

BIBLIOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

I believe that there are three foundational truths which must be understood when approaching the study of Bibliology. **First**, we know that God is by the fact that He is the creator. “In the beginning God” (Gen. 1:1) “And God said to Moses, “I AM THAT I AM.” (Ex. 3:14) Hebrews 1:1 “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers...” (Heb. 1:1) **Second**, we know that God has spoken. Just as “He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,” in the past (Heb. 1:1) After this means of revealing Himself he also “has spoken to us in His Son,...” (Heb. 1:2) **Third**, we know what He said.

I believe that **revelation** is the avenue through which God chose to reveal Himself to man. The two main categories of revelation are general and special. *General revelation* is God revealing himself to mankind in general through His creation (Ps. 19:1-2; Rom. 1:18-21). *Special revelation* is God revealing himself to specific persons at specific times and places in order to bring them into a personal redemptive relationship with Him. God used many special ways to reveal Himself. God used dreams (Gen. 31:11), casting lots (Acts 1:26), visions (Isa. 6:1), Prophets (2 Sam. 23:2), the incarnation of Christ (Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 1:1-3), and through Holy Scripture (Heb. 1:1; 2 Tim. 3:16).

I believe that the word **Inspiration** means God-breathed. The Greek word *geo,pneustoj* occurs only one time in the scriptures (2 Tim 3:16). Inspiration is God breathing His words through the Holy Spirit into human authors who composed the original writings of Scripture to communicate those words to man (2 Peter 1:20-21)

I believe that the Bible is the believer’s **authority** for faith and practice. All the text of the scriptures are God’s words and doing anything contrary to God’s word is a denial of His authority. God’s words are authority (Ex. 4:22). Christ used the scriptures as His authority (Mt. 4:4-7). I believe that authority applies to all the scriptures not just the Old Testament (2 Pet. 3:15-16)

I believe that the Bible is **inerrant**. Inerrancy means that the scripture was totally and completely given to men without error in the original manuscripts. The historical term is “infallibility” and should be understood as synonymous with inerrancy. Some contemporary theologians try to distinguish the two terms. They say inerrancy has to do with the registration of the facts while infallibility involves the communication of the facts. This is an incorrect understanding of the meaning of these terms. God is truth and cannot lie (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18; Numb. 23:19). The scriptures themselves are true (Ps. 12:6; Jn. 17:17). God’s words are permanent (Ps. 119:89; Mt. 24:35).

I believe that the Scriptures are absolutely sufficient for the believer. **Sufficiency** of the Scriptures means that the Bible contains all the words that are necessary for redemption (2 Tim. 3:15) and Christian living (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 3:5-6). God prohibits any additions to the Scriptures (Dt. 4:2; 1 Cor. 2:14).

I believe that God illumines believers by the work of the Holy Spirit. **Illumination** is referring to the work of the Holy Spirit whereby he helps believers understand the meaning and significance of the Scriptures and gain certainty of its truth (Jn 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:14).

I believe that the sixty-six books of the Bible are the complete word of God. The process of determining which books are included in the Bible is called canonization. **Canonization** is coming to the conclusion as to which books were inspired by God and thus should be included in the Bible. This process must be understood in light of the doctrine of inspiration. The books included in the canon must be God breathed. The determining factor of the canonization of a book in the Bible is divine authorship. The words of these books were inspired by God. This applies to the Old Testament (Ex. 31:18) as well as the New Testament (2 Pet. 3:2,15-16)

I believe that God has and will preserve His word. **Preservation** is best defined in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. “The Old Testament Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion the church is finally to appeal unto them.” Textual support for preservation is implied in the Scriptures (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24-25). **Textual criticism** is the science in which men ascertain what was in the original text in the Hebrew and Greek. Textual criticism does not mean that one is criticizing the text. It is better understood as an investigation of the text. The original manuscripts or autographs had perished after the copies were made. The copies are those manuscripts that we have today. We have over five thousand Greek manuscripts today as well as over six thousand Hebrew copies of the Masoretic text. The process of textual criticism involves taking the manuscripts that we have in hand and discerning what reading has the majority of manuscript evidence. **Translation theory** is the distinguishing between a translation that is a formal or dynamic equivalent. My translation preference for preaching is formal (KJV, NKJV, NAS, and the ESV). I prefer to use a formal translation in my preaching because it stays close to the text of scripture. My translation preference for devotions is formal and dynamic. I will sometimes look at a dynamic translation to gain a better understanding of what the passage is communicating (NIV, NLT).

THEOLOGY PROPER

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

I believe that God’s **existence** is seen in Scripture (Gen. 1:1) and in nature (Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1). I believe that Scripture reveals several aspects of God’s nature. The Bible tells us that God is holy (Ps. 71:22; Isa. 6:3; Ps. 99:9), love (1 Jn. 4:8; 1 Jn 4:10; Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 5:3), merciful (Ex. 34:6; Ps. 103:8), good (Lk. 18:19; 100:5; Gal. 6:10), wise (Rom. 16:27), righteous (Gen. 18:25; Isa. 45:19), jealous (Ex. 20:5; 2 Cor. 11:2) truth (Pr. 30:5). God is also a Spirit (Jn. 4:24) and therefore He cannot be seen (Jn. 1:18). These attributes are God’s communicable attributes. His incommunicable attributes are those which cannot be shared with others. God is eternal (Ps. 90:2; Rev. 1:8), immutable (Ps. 102:25-27; James 1:17), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10), omnipotent (Gen. 17:1; Mt. 19:26), omniscient (Ps. 147:5; Mt. 6:8; Acts 15:18), self existence (Acts 17:24-25; Ex. 3:14). These lists of attributes are not exhaustive. In regards to God’s omniscience I believe that the heretical teaching of Open Theism weakens the very nature of God taught in the Bible. Openness Theology or Open Theism is a teaching in modern evangelical circles

that believes that God learns as the world operates and he changes his plan based upon how man responds to him.

I believe that there is only one God (Dt. 6:4; Eph. 4:6) and that He exists in three persons (Gen. 1:26; Mt. 28:19). The **trinity** includes the Father (1 Pet. 1:2), the Son (Col. 1:17; Jn. 1:3), and the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10). God preserves (Heb. 1:3) and governs all things (Ps. 135:5-7). God exists today through believers by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:6; 16:13).

I believe that the **decrees** of God are from all eternity (Ps. 33:11). God can never make mistakes (Isa. 48:11). The decrees of God are done based on His omnipotence (Dan. 4:35). The ultimate goal of these decrees is to bring glory to God (Eph. 1:5-6). God's decrees can never be changed (Isa. 46:10). I believe that these decrees are described in the Bible. God created man and the universe (Gen 1:26). He established the earth (Ps. 119:90). God promised never again to destroy the earth by a worldwide flood (Gen. 9:11-13). There are two kinds of decrees. These include efficacious decrees (Isa. 14:24-27; 46:10) and permissive decrees (Rom. 8:28)

ANGELOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF ANGELS

I believe that scripture implies the existence of **angels**. Angels are listed with the sun, moon, and stars as part of God's creation (Ps. 148:2-5). Angels are mortals because God is the only one who is mortal (1 Tim. 6:16). The angels were the heavenly hosts and were part of the heavens (Gen. 2:1).

Scripture reveals several things about the nature of angels. There is an innumerable amount of angels (Rev. 5:11; Heb. 12:22). Angels are not human beings (Mt. 22:30) or a race (Ps. 148:2). Angels are incorporeal (Ps. 104:4). Angels have great wisdom but are not all knowing (Mt. 24:36). Angels are ministering spirits (Heb. 1:14). Angels have great power and might but are not all powerful (Ps. 103:20; 2 Thes. 1:7; Jude 9). They cannot be in more than one place at a time (Job 1:7).

I believe that Satan and other angels fell (Ez. 28:13-15) and that Satan was instrumental in the fall of man. Satan and the evil angels will be judged (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Mt. 25:41). The exact time of the fall is difficult to decipher but it must have occurred sometime before Genesis 3:1. The cause of the fall may have been pride as described in 1 Timothy 3:6. Many struggle with finding an answer to the problem of evil. For unknown reasons we do not know how evil came into existence. The best way to answer this problem is that "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law." (Deuteronomy 29:29)

I believe that angels have two classifications. **Good angels** are those who assist God in carrying out his purpose. The cherubim were appointed to attend in some special way upon God (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:19). God stands over the cherubim (Ps. 80:1). The seraphim stand above God. Their duties are to lead in the worship of God and to purify the servants of God to make them acceptable for worship (Isa. 6:2,6). An archangel is a leader of a group of angels (1 Thes. 4:16; Rev. 12:7). **Evil angels** are those who fell with Satan and oppose God (2 Pet. 2:4; Mt. 8:16; Mk. 9:25). Satan and the evil angels oppose

God by hindering God's work (Dan. 10:21). They spread false teaching (2 Cor. 11:13-15). They cause God's people to struggle (Eph. 6:12; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).

The "sons of God" in Genesis 6:1 are from the early Sethite line. They could not be angels because angels cannot have relations with humans or marry them (Mt. 22:30). These men must have been from the line of Seth mentioned in Genesis 5.

HAMARTIOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

I believe that **sin** is the failure to conform to God's moral law either by act or disposition. God is not the author of sin (James 1:13). Sin originated initially from the angelic world (1 Jn. 3:8). Sin originated with mankind through Adam (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22). The corrupt nature that man inherited brings guilt. Some hold that Adam was the representative of the race and therefore the guilt from his sin is passed down to his children. Many theologians use the term imputed as a basis to argue that just as Christ's righteousness can be imputed to man so also Adam's sin was imputed to man. This is a difficult aspect to deal with. Adam's sin was passed down to man but how it was accomplished is only understood by God. (Dt. 29:29) Adam's sin nature was passed on to his posterity because he was the representative of humanity. His fallen nature was communicated through his seed.

The human race is completely **depraved**. Man is born in sin (Ps. 51:5). Man by nature is sinful (Eph. 2:3). The result of man's sinfulness is spiritual death (Eph. 2:1,5,12).

Sin is Absolute (Jas. 2:10; Lk. 11:23).

Sin is missing the mark (Judges 20:16).

Sin is unrighteousness (1 Cor. 6:9).

Sin is breaking the law (2 Pet. 2:8-9; Mt. 7:23).

Sin is transgression (Numb. 14:41-42; Mt. 15:2-3).

Sin is rebellion (Isa. 1:2; Jn. 3:36)

Sin is universal (1 Kings 8:46; Pr. 20:9; Rom. 3:10-11).

Sin has several results upon man. Sin brings restlessness and agitation (Job 3:17). Sin brings guilt (Jas. 2:10), pollution (Rom. 8:5-8), and trouble (Hosea 4:15).

God delivers man from sin (2 Peter 2:9). Sin is an issue of the heart and mind (Jer. 17:9; Pr. 4:23; Mt. 15:19-20).

The believer is always just in God's eyes even though he still sins (Rom. 8:1). Sin can bring the believer under chastening (Heb. 12:4-5). Sin can hinder the believers relationship with God (Eph. 4:30).

ANTHROPOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

I believe that the creation of man was a direct act of God. God created man in His image (Gen. 1:27). Man was made out of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7). Man was made alive by God (Gen. 2:7). Man came from dust and will return to dust (Gen. 3:19). Man is distinct from animals (1 Cor. 15:39).

Man was made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 5:3).

Man was made in the mental likeness (Col 3:10; Gen. 2:15,19).

Man was made in the social likeness (Gen 3:8; 2:18; 2:24).

Man was made in the moral likeness. Initially man was made righteous and holy (Gen 1:31).

I believe that man's **constitution** is comprised of two parts (i.e. The material "body" and the immaterial "soul/spirit"). I believe that in Hebrews 4:12 "piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit..." refers to penetration and not division. The scriptures are unique because they are God breathed. Just as God breathed into the scriptures so also God breathes into man making him unique. Man has a unique life principle. Several reasons are given in scripture which support the view that man has two parts. First, soul and spirit are used synonymously in scripture. **John 12:27 and John 13:21** support that the words soul and spirit are used interchangeably in the scriptures which makes them synonymous. Jesus said "Now is my soul troubled," and a few verses later John states that Jesus was "troubled in spirit." Further, when speaking of death man is described as spirit or soul going to heaven or hell. In **Hebrews 12:23** the word *spirit* is used. "The spirits of just men made perfect." In **Revelation 6:9** the word *soul* is used. "And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained." Finally, in death the soul and spirit are not mentioned together. When Rachel died her "soul" departed (Gen. 35:18). When Stephen prayed before his death he said "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7:59) In the context of holiness Paul said: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1). Jesus himself only spoke of two parts (Mt. 10:28). Often in scripture synonyms are used to emphasize a certain truth. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** lists "your spirit and soul and body" as separate ideas but soul and spirit are synonymous. Another example is **Mark 12:30** "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." If some of these words are not synonymous, then there are four parts to man.

God has given man a **conscience** (Rom. 2:14-15; Titus 1:15) and a **will** (Rom. 7:18-19; Jn. 1:12-13).

SOTERIOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

I believe that **conversion** is the process of turning from sin in repentance and coming to Christ in Faith. These two aspects are gifts from God (Jn. 6:44). Faith is an acknowledgement that something is true (Mt. 9:28; Heb. 11:6). Faith is trusting in someone or something. In regards to saving faith it is one who trust's God for eternal life (Jn. 1:12). Repentance is the casting aside or turning away from sin (Mt. 3:2; Acts 2:38).

Regeneration is the work of God in the new believer's heart. In the New Testament it is described as new birth (Jn. 3:3,7; Titus 3:5). The question as to whether regeneration comes before repentance is not necessary to answer because God is not limited by time and chronologically conversion happens simultaneously with regeneration.

Grace is God's unmerited favor upon the believer. Common Grace is the act whereby God gives blessings to man which are not a part of salvation (Acts 14:16-17).

Prevenient Grace is the grace in which God has given to all men the ability to make a choice in submission to God (Titus 2:11). Efficacious grace is God's call to salvation which results in justification. This doctrine should in no way exalt the effective call over the gospel call (Rom 8:30; 10:14).

Justification is by grace through faith alone. Justification is the act of God whereby he declares righteous those who come to him by faith (Rom. 3:24-26).

Union with Christ is the understanding that the believer is one with Christ (Col. 1:27; Jn. 15:4).

Adoption is when God places the believer into the family of God (Jn. 1:12; Eph. 1:5).

Election is the act of God in His grace sovereignly choosing those who he foreknew would come to salvation in Christ (Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:4-6; Heb. 2:9).

Sanctification is the process in which the believer is drawn closer to God on a daily basis. The three types of sanctification are positional (Titus 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11), progressive (Rom. 6:12-13; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10), and final (Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:49).

Eternal security is the act whereby all believers are secure in God's hand after salvation (Rom. 8:38-39; Jn. 10:27-30). Some use Hebrews 6:4-6 as proof that man can lose his salvation. However that is not the case since some make professions of faith but were never genuinely saved.

CHRISTOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

I believe that Jesus Christ is God. I believe in His virgin birth, incarnation, deity, perfect life, teachings and miracles. Scripture reveals to us that Christ died for all, was buried and rose again the third day. He ascended into heaven and is seated on God's right hand interceding for believers and he will one day return to earth.

The person of Christ: Christ existed prior to His birth (Jn. 3:13,31; Col. 1:16; Jn. 1:1). The eternity of Christ does not just mean that Christ existed prior to creation but that he is eternal (Heb. 1:3; Jn. 8:58). Christ was involved in creation (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:17). He appeared as the angel of the LORD (Ex. 3:2; Gen 16:7-14; Judges 2:1-4).

The Incarnation: His incarnation is necessary for the atonement of sin. In the incarnation Christ had two natures existing in one person. This is known as the hypostatic union. The prophets foretold of the incarnation (Isa. 9:6). He became flesh and tabernacled among us (Jn. 1:14). That same passage says that He was "the only begotten from the Father." Being begotten relates to Christ's uniqueness as the incarnate Word of God. This does not mean that he was the first born of God (Ps. 2:7).

The deity of Christ: Christ is the second person of the trinity who possesses eternity (Jn. 17:5). Christ possessed the attributes that belong to God (Mt. 28:20; Mt. 16:21; Lk. 11:17; Mk. 5:11-15). He did works that only God could do (Mk. 2:1-12; Jn 5:21-22). Names were ascribed to Him that show He was deity (Jn 10:36; Lk. 1:76; Jn. 1:1; Mt. 22:43-45; Rev. 19:16). Christ Himself claimed to be God (Jn. 10:30-33).

The humanity of Christ: Christ's birth was unique (Mt. 1:23). He possessed a human body (Lk. 2:40, 52; Jn. 8:40). He had human characteristics (Mt. 4:2; Jn. 4:6). Human names were ascribed to Christ (Mt. 8:20; 1 Tim. 2:5).

The Work of Christ: Christ's offices are Prophet (Acts 3:22-24) Priest (Heb. 5:1-3) and King (Lk. 1:32-33). Christ died for the sins of the world (Jn. 3:16). Christ was completely obedient in His suffering (Rom 5:19; Isa. 53:6). His death was substitutionary (Gal. 3:13). Christ sacrificed himself (Heb. 9:26). He became a propitiation for us (1 Jn. 4:10). Christ reconciled us to God (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Christ redeemed us from sin (Col. 1:13; Gal. 3:13).

The impeccability of Christ: Christ had no sin (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22). He faced temptation but never sinned (Heb. 4:15).

The Kenosis of Christ: This is the doctrine that teaches that Christ emptied himself (Phil. 2:5-11). This does not mean that he gave up his divine attributes. He simply chose not to exercise them. The Holy Spirit gave Christ power on earth to do miracles. (Luke 4:1,14,16,18; Mt. 12; Mt. 3:16 "The Holy Spirit descended upon Him.").

The resurrection of Christ: Christ's resurrection was not a mystical experience but a real experience (1 Cor. 15:3-4; 16-17). He ascended and now acts as an Advocate (1 Jn. 2:1) High Priest (Heb. 4:14) and Intercessor (Heb. 7:25).

PNEUMATOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon man at Pentecost as prophesied in Joel 2:28-29. His name is used with other persons of the Trinity (Acts 16:7; 1 Cor. 6:11). He has attributes that prove His deity. He is omniscient (Isa. 40:13) omnipresent (Ps. 139:7) omnipotent (Job 33:4). The Holy Spirit was involved in activities that God performed (Lk. 1:35; 2 Pet. 1:21; Gen 1:2,26).

I believe in the **personality** of the Holy Spirit. He has the attributes of a person (1 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 8:27). Masculine pronouns are ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Jn. 15:26; Eph. 1:14). Terms used of people are ascribed to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3; 7:51; Heb. 10:29; Eph. 4:30).

In connection with salvation the Holy Spirit regenerates (Jn. 6:63) indwells (Jn. 14:16-17) seals (2 Cor. 1:22) and baptizes (1 Cor. 12:13). The Holy Spirit is involved in the believer's life. He fills (Eph 5:18) guides (Rom 8:14) teaches (Jn. 14:26) and gives power to overcome the flesh (Rom. 8:13).

The Holy Spirit's role in the Old Testament. He was involved in the process of inspiration and revelation (2 Sam. 23:2; Micah 3:8). The Holy Spirit was involved in the act of theocratic anointing. The Holy Spirit acted as a mediator between God and Israel (1 Kings 4:29). The Holy Spirit's role in the New Testament is different after Pentecost (Jn 16:7-8).

The Holy Spirit is a witness to the world (Acts 5:32). He convicts the world (Jn. 16:8). He restrains evil (2 Thes. 2:6-8).

The gifts of the Holy Spirit had different purposes. Some gifts are miraculous and others are not (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28; Romans 12:6-8). The gifts given to the church in Ephesians 4:11-12 were merely offices of leadership that Christ gave to the church. God gifted men to the church. The gifts were intended to be used prior to the completion of revelation (1 Cor. 13:8-13). This has nothing to do with the completion of the Canon of Scripture. Seeing God "face to face" (13:12) meant that they could see "plainly." All

the miraculous gifts have ceased and are no longer needed because the Scriptures are completed.

ECCLESIOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

I believe that the word “church” means “called out ones.” Church is also used to describe an assembly or congregation. The basic meaning of the term is assembly or congregation. Acts 19:39 describes a group of citizens and is not referring to a Church and calls them “the lawful assembly.” Acts 7:38 refers to Israel as a “congregation” and should not be equated with the Church. The church is not Israel and Israel is not the church (Rom. 11:25). The church is introduced in the gospels (Mt. 16:18; 18:17) The church is mentioned in Acts (8:1; 13:1). Paul addresses several local assemblies (Gal. 1:2; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thes. 1:1). The local church consists of those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, have been baptized and are involved in all aspects of the New Testament including the two ordinances. The universal church is described by Paul in Colossians 1:18. The church is the mystery dispensation (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 3:4-6).

Scripture uses several terms to describe the nature of the church. The church is called “the people of God” (1 Pet. 2:9-10; Rom. 9:25) “the Bride of Christ” (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7) “the Body of Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27) and “God’s building” (1 Cor. 3:9-11).

The purpose of the local church is to evangelize and disciple (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8), edify and equip for service (Eph. 4:12), worship God (1 Cor. 16:2; Ps. 96:9), and to display the love of God (1 Jn. 3:17-19).

I believe that the church is to be autonomous (Acts 6:3-4; 15:22). The Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16). I believe that baptism is after conversion and immersion is the biblical mode of baptism (Acts 8:38). Practicing church discipline within the church membership is a distinctive of the church (1 Cor. 5:12-13). The church appoints officers (Acts 6:1-6). The membership is made up of believers (Acts 2:41-47).

I believe that there are two offices in the local church those being pastor and deacon (Phil. 1:1). I believe that the terms Elder, Pastor, and Bishop are synonymous terms referring to the same office (Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2) The qualifications of a Pastor are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. The deacon has the role of service to the Pastor and the church (Acts 6:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). I believe that there are only two ordinances for the local church. The qualifications of an ordinance would be determined by the fact that it was introduced in the gospels, practiced in the book of Acts, and explained in the Epistles. Baptism is the sacred act whereby one is identified with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5). The Lord’s supper is a proclamation of Christ’s death till He comes again (1 Cor. 11:26), an illustration of the unity of believers in the church (1 Cor. 10:17), and the commemoration of the blood that was shed for the remission of sins (Mt. 26:28).

I believe that the church must be careful to practice biblical separation. The church must separate from apostasy (2 Thes. 2:3) from all that is evil (1 Peter 2:9) from those who cause divisions (Rom. 16:17-18) and from false teachers (2 Tim. 2:15-16).

ESCHATOLOGY

THE DOCTRINE OF THE END TIMES

I believe that **death** is when the body and the soul are separated from each other. Stephen is an example of this. “And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’” (Acts 7:59) The intermediate state is the doctrine that explains what happens to individuals between their death and the resurrection. Where are they and what is their condition? Christ gave victory over death (1 Cor. 15:54-57). Death will be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26). Hades is the temporary place of torment and punishment between death and resurrection (Luke 16:22). Gehenna is the place of eternal torment which happens after the second coming of Christ (Mk. 9:43-48; Mt. 16:18-19; Lk. 23:43).

The **Kingdom of God** has caused much confusion in our day. In order for a Kingdom to exist there must be a ruler over a realm of people over which he exercises his rulership (1 Chron. 29:11-12). God’s kingdom is universal (Ps. 145:13). God’s kingdom is spiritual (Col. 1:13-14). God’s kingdom is eternal (Dan. 2:44). The Millennial Kingdom is postponed till Christ returns (Lk. 19:11; Acts 1:6-8).

Two **covenants** have a relation to the end times. The Abrahamic Covenant contains the personal promises that God made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). The promise of the land was never fully realized (1 Kings 4:21) so the literal fulfillment of it must be future. This will occur at the coming millennial kingdom. The Davidic Covenant contains personal promises related to descendants and a Kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Christ came from the line of David (Lk. 1:31-33). Christ is called “the King of the Jews” (Mt. 2:2). Christ proclaimed that His Kingdom was at hand (Mt. 4:17). Only the righteous will inherit the Kingdom (Mt. 5:20).

The **second coming** of Christ will occur at the end of the tribulation (Acts 1:10-11; Phil. 3:20-21).

The **resurrection of the dead** includes both believers and unbelievers. Unbelievers will stand before the Great White Throne of Judgment (Rev. 20). Believers will be resurrected unto eternal life and stand before the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thes. 4:17).

The **tribulation** is the period of seven years when God will pour out his judgment on the earth when antichrist rules the earth (2 Thes. 2:3; Rev. 6-19 see chronology chart).

I believe in the **Pretribulational rapture** of the church. The rapture will occur at any moment (Mt. 24:44). This view holds that the Rapture of the church will occur prior to the seventieth week of Daniel 9:24-27. The church is never mentioned in Revelation chapters 4-19 when the tribulation period is described (Rev 3:10; 1 Thes. 5:4-11).

I believe in the **PreMillennial** return of Christ. **Revelation 20:4-6** supports the position that Christ returned before the millennium. “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their

forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” The verb “come to life” which appears in verses four and five is referring to a resurrection of the same type that involves two different groups of people. The first kind of resurrection was to eternal life and the second kind was to eternal death. The Old Testament predicts that the Messiah would come and reign as king over the land promised to Abraham in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 15:18) and the reign promised to David in the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:12-16). In our dispensation we participate in the New Covenant through the work of Christ. “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” (Ephesians 2:13)

The **final state** for the believer is heaven (Heb. 9:24; 1 Thes. 4:17) and for the wicked will be hell (Mt. 25:41; 8:12). Hell is described in many ways. It is a place of “eternal fire” (Mt. 18:8), “everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2), “eternal destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9), “eternal chains” (Jude 6), “eternal torment” (Rev. 20:10), and “eternal punishment” (Matt. 25:46).

I hold to a classical Dispensational view. A dispensation is not just a period of time or an age of history. It also means administration or house management. God is administering His rule over the world. God administered his rule differently in the Old Testament than he did in the New Testament (Eph 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4). The dispensations are innocence (Gen 1:26-3:24) conscience (Gen. 4:1-8:19) human government (Gen. 8:20-11:32) promise (Gen 12-Ex. 18) Mosaic Law (Ex 19 to the death of Christ) grace, and the millennium (Rev. 20:1-10). I believe that Israel and the church are distinct and that a historical-grammatical hermeneutic must be used when approaching Scripture. I believe that the ultimate purpose in history is to bring glory to God by demonstrating that He is the sovereign God.