



# Welcome from the President

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Our goal at Grace Communion Seminary is to educate pastors, ministers, and lay persons in areas of biblical studies, theology and ministry to serve God more fully now in his Kingdom. We intend to give a broad education in Old and New Testament studies, insight into the early universal church as the body of Christ, and general understanding of the perspective of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches. This biblical and theological foundation, along with practical courses in pastoral ministry, is designed to help us think theologically in order to bring a Trinitarian Christ-centered message to our communities. Our commitment is to live and share the Gospel.

The universal church has not always been so minded. The early church came to see the need to establish a canon as a standard for Christianity, and affirmed it in 396 A.D. at the Council of Carthage, but through ensuing centuries the Bible often was used as a way to control people, and thus the early and medieval church followed the pattern of the scribes in the first century A.D. as the sole authoritative interpreters of the text.

So the movement to place the Bible and understanding of its intended purpose as the revelation of God in the hands of the people underwent a long journey. Miracles led the way, as the invention of moveable type lowered costs for reproducing books, secretive efforts delivered the Bible into the vernacular so it could be read by the common person, and proclamations and financial support by Kings distributed texts to churches for their growth. And the miracle of the seed being sown and growing in spite of opposition continues.

The Worldwide Church of God has always been a church of the Word – that is, of the Son of God and the biblical message of God. We have always encouraged people to read the Bible for themselves. We have not always, however, encouraged them to read widely from the early church fathers and other men and women of God. Now we take refuge in the light of God as it shines from many quarters.

We believe GCS provides an opportunity for educating our people to be sound interpreters of the Bible, strong servants of God in ministry, and stronger disciples of Jesus Christ.

We know that pastors lead busy lives – some of us at GCS have pastored for many years so we do understand emergencies and juggling schedules, both for church and families. We also, most of us, have had to work full-time jobs while getting degrees. So we welcome you to our world of academia and practical theology.

Russell Duke, Ph.D.  
President