead the church to affirm anything that contradicts the teaching of Scripture, and, consequently, nothing contrary to Scripture should ever be taught in the church.