

1 **THE FAITH JOURNEY, CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE, AND CALL TO MINISTRY**
2 **OF BAFFOUR NKURUMAH-APPIAH**

3
4 **FAITH JOURNEY**

5 My name is Baffour Nkrumah-Appiah also known as Robert. I was born on
6 July 1, 1957 in Ghana, on the continent of Africa. Being the last of twenty-five
7 children to one father married to four wives at one time was not the place or
8 time to seek attention as a child. The culture dictated that a man could marry
9 as many wives as he could care for, and that is exactly what my father did. At
10 an early age I began to seek attention and fulfillment from friends and other
11 children who were from a similar background as me.

12 This unofficial club of “needy” children (of which I was a member)
13 became recipients of attention from strange white people dressed in African
14 attire who spoke only English, and spoke it so fast that none of us could
15 understand them. Through befriending the children of these missionaries, we
16 were invited to attend our first Baptist church service, conducted by these white
17 people.

18 The first message I heard in a Sunday evening, Southern Baptist
19 Missionary service in Accra Ghana was “You did not choose me, but I chose you
20 to go and bear fruit that will last (John 15:16).” I marveled at the thought that
21 this huge and mighty God I had heard so much about in the stories of the
22 Israelites in Egypt and at the parting of the Red Sea could be personally
23 interested in me. That was the beginning of this wonderful, exciting, and

24 sometimes challenging journey. I knew without any ambiguity or reservation that
25 I had been chosen to be part of this great gift of salvation, regardless of the
26 color of my skin or the region of the world. With that, I became a follower of the
27 Lord Jesus Christ and His saving grace at the age of 17 in 1974 through the
28 mission work of these Southern Baptist Missionaries, who were planting churches
29 in Ghana, West Africa. After 4 years of friendship, I was invited by one of the
30 missionary families to visit them in the United States, my acceptance of their
31 invitation and arrival in May 1978, marked the beginning of a new chapter in my
32 life.

33 **CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE**

34 Upon arrival in the United States in 1978, I spent several years working
35 minimum paying jobs to support myself, including driving NYC taxi service. I
36 began my undergraduate work at Fordham University in New York City in 1989,
37 and received my Bachelors of Science in Economics and Finance degree in
38 1994. During my college years, I joined Calvary Baptist Church in New York City,
39 and was involved in numerous Christian organizations, both on- and off-campus
40 evangelizing and witnessing to the youth in the dangerous areas of the city
41 during 5 years.

42 After meeting my wife Christiana, I moved to Boston in July 1994, and
43 began working for an international banking organization. We have two boys,
44 Alexander (age 18) and William (age 17).

45 The Lord continued to use me in Boston. 1998, I began graduate work on
46 my Masters of Science in management and leadership at Emmanuel College in
47 Boston, Massachusetts.

48 During same period 1998 December, I was elected director of the junior
49 church program, and a deacon at Twelfth Baptist Church of Boston under the
50 leadership and supervision of Rev. Dr. Michael E. Haynes for 7 years until 2005,
51 however I continued to minister in other capacities.

52 After 19 years in banking, and 10 years as an Assistant-vice president, In
53 July 2013, I finally gave in to God's calling that happened in 1974 in Ghana,
54 Africa.

55 I am now two-thirds of the way through my Master of Divinity degree
56 program at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. At the seminary, I serve as a
57 Pierce Fellow through the John and Lois Pierce Center for Discipleship Building. A
58 spiritual formation compliment to the excellent academic and ministry skill
59 development each student receives at the Gordon-Conwell Theological
60 Seminary, an experience that has helped me to grow in my understanding of
61 Christ-centered discipleship. It is also helping me to develop a passion for the
62 church's role in spiritual formation and discipleship building as a missionary
63 pastor. I want to give back what the Lord gave to me through the missionary's
64 years ago.

65

66

67 **CALL TO MINISTRY**

68 I am currently serving as the executive pastor with Rev. Dr. Roger Haber,
69 my mentor, at First Baptist Church in Randolph. With my current position at First
70 Baptist, I have the honor of being responsible for supervising the staff, Sunday
71 school, and most of the ministries, including facilities. It has also been a privilege
72 to preach on some Sundays. My prayer is that, there will be an opportunity to
73 send the Word out to those who need it, especially in Africa. I pray one day I
74 can be useful there for His service.

75 **BAPTIST DISTINCTIONS AND HISTORY**

76 Several theological principles make the Baptist church a distinct body
77 among Christians. We believe that the Bible is the supreme authority for the
78 Church. Every believer has direct access to God through Christ, and most
79 importantly the individual responsibility to God for the performance of
80 duty...bringing him face-to-face with God. The autonomy of the local Church is
81 distinctive to Baptists, the Church is a visible body of Scripturally baptized
82 believers, equal in ranks and privileges, administering its own affairs under the
83 leadership of Jesus Christ.

84 As part of the Free Church movement, they sought to restore the purity of
85 the Church from its secular influences. I became a member of the American
86 Baptist Churches, (ABC) because of these Free Church principles. I have been
87 active in the local Old Colony Baptist Association, where I have been elected as
88 the vice moderator

89

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

TRINITY

91 The doctrine of the Trinity has been accepted as the cornerstone of the
92 church's teaching from its early history. The awesomeness of the Triune God is
93 reflected in this statement: There is only one God: this God exists eternally in
94 three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are completely equal,
95 each fully possessing the divine nature.

GOD

97 I believe in one God revealed as eternally existing in three equal and
98 distinct persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14 – “The
99 grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy
100 Spirit be with you all.”) I believe each of the three, Father, Son, and the Holy
101 Spirit are/is to be worshiped as the Triune God. I believe the love and unity within
102 the Trinity is a model for the church. God is the Creator of all things,
103 transcendent, and love (John 1:3 – “All things were made through him, and
104 without him was not any thing made that was made. Hebrews 11:3 – “By faith
105 we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what
106 is seen was not made out of things that are visible”, Col. 1:16 – “For by him all
107 things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether
108 thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him
109 and for him”). I believe the attributes of God speak to the very characteristics of
110 His nature, while the very essence of God is revealed to us as omniscient,

111 omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal, spirit, personal, and unchanging. That which
112 God has revealed of Himself is beyond total human comprehension.

113 **JESUS**

114 I believe that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity; conceived by
115 the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, fully God and fully
116 human. I believe that He died for the sins of humanity as a representative and
117 substitutionary sacrifice and that His death was sufficient reparation for the guilt
118 of humanity. I believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His
119 ascension into Heaven at the right hand of God, and in His present life there for
120 us as High Priest and Advocate.

121 I believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is fully divine (John
122 4:15 – “The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty
123 or have to come here to draw water”) and fully human (John 4:2 – “although
124 Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples”). He is the Redeemer”,
125 Matthew 26:28 – “For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for
126 many for the forgiveness of sins”, Romans 3:25 – “Whom God put forward as a
127 propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s
128 righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former
129 sins”). Jesus’ preexistence is evident in the Old Testament and the New
130 Testament, as stated in John 1:1-3: “In the beginning was the Word and the
131 Word was with God, and the Word is God”. This tells me that He is truly God and
132 has always co-existed with the Father and with the Holy Spirit

133 **HOLY SPIRIT**

134 I believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity (2 Cor. 13:14 – The
135 grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy
136 Spirit be with you all”). The Holy Spirit is coequal (Jn. 14:26 – “But the Helper, the
137 Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things
138 and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you”) and coeternal
139 (Heb. 9:14 – “How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal
140 Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead
141 works to serve the living God”) with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is
142 intelligent, comprehending the thoughts of human and God (1 Cor. 2:11 – “For
143 who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him?
144 So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God”).

145 The Holy Spirit comforts, (Eph. 1:12-14 – “So that we who were the first to
146 hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also, when you
147 heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were
148 sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until
149 we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory”) prays, and intercedes on
150 our behalf (Romans 8:26-27 – “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we
151 do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us
152 with groaning too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is
153 the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to
154 the will of God”). The Holy Spirit testifies about Christ, (Jn. 14:26 – But the Helper,

155 the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things
156 and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you"). I believe in the Holy
157 Spirit as a divine person, a personality distinct from the Father and the Son.

158 **CREATION**

159 God created the world (Proverbs 3:19 – "The Lord by wisdom founded the
160 earth; by understanding he established the heavens"), "by wisdom the Lord laid
161 the earth's foundations, by understanding He sat the heavens in place". (Isaiah
162 44:24) " This is what the Lord says, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:
163 I am the Lord, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens,
164 who spread out the earth by myself". (Genesis 1:1) In the beginning God
165 created the heavens and the earth. (John 1:3) "Through him (Christ) all things
166 were made; without him nothing was made that has been made". (Colossians
167 1:16) "For by him (Christ) all things were made: things in heaven and on earth,
168 visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities, all things
169 were created by him and for him". The above scriptures all point to the one and
170 only God who created the universe, Jesus the Christ.

171 **HUMANITY**

172 Part of this wonderful creation was humanity, (Genesis 1:26) "Then God
173 said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness: let them have
174 dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle,
175 over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth".
176 When it came to the creation of man God said, " Let us create man in our

177 image, according to our likeness". Indeed I am His creation and He is my maker
178 and therefore there is a natural willingness to draw near unto Him.

179 St Augustine writes in the Institute (book 48) ¹"Your works praise you that
180 we may love you, and we love you that your works may praise you. They have a
181 beginning and an end in time, a rise and a fall, a start and a finish".

182 **THE FALL**

183 The question of God's relationship with evil has always been a contentious
184 one. It has been stated in the Book of Genesis, when the fall happened, and
185 why it happened. My understanding of this theological mystery is supported by
186 the Old Testament Scripture (Genesis 2:16-17), "The Lord God commanded the
187 man, You are free to eat from any tree of the garden; but you must not eat from
188 the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely
189 die" We later found out that was not an empty threat by God to the human. As
190 it became known, human disobeyed God, and the result is a world of chaos. Sin
191 required a savior. (Psalm 51:5) "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from
192 the time my mother conceived me". (Proverb 20:9) Who can say, "I have kept
193 my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?

194 **SALVATION**

195 The Bible teaches us (1 Corinthians 15:22) "For as in Adam all die, so in
196 Christ all will be made alive". None of us can boast in ourselves. It is through the
197 righteousness and justification of Christ that we can be worthy to be called

198 Children of God. Jesus Christ died for the sins of humanity as a representative
199 and sacrifice that His death was sufficient reparation for the guilt of all
200 humankind. In the resurrection of the crucified, He ascended into Heaven, and
201 sat at the right hand of God the Father, advocating on our behalf as the High
202 Priest.

203 **SANTIFICATION**

204 Scripture defines sanctification as the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit.
205 (1 Cor. 1:30) It involves our responsible participation, which delivers us as justified
206 sinners, renews our entire nature according to the image of God, and enables
207 us to live pleasingly to Him.

208 **JUSTIFICATION**

209 Justification is described as “For our sake he made him to be sin that knew
210 no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21).
211 This is a declarative act of God (acts of sin being removed on the basis of
212 Christ’s work of reconciliation). This clarification is important to the core of
213 salvation. Both sanctification and justification are acts initiated by the mercy of
214 God.

215

216 **SCRIPTURE**

217 I believe in the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, (2 Timothy
218 3:16-17 – “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for

219 reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God
220 may be complete, equipped for every good work”). The Scriptures were written
221 through the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21 – “For no
222 prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as
223 they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”). It is also my conviction that God has
224 exercised care and providence through the ages in preserving the written Word,
225 (Hebrew 4:12 – “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-
226 edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of
227 marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart”). The result is
228 the very Word of God, the only authority for faith and practice (necessary for
229 salvation and proper relationship to God).

230 **THE CHURCH**

231 The Church is the body of believers brought together to spread the Good
232 News and to support one another through the help of the Holy Spirit. Within their
233 local churches, individual Christians each carry the responsibility of supporting
234 one another through the work of mission, ensuring that the Word is spread to an
235 unsaved world.

236 **THE ORDINANCES**

237 The Baptist Church has two ordinances given to her by the Lord, Believer's
238 baptism (Matt. 28:19 – “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing
239 them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”; Acts 2:41-

240 42 – “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added
241 that day about three thousand souls. Believer’s baptism is to be administered by
242 immersion (Acts 8: 38-39 – “And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they
243 both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized them”).
244 It is an outward experience of what has already taken place when the sinner
245 was saved. It is identifying with Jesus in His death, burial, and resurrection to new
246 life in Christ (Rom. 6:3-4 – “Do you not know that all of us who have been
247 baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into
248 death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the
249 Father, we too might walk in the newness of life”).

250 Christ instituted the Lord’s Supper as told in (Matt. 26:26 – “Now as they were
251 eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the
252 disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body’”). This is the time when believers
253 remember that His body was broken for us. As often as we eat the bread and
254 drink of the cup, we are proclaiming the Lord’s death as we remember Him, until
255 He comes (1Cor. 11:23-26 – “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to
256 you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and
257 when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said ‘This is my body which is for you.
258 Do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way also he took the cup, after
259 supper, saying, ‘this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as
260 you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink
261 the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes”).

262 **CODE OF ETHICS**

263 Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant
264 with God to serve Christ and the Church, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, to
265 deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments: to love the Lord our
266 God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as
267 myself.

268 In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by the Code of Ethics of the
269 Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches and I will faithfully support its
270 purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with
271 my colleagues in ministry that we will hold one another accountable for
272 fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics.

273 I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist
274 Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am
275 in accord with those traditions and practices; nor will I use my influence to
276 alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship
277 and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my
278 position.

279 I will respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my
280 American Baptist colleagues, and other Christians. I will seek to support all

281 colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve,
282 both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.

283 I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help
284 laypersons and colleagues to understand that ministerial leaders should not
285 expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when
286 these constituents are helping pay their salaries. I will not seek personal favors or
287 discounts on the basis of my ministerial status. I will maintain a disciplined ministry
288 in such ways as keeping hours of prayers and devotion, endeavoring to
289 maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility,
290 regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for ministerial and
291 personal development.

292 I will seek to maintain good health habits. I will recognize my primary
293 obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called, and
294 will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall
295 effectiveness of my ministry. I will personally and publicly support my colleagues
296 who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, age,
297 marital status, national origin, physical impairment or disability.

298 I will not proselytize from other Christian churches. I will, upon my resignation
299 or retirement, sever my ministerial leadership relations with my former
300 constituents, and will not make ministerial contacts in the field of another
301 ministerial leader without his/her request and/or consent. I will hold in

302 confidence and treat as confidential communication any information provided
303 to me with the expectation of privacy.

304 I will not disclose such information in private or public except when, in my
305 practice of ministry, I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is
306 outweighed by my well-founded belief that life-threatening or substantial harm
307 will be caused. I will not use my ministerial status, position or authority knowingly
308 to abuse, misguide, negatively influence, manipulate, or take advantage of
309 anyone, especially children.

310 I will report all instances of abuse as required by law to the appropriate
311 agency. In any case involving persons working in ABC ministry, I will also report
312 the circumstances to the appropriate regional and/or national denominational
313 representative. I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in
314 my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the
315 dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to
316 which we have been called.

317 **SUMMARY**

318 In summary, my belief is shaped by cultural and ethnic upbringing. At some
319 point of faith maturity, the grace of God through the Holy Spirit witnesses
320 through a spoken word that leads us into eternal salvation. This begins the
321 maneuverings of various Christian doctrines depending on what I was taught in
322 my early years. These opinions and principles shape my walk with the Lord.

323 Studying scripture helps me to decide which doctrine is consistent with the Bible.

324 I ask the Holy Spirit to help me hear the voice of God by reading His Word,

325 through constant prayer, and with the gift of discernment.

326 My sincere prayer is to continue to dwell in His presence all the days of my

327 life, even as I seek to do His pastoral call on me as part of the body of His

328 Church. Amen.

329