

## **Public Statement on Amyand Park Chapel's discipline of Jeyakanth**

March 2025

In 2007 Jeyakanth came to the UK on a semi-permanent basis and in 2015 he became a member of the church which meets at Amyand Park Chapel (APC). This was a natural step. Since his arrival in 2007, Jeyakanth had been much involved in the life of the church family. He was a regular attender at the Sunday services, the midweek prayer meetings and the church family holidays. Furthermore, APC had been heavily invested in the work in Sri Lanka since 1996. During this time 24 members of the church had visited LEFC churches in Sri Lanka and 7 members were involved in the day-to-day work of Care Sri Lanka. Jeyakanth's wife Vani also became a member of APC and furthermore, when his daughter, Jemima, was saved, she was baptised at the Chapel and also joined the membership.

It was therefore with great sadness that in July 2021 at a meeting of the gathered church, the members expelled Jeyakanth from the membership. The issue occasioning this solemn and serious action was not a matter of slander, rumour, misunderstanding, differences of opinion, or indeed a breakdown in his relationship with the church leadership. Neither was it for his behaviour in Sri Lanka. On the contrary, Jeyakanth was called to account for words and actions which took place here in the UK while he was a member of APC.

Firstly, he consistently and repeatedly broke the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment in his dealings with us. The 9th Commandment says, "*You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.*" Tragically, Jeyakanth did exactly this. He knowingly and repeatedly sought to create false and misleading narratives. Furthermore, he knowingly and repeatedly slandered believers. He endeavoured to raise his own reputation upon the ruin of the reputation of others.

Furthermore, Jeyakanth also circulated a report in the UK strongly condemning Kanna, his fellow elder in the Thampalagamam church. He did this without first discussing the contents of the report with Kanna or

with the Thampalagamam church. Indeed, the matter was never brought before the church, which is the highest authority in such matters. Therefore, Jeyakanth's action was personal rather than biblical. Kanna was publicly attacked and condemned without being given the opportunity to defend himself. Jeyakanth's actions were in contradiction to the Lord's commands; 1 Timothy 5.19, Leviticus 19.16.

After many months of biblical counsel, support and later admonition, Jeyakanth was suspended from the membership of the church. This took place in April 2021, and it was for his consistent dishonesty and duplicity. It was clear to us that Jeyakanth was seriously backslidden. Therefore, the discipline was not to punish Jeyakanth. On the contrary, in the hope that it would lead to his repentance, its purpose was to restore him. He was assured of our love and of the warm welcome he would receive as matters were put right. However, he responded by refusing to hear the church. Indeed, he told us that he was not accountable to the church but only to the Council of Reference. He was unrepentant. Biblically, the only option left to us was expulsion. He was therefore removed from the membership on a vote at a specially convened church meeting. We now treat him as an unbeliever.

This has been a heart-breaking episode in the life of the church, but in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ the church could take no other course. The action taken was without partiality, in the fear of God, knowing that the church, and especially its leadership, must give account to Him on Judgment Day.

The purpose of the discipline was to deliver our friend from the calamitous path he continues to take. We administered Christ's medicine in the hope that Jeyakanth would come to his senses and repent. We were on a rescue mission.

It is perhaps worth stating that the process leading to Jeyakanth's excommunication took 18 months. It involved many hours of face-to-face conversations with every permutation of elders and more. The approach was biblical, loving, proportionate, fair and reasonable.

Throughout those sad days and since, the door to Jeyakanth's restoration has been wide open. He has been encouraged many times to offer the sinner's sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart and to come to the foot of that rugged cross for cleansing and healing. The APC family have loved their friend and have done all they can to rescue the situation, but Jeyakanth remains unrepentant.

We have no interest in winning arguments, having the last word or being personally vindicated. The issue has never been 'who is right?' but before the Lord, 'what is right?' We have sought to listen to only one voice, that of the Lord's and we are content to leave these matters in His hands, for His glory.

In the name of our Lord Jesus,

Gerard Hemmings

Paul Fountain

Simon Doyle

David Malam

Jon Cassam

(elders of Amyand Park Chapel)