

The Ordination Paper

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Introduction

Bawi Tiam, my grandfather, was the first convert in our village. He was baptized by American Baptist Missionary, Dr. C. H. Cope, in 1932 at Chin State, Burma. I am the third generation who succeeded his Faith and belief. So, I think that it was the reason that I grew up in a genuine Christian family.

A couple months before he died in 1974, my grandfather visited to his daughter's house and gave a name for her new born baby. He blessed the baby and dedicated him to the Lord to be a servant of God when he grew up. That baby was me. I believe that my initial calling of God started when my grand Father dedicated me. It was sealed when I passed 10th standard examination in 1992. In the midst of choices like secular university and college ahead of me, I strongly decided to go to seminary without any hesitation.

I was conferred Bachelor of Theology degree after I met the requirement credits at Zomi Theological College (ZTC) in Falam in 1998. As soon as I finished in ZTC, my first posting as a pastor began at Locom village, where my grandfather was born and served the Lord. After two years commitment in Locom village, I continued my theological study at Myanmar Institute of Theology (MIT) in Rangoon. Both ZTC and MIT are accredited and partners of Association for Theological Education of South East Asia (ATESEA). In 2003, I finished M.Div. course from MIT and returned back to the Lord's Ministry until 2008. During 2008-2011, I was a head teacher of Burma Refugee Children Education Centre in Malaysia. I was also a part-time Pastor in Falam Christian Community (FCC) in Malaysia. I arrived US in July 2011 and God appointed me to be a pastor of Falam Baptist Church of Battle Creek until today.

General Comprehension of Christian Doctrine

Doctrine of God

I believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the father is the Creator and the Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. God is sovereign all over and this sovereignty is expressed and realized through Jesus Christ; *All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3; Col 1:16; John 8:59).*

The Person and work of Jesus Christ

According to the above biblical verses, I understand and affirm that Jesus Christ is fully and completely Divine. Moreover, many passages of Scripture demonstrate that Jesus is fully and completely God; In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God.....and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1,14); Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and My God" (John 20:28); ".....Christ who is God over all...." (Rome 9:5; also see II Pet 1:1; Heb 1:3; Titus 2:13). Jesus is fully and completely human. The biblical evidence of Jesus' humanity is strong, showing that he had physical body (Lk 24:39); human mind (Mk 13:32; Lk 2:52); and experienced human temptation (Heb 4:15; Lk 4:1-2). To support the doctrine of humanity of Christ, I would like to cite more biblical portions: "When the set time had fully come, God sent

43 his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might
44 receive adoption to son ship" (Gal 4:4,5); Jesus had a human body that experienced growth
45 (Lk 2:40,52); and physical hunger (Mtt 4:2) ; thirst (John 19:28); tiredness (John 4:6) and death
46 ((Lk 32:46). The passages cited on above are enough for me to belief that Jesus Christ is fully
47 Divine and fully Human.

48 The atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ paves the way of salvation (forgiveness of
49 sin, release guilt and condemnation, reconciliation with God). This eternal life is granted in
50 Grace to all who believes Jesus Christ as their personal savior and Lord. *"God was in Christ*
51 *reconciling the world to Himself"* (II Cor 5:18). This Gospel is the central message of the Bible.

52 **Doctrine of Spirit**

53 I believe that The Holy spirit is co-equal with God the father and God the Son and is the same
54 essence and fully God (Act 5:3-4). He is eternal (Heb 9:14), Omnipotent (Lk 1:35), Omnipresent
55 (Ps 139:7-10), has a will (I Cor 12:11), can speak (Act 8:29) and fills with power (Lk 4:14). The
56 Holy Spirit unveils unbeliever to see the truth of the Gospel that causes Salvation to individual.
57 (Jn 16:8-10). I believe that the Spirit of God is dwelt in a true believer (I Cor 3:16; 6:19; Eph
58 2:22). When the believer lives in the power of the Spirit, he/she produces the fruit of the Holy
59 Spirit:- love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-
60 control. (Gal 5:21).

61 **The Authority of Scripture**

62 I belief that the Bible, composed of 66 books, Old and New Testament, is the Divinely inspired
63 Word of God (II Tim 3:16) and the writers were inspired, moved by the Holy Spirit (I Pet 1:21). It
64 is trustworthy for faith and practice. The Bible is the final authority and trust worthy for faith
65 and practice. It is to be interpreted responsibly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the
66 community of faith. The primary purpose of the Bible is to point to the Christ, the living word
67 of the Church. The Bible is useful as a guide to salvation through faith in Christ, and sufficient
68 for doctrine, correction, moral and ethical instruction (II Tim 3:15-17).

69 **The Doctrine of Humanity and Sin**

70 Human were not evolved. The Bible is clear that God created both male and female in His own
71 image (Gen 1:26-27). Both share together a common, equal humanity, equal personhood and
72 equal dignity, equal respect for one another. Both were shaped and formed and made by God
73 and totally depend upon Him. So, God is the Creator and Owner of us and requires our
74 obedience to Him. We are created and made to bring glory to God and to acknowledge Him as
75 our source of Provider by obeying, loyal and worshipping Him in our daily life. As our bodies,
76 souls and minds are created by God and it is to be used for the purposes that God intended in
77 creating us.

78 Sin is the breaking, or transgression of God's law (I John 3:4). It is also disobedience or rebellion
79 against God (Deut 9:7), It separates us from God. In the beginning humans were innocent of sin.
80 But as a result of Adam's fall, sin entered into the world (Romans 5:12; I Cor 15:22; Ps 51:5).
81 Adam, the head or root of the human race, caused every man after him to be born into a sinful
82 state or fallen condition. All human have adopted this sin nature through Adam's original act of
83 disobedience. Every sin and act of rebellion leads to condemnation and eternal death (Romans
84 6:23).

85 **The Nature of Gospel and Salvation**

86 Gospel is the message of the "Good News" of salvation, the word of the truth offered to
87 mankind by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. In short, the Gospel
88 is the sum total of the saving truth as God has communicated it to lost humanity and is revealed
89 in the person of His Son and in the Holy Scriptures.

90 Salvation happens when we admit that we are sinners and confess our sins before God, and
91 repent and turn from those sins. Salvation is accepting that Jesus Christ came to our earth in
92 the flesh to die on the cross for all of our sins, and He rose from the dead on the third day and
93 accepting Him as personal Lord and savior. This salvation is a free gift by God for those who
94 believe in Jesus' death and resurrection. The Bible tells us that the good works will not get us
95 into salvation but by grace through faith (Eph 2:8).

96 **The Christian Hope: The Meaning of Death and Eternal Life**

97 Christian hope is "confident expectation". Hope is a firm assurance regarding things that are
98 unclear and unknown (Romans 8:24-25; Heb 11:1). It is the future hope of resurrection of the
99 dead (Acts 23:6) and hope of eternal life (Titus 3:5-7). The certainty of this blessed future is
100 guaranteed through the indwelling of the Spirit, Christ in us (Gal 1:27), and in the resurrection
101 of Christ (Acts 2:26).

102 The Bible says that "Whenever Christ, who is your life, should be revealed, at that time you also
103 will be revealed with him in glory." (Col 3:4). This verse tells us that when Jesus Christ should be
104 revealed and appear on the last day, we will appear with him in glory. We have hope that Jesus
105 will come in glory and all who believed in Jesus will live in heavenly glory with Jesus forever. I
106 believe that he who believes in Jesus would live, even though he died, and that everyone who
107 lives and believes in him will never die (meaning never perish in hell). In another word Jesus
108 rose and lives eternally, so we will rise and live eternally.

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111 **Christian Eschatology**

112 The word eschatology is the study of the "Last Things", whether the end of an individual life,
113 the end of the age, or the end of the world. Broadly speaking, Christian eschatology is the study
114 of the destiny of mankind as it is revealed in the Bible. The major issues in Christian eschatology
115 are death and the afterlife, heaven and hell, the Second Coming of Jesus, the Resurrection of
116 the Death, the Rapture, the Tribulation, Millennialism, the end of the world, the last Judgment,
117 a new heaven and new earth (the World to Come).

118 The second coming of Christ is the central event in Christian eschatology and the book of
119 Revelation is the core of Christian eschatology. Other passages are found in many places, esp.,
120 Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew (24), The Sheep and Goats, and the book of Revelation.

121 **General Comprehension of the Church**

122 **Definition of the Church**

123 The Church is the body of Christ and Christ is the head of the Church (Col 1:18). I believe that
124 there is Church Universal and a local Church. Universal Church is a composed of all who truly
125 profess faith in Jesus Christ as their personal savior and Lord regardless of denominations, races
126 and geographical boundaries. I understand that the local church is a visible church, where the
127 Gospel is truly preached, the ordinances truly administered and the disciplines of holiness
128 maintained.

129 **The Purpose and Place of the Church in the World**

130 No church can be isolated. God placed the Church in the world that the world to see His glory.
131 The purpose of placing the Church in the world is to fulfill the Great Commission, to preach and
132 invite people to receive salvation and follow Christ. In addition, the Church seeks justice for all
133 people and provides prayer and financial supports to sustain the world wide mission outreach.
134 The Church cares for the needy, the weak and the oppressed, the earth and its all creatures.

135 **The Role of the Minister**

136 A Minister is to serve the Lord's flock. The Bible says "take heed to yourselves, and to all the
137 flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He
138 hath purchased with His own blood." (Act 20:28). A minister have a great responsibility. The
139 roles of a ministers are administering the ordinances, administrator of the Church, preaching
140 the word of God, caring and directing members personally as a father cares for his household.

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143 **The Role of the Laity**

144 The spreading of the Gospel of Christ is not confined to a few ministers. The work of God in this
145 earth cannot be finished until the men and women involve themselves in the ministry. As one
146 of our Baptist distinctive, the "Priesthood of all believers," all the members should be engaged
147 in the service of the Kingdom of God. Everyone has a responsibility to the expand of the
148 Kingdom of God where he/she is appointed by God. In mission, the work of the laity is the
149 crucial means by which the world is to encounter Christ.

150 **The Ordinances**

151 Two ordinances are administered in the Church. The first ordinance is believer baptism by
152 immersion. Baptism is outward expression of an inward experience that reveals symbolically
153 his death to an old life and his resurrection by God's Spirit in a new life in Christ. It portrays the
154 death and burial of our old nature with the death of Jesus Christ and resurrected with Christ in
155 a new life. Thus, Baptism should not be viewed as the saving Grace of God to individual.

156 The second ordinance in the Church is the Lord's Supper. This is a memorial feast of the
157 suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Through observance of this memorial feast, we could find
158 genuine spiritual renewal such as self-examination, repentance, a new dedication to Divine will.

159 **Understanding of Mission and Evangelism**

160 Mission is the proclamation of the Gospel to the world that proclaims the Good News of the
161 atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, knowing salvation (forgiveness of sin, release
162 from guilt and condemnation, reconciliation with God), and eternal life which are granted in
163 Grace to all who trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We are called for this Mission to bring
164 this good news and to "make disciple of all nations" to every human being and to every human
165 institution with all Christians until every creatures and all creation, on earth and beyond, will
166 confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phi 2:10-11).

167 Evangelism is telling others the good news about what Jesus Christ has done for us. In order to
168 do that we must tell other that God is Holy (I John 1: 5 and the Creator of all things (Gen 1:1), all
169 people are sinners and deserve God's eternal wrath (Rom 3:10-19), Jesus Christ died on the
170 cross to bear God's wrath in the place of all who believe in Him, and rose from the grave in
171 order to give his people eternal life (John 1:1; 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:21-26), the only way to be
172 saved from eternal punishment and be reconciled to God is to repent of sin and trust in Jesus
173 Christ for salvation (Mk 1:15; Act 20:21). It is also believers' worship and fellowship, nature and
174 engagement in the Church which are empowered by the Holy Spirit.

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176 **Understanding of Justice in Society**

177 The OT often refers justice as to take care of the fatherless, the widows and the sojourners in
178 the society who were not able to support themselves. Jesus also echoes this understanding of
179 justice, when he mentioned to take care of the "least of these" (Matt 25:40; James 1:27). We
180 can bring this justice into our community by loving God and neighbors (Luke 10:25-37). Loving
181 neighbor means helping people in need until they can become self-sufficient as the parable of
182 Good Samaritan. Justice may have a broader meaning in community such as equality of races,
183 genders, equal distribution between the haves and have not.

184 **The Church and Its Ecumenical Relationship**

185 The Lord Jesus Christ prayed for his Church, "that they may be one, even as you, Father, are in
186 me and I in You." (John 17:21). The Apostle Paul also mentioned that the Church as the body of
187 Christ and founded on the confession of "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father
188 of all, who above all and through all and in all." (Eph 4:5-6). Such a vision commits us and leads
189 us to work and pray for cooperation and unity among Christians and Churches both within and
190 beyond Churches to fulfill the Great Commission of our Lord to "go and make disciples of all a
191 nations, baptizing then in the name of the Father and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...(Mtt
192 28:19). Under the roof of God, we should have only one Goal of Mission for Christ: " that the
193 world may believe...that the world may know." (John 17:21,23)

194 **Denomination Commitment**

195 **Understanding of Baptist Distinctive**

196 Baptist was born out of religious restrictions and turmoil. Thus, Baptist highly honors religious
197 freedom:- Soul Freedom (no mediator is needed to access God). Baptists also baptize no one
198 but believers with full immersion, which portrays death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
199 Baptist insists separation of Church and State. This can avoid domination of the Church by the
200 State. Bible is the final authority. Baptist believes that Baptism and Lord's Supper the only two
201 practices ordered by Christ for his followers. The Church should be governed democratically by
202 its own congregation. Baptists declare that the proclamation of the gospel is centre to their
203 task in the world. Thus, in order to fulfill this great commandment, Baptist cooperate with other
204 Christians and Churches.

205 **Reasons for Seeking ordination Within the ABC, USA**

206 Christianity was introduced to the Chin people by the **American Baptist Missionaries** in a
207 century ago. The seed of the Gospel that the Missionaries sow in our land was furnished faster
208 and almost 100% of Chin people have become Christian today. I am one of those. The American
209 Baptists are our spiritual parents. They crossed the huge oceans, probably by boat, to get the
210 Chin people for the sake of the Gospel. We still keep a Missionary cemetery in our land with
211 honor as it will always be a witness that they gave their lives for us. Thus, I have nowhere to go
212 apart from the ones who gave their lives for me and my people.

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215 **Relationship to the ABC, USA**

216 A Letter of Interest and Application of Membership of ABC, USA were sent to **Dr. Michael**
217 **Williams**, Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches of Michigan in October 2011. Our written
218 request was supported by Lakeview Baptist Church of Battle Creek. Thus, Falam Baptist Church of Battle
219 Creek was accepted by the West Area ABC on Tuesday, May 8th, 2012.

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