

Introducing The Master's Seminary

Educational Priorities

The Master's Seminary offers graduate-level biblical, theological, and professional education designed to equip men for effectiveness in Christian ministry to the universal body of Christ, primarily through the local church. This educational task is accomplished through emphasis on the following:

- Careful instruction in the Scriptures, including the original languages
- The study of various systems of theological thought including exposure to both past and present movements in history and Christian missions with a view to embracing a comprehensive, coherent theology built from Scripture
- A consistent focus upon involvement and accountability within a local church
- Ongoing efforts to challenge each student in developing a biblical philosophy/style of ministry
- The development and improvement of communication, relationship, leadership, and administrative skills for ministry. The objective is to produce graduates who are recognized as men of God and who are equipped to serve effectively as pastors, missionaries, teachers, evangelists, counselors, and leaders in evangelical ministries around the world (1 Tim. 3:1–7; Tit. 1:5–9).

Training Distinctives

The seminary community and curriculum are designed with the following goals and ideals in view:

- Excellence in academics is to be cultivated in an attitude of spiritual devotion
- The essential focus of all study at the seminary is to be biblical, exegetical, theological, expositional, and practical
- Though other viewpoints are given careful consideration, the emphasis is to be positive in building upon the certainties of God's inerrant Word
- Careful attention is to be devoted to the cultivation of Christian character qualities and living skills which are essential for godly living, for leadership in ministry, and for effective involvement in serving others
- Each program of study is to include a significant focus on the development of the appropriate ministry skills which are necessary for effectiveness in the chosen areas of Christian service
- The entire seminary community is to be characterized by the desire for the worship of God, mutual edification, and by an evangelistic and missionary zeal.

Institutional Purpose

The Master's Seminary exists to advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping godly men to be pastors and/or trainers of pastors for excellence in service to Christ in strategic fields of Christian ministry. This is to be accomplished through an educational program and an environment of spiritual fellowship and relationships which emphasize unreserved commitment to the worship of God, submission to the authority of the Scriptures, a life of personal holiness, the priority of the local church, and the mission of penetrating the world with the Truth.

Personal Objectives

The following characteristics portray an alumnus of The Master's Seminary in terms of the kind of person he should be, what he should know, and what he should be able to do.

Character—He should be a godly man, notable for holiness of conduct in all his relationships (Ps. 1; 15; 1 Tim 3:1–7; Tit. 1:5–9).

He should be caring, generous, wise, discerning, mature, secure, disciplined, accountable, humble, purposeful, empathetic, and teachable.

He should be a loving and responsible husband and father (if married and if blessed by God with children—1 Tim. 3:4–5; Tit. 1:6), and his heart should be moved by the compassion of Christ for others. He should readily acknowledge his own failures and deal honestly and humbly with sin in his own heart (Prov. 28:13; Matt. 7:1–5).

His service for God should reflect the awesomeness and glory of ministry (2 Cor. 2:14–6:10) with awareness that God is concerned with attitudes as well as with actions (1 Sam. 15:22–23; 1 Cor. 9:24–27; 1 Pet. 5:1–7).

His Christian life should reflect stability and maturity (1 Tim. 3:2, 6–7) as demonstrated by the exercise of good judgment in facing the trials of life and ministry in a contemporary context (1 Tim. 6:11–12; 2 Tim. 2:1–13; 4:1–8).

He should be one who establishes genuine, God-centered relationships with a wide range of people, encouraging and exhorting them according to their need in the mutual pursuit of God (Gal. 6:1–5).

Knowledge—He should have a general comprehension of the entirety of God's written revelation and should have developed a well-formulated theological framework which adequately synthesizes the biblical and historical data. He should have a functional linguistic facility in biblical Hebrew and Greek, and a basic knowledge of the contributions of major Christian leaders, thinkers, and authors throughout church history (Ezra 7:10; 1 Tim. 4:13–16; 2 Tim. 2:2, 14–15; 3:14–17; 4:1–4).

He should have an understanding of the world, of culture, and of human problems, interests, and concerns. He should be able to address contemporary culture with a biblical worldview and confront unbiblical religious and philosophical thought in defending the Christian faith (Col. 2:8; Tit. 1:9; 1 Jn. 2:15–17). He should know himself, including his strengths, weaknesses, responsibilities, and people skills (Matt. 20:20–28; Acts 6:1–7; Eph. 4:11–13; 1 Pet. 5:1–3).

Abilities—He should be able to articulate a biblical philosophy of ministry that balances principles of worship, prayer, exposition, edification, evangelism, and discipleship.

He should be able to lead with conviction, teach with authority, and preach with passion. He should be able to use appropriate tools for research, for record-keeping, and for writing. He should be sharpening those skills through the efficient use of research facilities, critical reading of current literature, and other forms of continuing education. He should be able to make decisions, to motivate, to listen, to empathize, to set priorities, and to defend the faith.

He should be able to assess the needs of individuals and apply the Word of God to those needs in various ministry situations such as preaching, teaching, counseling, and witnessing (1 Cor. 2:1–5; 1 Tim. 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:14–15; 4:1–5; Tit. 1:9). He should be able to equip and stimulate people to do the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11–13; 2 Tim. 2:2).

He should know how to lead in church activities, administer church ordinances, and conduct the services and ceremonies of the church in a God-focused manner.

He should be deeply involved in the ministries of evangelism, discipleship, restoration, and edification with conviction and passion. He should have a deep concern for the lost and he should be challenged by the biblical command to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth. These concerns should be evidenced in his prayer life, in his evangelistic endeavors, and in his lifestyle. In all his roles, he should model the message he proclaims (1 Tim. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:10–14; Tit. 2:6–8; 1 Pet. 5:1–3).

Educational Parameters

To *adhere* unswervingly to the founding purpose of training pastors to shepherd and equip Christ's church.

To *keep* The Master's Seminary faithful to its biblical foundations. All biblical content is to be based on God's inerrant Word and developed through the exegetical process. The curriculum must constantly reflect scriptural absolutes to avoid deviation from God's truth.

To *enrich* faculty leadership. Every member of The Master's Seminary faculty fits a fivefold profile in that they are all men of God, men of the Word, men of scholarship, men of Christ's church, and men of compassion.

To *insist* on an educational philosophy that is consistent with Scripture by:

- Majoring on biblical certainty, not doubt or theory
- Striving for spirituality in The Master's Seminary students, not intellectualism alone
- Preparing men to serve the Lord, not merely to know about the Lord
- Emphasizing a methodical, disciplined approach to studying Scripture rather than using a haphazard approach
- Encouraging excellence and never accepting mediocrity
- Expecting the faculty to be examples, not merely experts
- Stressing the imperative to function in the body of Christ, not merely function as an individual

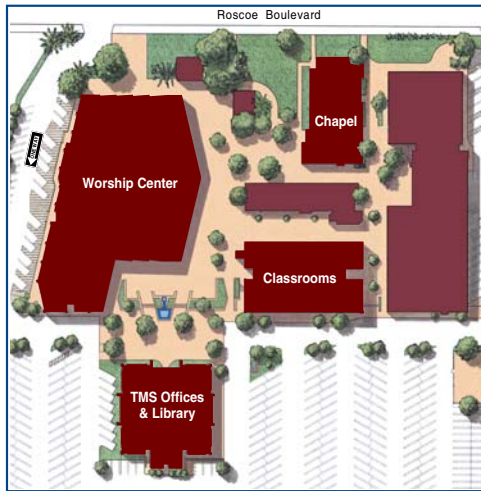
To *emphasize* the well-articulated goals of The Master's Seminary—both personal and pastoral:

Personal:

- To cultivate a holy, intimate relationship between every student and God
- To produce compassionate men who have gracious relationships with others

Pastoral:

- To study God's Word with precision
- To speak God's message with power
- To serve God's purpose with zeal
- To shepherd God's flock with care
- To fight God's battle with courage. Only by maintaining these personal and pastoral goals will The Master's Seminary build the complete man of God



Campus of Grace Community Church and The Master's Seminary

wide spectrum of theological thought. Other important collections representing various disciplines have been acquired for the purpose of reaching back and obtaining one-time scholarship in the critical areas of biblical and theological studies with a view toward building a comprehensive collection in these areas.

The seminary's administration is committed to building a strong library, one that balances traditional holdings with forward thinking and technical excellence. An efficient and knowledgeable staff is equally committed to providing assistance in accessing its rich holdings and services, and an environment conducive to using these resources in an effective and productive manner.

History of the Seminary

The Master's Seminary is a young seminary, having opened its doors in 1986 under the leadership and vision of Dr. John MacArthur, known worldwide as a master Bible expositor, church leader, and author. For a number of years, the elders of Grace Community Church, pastored by Dr. MacArthur, had envisioned a seminary program that would train men for ministry in the context of a local church. In 1977, Talbot Theological Seminary helped bring partial fruition to that vision by initiating an extension center offering seminary courses on the church campus.

Several years later, Dr. MacArthur was chosen as President of The Master's College (1985). The college had a history of involvement with seminary education, having originally opened its doors in 1927 as the Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary. Building upon these foundations—the heritage at the college and the extension courses at the church—the time seemed right in 1986 for the birth of a new seminary. The Master's Seminary came into existence for the purpose of building men of God, thoroughly equipped for Bible exposition and local church ministry, through emphasis on careful biblical scholarship, pastoral training, and personal spiritual growth.

Initially, this was accomplished through a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program. Then, in 1992, a Master of Theology (Th.M.) degree program was inaugurated, focusing on the effective use of advanced exegetical and theological skills. A Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) was launched in 2000 and is based on the Th.M. degree. Its unique design combines the European model with the salient features of traditional American models and allows for a residency primarily consumed with researching, writing, and defending the dissertation. A Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) was launched in 2004 with an emphasis on expository preaching.

Beginning with ninety-five students and four full-time faculty members in its inaugural year, the seminary has grown to its current level of three hundred twenty-five students and a faculty of eighteen full-time members. During this period of steady growth (approximately ten percent per year), the seminary has maintained its singular commitment to training men for a ministry of the Word. Over 1,000 alumni now minister on six continents of the world, with eighty-five percent ministering in a full-time capacity and approximately fifteen percent serving overseas.

Rediscovering Expository Preaching, our first faculty-written volume, which brings the seminary curriculum together at the confluence of Bible exposition, was released by Word Publishing in 1992. *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministries*, a companion volume released by Word Publishing in 1995, was also authored by our faculty and addresses the practical issues of ministry. *The MacArthur Study Bible* (enriched by TMS faculty) was released in 1997. Since 1998, a total of four anthologies of *The Master's Seminary Journal* articles have been released by Kregel.

The Master's Seminary's regional accreditation was officially recognized in 1988. As a result of the second full accreditation visit, the regional accrediting association (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) stated in their February 1992 report: "The seminary has been very intentional in its development of an M.Div. program with few analogies in the U.S., distinguished above all by its almost single-minded commitment to the preparation of ordained pastors for leadership in the local church.... Given the fundamental focus of the seminary, the structure of the M.Div. program seems well-oriented to its goals. The model itself—combining church-based involvement, personal discipleship, and academic study—is worth applauding, and it is not insignificant that at the level of degree structure, the seminary is on the cutting-edge of reform in seminary education in this regard. In all three areas of the formal aspects of the academic curriculum—Bible, Theology, and Pastoral Ministries—a logical progression is detected, and discussions with the Faculty indicated a high degree of familiarity with how one aspect of the program integrates with other aspects. All of the interviewed alumni expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program, believing that the seminary prepared them well for the ministries in which they are currently involved" (pp. 23–24). The Master's Seminary completed a third full accreditation visit in Spring 2000 with full affirmation.

The growth and advance of TMS created a pressing need for a facility to house the seminary library and an estimated faculty of twenty-two. The new Equipping Center, including the 23,000-square-foot Master's Grace Library, was dedicated in 1998.

Since the beginning of the seminary in 1986, the library has grown from a moderate church library of 7,000 volumes to a major theological collection numbering over 160,000 volumes. Plans are currently being implemented to increase these holdings to 175,000 volumes to adequately support the M.Div., Th.M., and Th.D. programs.

The Master's Seminary Journal

The Master's Seminary Journal is a publication of the faculty of The Master's Seminary. It is published semiannually and contains scholarly articles dealing with the biblical text, theology, and pastoral concerns. It also contains reviews of current books and significant articles relating to these issues. A copy of the journal is provided to each student and alumnus. Interested friends are encouraged to subscribe.

Legal Notices

As the graduate seminary division of The Master's College and Seminary, The Master's Seminary is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. The institution operates under a charter granted by the State of California in 1927 and is qualified under the California Education Code Section 94310(a) to grant degrees. WASC can be reached at 985 Atlantic Ave., Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501 or (510) 748-9001.

Students and prospective students should read this catalog carefully.

The appropriate catalog, along with other bulletins or distributed materials, determines student rights and responsibilities with respect to the seminary. Matriculation constitutes an agreement by the student to abide by the regulations and policies of The Master's Seminary.

Information regarding the accessibility of facilities to handicapped students is available from the Administration office.

The Master's Seminary does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, nationality, non-disqualifying handicap, or ethnic origin in its admissions policies, educational policies, employment policies, services, or scholarship and loan programs.

The provisions of this catalog, including academic offerings, academic policies, and all financial charges are subject to unilateral change by The Master's Seminary. While the seminary attempts to keep costs at reasonable levels, it is anticipated that costs will increase in future years.

Financial Resources

The Master's Seminary was launched with the resources of the unfailing promises of God and the prayerful support of a small circle of loyal friends. Because tuition charges are kept at a reasonable level, there is a continuing need for an increasing number of regular supporters. The members of Grace Community Church have graciously and sacrificially provided facilities. Interested donors may be assured that all funds are invested in direct support of the mission of the seminary in building men of God for effective ministries.

Interested friends may support the seminary in any of the following ways:

- Prayer partners
- Regular monthly giving
- Cash contributions in any amount
- Funding of a student scholarship program
- Memorial gifts/living honor gifts
- Matching gifts, (matched by employing corporations)
- Designation of the seminary as beneficiary of an insurance policy
- Donations of real estate property
- Estate gifts by means of a will designating the seminary as a beneficiary
- Donation of securities, stocks, or bonds
- Endowment gifts
- Annuity programs

All gifts, bequests, or annuities should be designated for The Master's Seminary, with correspondence concerning these matters addressed to one of the men below:

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