



The King's University and the Seven Affirmations



When I began serving as the Director of Messianic Jewish Studies at The King's University (TKU) in 2015, I was told that the school had an institutional commitment to Paul's vision of the "One New Man" made up of Jews and Gentiles in Messiah as described in Ephesians 2. This was part of the DNA that Pastor Jack Hayford, the school's founder, instilled in the college and seminary from the beginning.

Pastor Jack wrote some years later that a "primary mission" of TKU was "to love, affirm, and stand with the Jewish people and Israel, especially at this politically strife-filled season of history." It also became clear to me that the university was committed to the principle of "To the Jew First," a vision that Pastor Robert Morris embedded in the university from the time the university became an educational ministry of Gateway Church.

Although the university lived out this primary mission and vision, and had a vibrant Messianic Jewish Studies program, there was nothing in writing that concisely communicated to the students, staff, faculty and prospective students the nature and scope of what "One New Man" and "To the Jew First" meant. It struck me that the TJCII Seven Affirmations beautifully expressed the contours of what the university had long stood for and lived out. Moreover, Pastor Jack had been one of the first Christian supporters of TJCII!

After Rabbi Marty received from the Lord the vision for TJCII, he traveled to Israel in March 1995 to seek Pastor Jack's wisdom in the matter. At that time, Pastor Jack was teaching at a Messianic Jewish leadership conference in Jerusalem. After one of the sessions, Rabbi Marty went up and said, "Dr. Hayford, the Lord has given to me, what I believe, could be a very important vision. May I share it with you?"

Rabbi Marty recounts:

His response was, "Let's have lunch tomorrow." The next day I had lunch with Jack and his wife and presented him with a written copy of the vision. He read it, then turned to me and responded, "Marty, this is from God."

We talked about it during lunch and he offered his 100% endorsement...Jack made that commitment to TJCII even before we had formed a TJCII Executive Committee! I returned from Israel feeling confident that the vision of TJCII was indeed a vision from the LORD.

Pastor Jack was the opening speaker for the first TJCII consultation in 2003. And in 2009, through Pastor Jack's leadership as president of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (which represents globally more than 66,000 churches [including a number of Messianic Jewish congregations]), ICFG became the first larger denomination to endorse the Seven Affirmations statement. Pastor Jack has been a champion of TJCII from its inception.

In light of Pastor Jack's endorsement of TJCII and given that the Seven Affirmations articulated so well the nature and scope of the school's perspective on matters related to the Church and the Jewish people, and given that Pastor Robert and Gateway Church had already endorsed the Seven Affirmations a year earlier, I went to the president of TKU and requested that the board of trustees consider affirming the Seven Affirmations.

On September 18, 2016, the president signed the Seven Affirmations statement on behalf of the board, making TKU the first Christian educational institution in the world to stand in solidarity with TJCII's vision for Jew-Gentile unity, diversity and reconciliation.

We are grateful to TJCII for providing us with the words we needed to communicate in an understandable and passionate way what was already in the DNA of our school, thanks to Pastor Jack and Pastor Robert.

The Seven Affirmations are a gift from God and enable us to pass on a legacy of blessing to future generations at The King's University. Thank you, TJCII!

1. Jack Hayford, "Allowing the Spirit to Refocus Our Identity," in *Unity: Awakening the One New Man* (ed. Robert F. Wolff and Don Enevoldsen; Chambersburg: Drawbaugh, 2011), 20.
2. *Toward Jerusalem Council II: Vision, Origin and Documents* (TJCII, 2010).

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