

**Philip Clayton, Ingraham Chair  
CST**

1325 North College Avenue  
Claremont, CA 91711  
(909) 447-6312  
<pclayton@cst.edu>

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CLAREMONT  
SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Friends,

I had the chance to work with Tony Jones for almost 10 years. We have planned major events together, spoken side-by-side, interacted with other speakers and small groups, shared numerous meals together, and had long talks while traveling.

In all of these interactions, Tony has been the consummate professional. This is not easy work: the stress is high (and sometimes the stakes are also); the decisions are difficult; and wisdom and discernment are required to take the right course of action. Throughout, Tony has brought concern and care for those we minister with and to. He understands the needs of those around us, and he consistently makes decisions that foster their own personal and spiritual growth. In the nature of our business, people are sometimes confused, angry, or resentful. Even at such times, I have never seen Tony be vindictive or act in ways that harm others. Although we live very public lives, he has consistently modeled the sort of Christian leadership that is (rightly) expected of us.

Those who know Tony realized that he is remarkably open and honest with his friends. Over the years we have talked openly about our personal lives, including the pain and tragedy of divorce. Everything that I have heard in private is fully consistent with the public statements that he has made.

Tony offers one of the most authentic theological voices in the American public square today. He deserves immense credit for bringing reflection about the Christian faith out of the elite academic institutions and making it accessible to men and women who struggle to find viable forms of belief and discipleship. Each one of us engaged as public theologians has to combine heart and mind, naming the problems that others won't name and then finding ways to offer hope. Few have engaged in this process as effectively as Tony has. I look forward

to many more years of following his ministry, and supporting it, as the church continues to adapt itself to the challenges of faith in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Feel free to contact me at <pclayton@cst.edu> if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Clayton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light gray background behind it.

Philip Clayton