

BIBLIOLOGY

The Bible is God's word, breathed from His own mouth as it were (2 Timothy 3:16). In each of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, His will is manifested according to His words. These are, word for word, God's thoughts (verbal) and the whole of them (plenary) they are *all* of His counsels to man. They are to be observed and obeyed in every area of life. (Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4) "If God should descend from heaven a hundred times, he would reveal nothing we need to know in addition to what he has said. His law is perfect wisdom." John Calvin

There are many reasons to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, not only does it claim to be (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Romans 15:4, 2 Peter 1:3), but there are also many infallible proofs (Acts 1:3):

1) THE EXTENT OF BIBLICAL REVELATION Although many books of the Bible were written in the early days of human knowledge, when its authors were not aware of modern discoveries; nevertheless, what they wrote has never been contradicted by later discoveries. **The Bible contains accurate history as well as accurate prophecy** (Ezekiel 26 is particularly fascinating!) This demonstrates easily the Bible's supernatural origin.

2) THE CONTINUITY OF THE BIBLE - The Scriptures were written by more than forty different authors over a period of about 1600 years. The Bible is remarkably one Book, not simply a collection of sixty-six books. The continuity of the Bible can be seen in its historical sequence which begins with the creation of the present world to the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. The main theme that is continued throughout the Bible is the anticipation, presentation and exaltation of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what is known as *Redemptive History* and is an important key to interpretation of the Bible as well!

3) THE INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE - It cannot be said of any other book that it has exerted an influence equal to that of the Bible. The Koran has not instituted schools, hospitals and social benevolence, most other religions are rather self-centered in their practices. The faith of the Bible transforms individuals, and societies through those individuals. The principles of the Reformation influenced the culture of this country in ways that are still widely felt though little understood to this day. As well, men and women of great intelligence; Augustin, John Calvin, Simon Greenleaf, etc., or of average intelligence such as Susanna Wesley or D. L. Moody have seen its truths and been transformed and done much to transform those around them.

4) THE UNPREJUDICED AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE - The human authorship of the Bible has not resulted in prejudice in favor of man. The Bible unhesitatingly records the sin and weaknesses of the best of men (2 Samuel 11), and graphically warns those who rely on their own good works of their ultimate doom (Romans 3:19-20). Although recorded by human pen, it is a message from God to man rather than a message from man to man.

5) THE SUPREME CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE - Above all else, the Bible reveals the person and glory of God as manifested in His Son. (Genesis 3:15, Psalm 2, 22, 85, Isaiah 53 and throughout the New Testament). Jesus Christ could never have been the invention of mortal man, the humility necessary for salvation in Him is in direct opposition to the human nature. (John 1:5, 1 Corinthians 2:14)

DEFINITIONS (BIBLIOLOGY)

INSPIRATION - That supernatural guidance of God, whereby without setting aside the writer's personalities, backgrounds, or emotions, the message of God was recorded in the very words God chose. The words of Scripture were "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

SPECIAL REVELATION - The supernatural communication from God to man of God's will and truth that would not otherwise be known. (1 Corinthians 2:13,14)

ILLUMINATION - The understanding on the part of man of God's special revelation of spiritual truths through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-16).

INTERPRETATION - The act of drawing from Scripture its meaning. The interpretation of Scripture is determined by a careful investigation of the following: A) The Literary Context B) The historical background C) The grammatical usage. D) Creeds, synods, and the historical interpretations of Church fathers. Some may take issue with point D and I would not give it the weight of A-C, however, to think that I am wiser than Augustine, Luther, Calvin, De Bres, or The Westminster Divines, etc. sets me up to be rather arrogant.

VERBAL - The very words of Scripture are inspired. (1 Corinthians 2:13, Jeremiah 1:9)

PLENARY - The Scripture is fully and equally inspired in all its parts. (2 Timothy 3:16, Romans 15:4)

INERRANT - The Scripture is without error (Not only in theological and "spiritual" content, but inerrant in history, science, prophecy, morality, etc.) (Psalm 145:17, 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

INFALLIBLE - The Bible is incapable of teaching error (Num. 23:19, Psalm 19:7-9).

CANON - The 66 books of the Bible that have been recognized as genuine and inspired from their conception (2 Peter 3:16, Luke 11:51).

PRESERVATION - God has preserved His Word so that we can have confidence that we have all of God's Word (1 Peter 1:23,25; Psalm 119:89; Matthew 5:18)

THEOLOGY

I believe that there is only one true God eternally existing in three persons; Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, these being the same in essence though distinct in personality, equal in every divine perfection and attribute, and working harmoniously to accomplish the divine plan of God. (Matthew 3:16-17)

A. The Trinity - Scripture indicates that God exists in a Trinity. Though the Word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, yet it is not an unscriptural word, because the concept of the Trinity is taught throughout the pages of the Word of God. The Trinity is the doctrine that there is one God, but "There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and

these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Answer 6)

1. The Old Testament sometimes uses a plural pronoun to describe God. (Genesis 1:26, 11:7)
2. Jehovah has a Son (Psalm 2:7, 12)
3. Jehovah has a Spirit (Isaiah 40:13)
4. The New Testament also teaches that God is triune. (John 14:6, Mark 1:10,11; Matthew 28:19)
5. Having preached through the book of Exodus, I also see the Trinity in Chapters 23-25 of that book as the Angel of the Lord (Christ) The Cloudy/Fiery Pillar (Holy Spirit and the Presence of God (The Father) between the cherubim on the Mercy Seat, all lead the ancient People of God into Canaan. (Also, see Isaiah 63 as an interpretation of the Exodus Narrative)

B. God the Father - The first person of the Trinity is God the Father. He is the originator or initiator of all the works of the Godhead. His three key works are creation (Gen. 1:1,16), redemption (John 3:16) and the effectual calling (John 6:44)

C. The attributes of God - The Lord possesses the following attributes:

1. He is Spirit - (John 4:24)
2. Infinite, (Job 11:7-9)
3. eternal, (Psalm 90:2)
4. unchangeable, (James 1:17)
5. in his being, (Exodus 3:14)
6. wisdom, (Psalm 147:5)
7. power, (Revelation 4:8)
8. holiness, (Revelation 15:4)
9. justice, goodness, and truth. (Exodus 34:6-7)
10. He is omnipresent - Present in all places. (Psalm 139:7-10)
11. He omniscient - knowing all things (Psalm 11:4, Psalm 147:5, Proverbs 5:21, Acts 15:8)
12. He is omnipotent - all powerful (Genesis 17:1, Matthew 19:26; Isaiah 26:4)
13. He is self-existent - Jehovah; n. The Scripture name of the Supreme Being. If, as is supposed, this name is from the Hebrew substantive verb, the word denotes the Permanent Being, as the primary sense of the substantive verb in all languages, is to be fixed, to stand, to remain or abide. This is a name peculiarly appropriate to the eternal Spirit, the unchangeable God, who describes himself thus, I am that I am. Exodus 3. (Noah Webster)
14. He is perfect - (Deuteronomy 32:4; 2 Samuel 22:31; Matthew 5:48)
15. He is sovereign - (1 Chronicles 29:10-13, 2 Chronicles 20:5-6, Psalm 47:2, 83:18, 103:19, Luke 10:19, John 17:1-2, Romans 9:5,

CHRISTOLOGY

A. The Deity of Christ - I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is one person of the Triune Godhead (John 1:1,2,14, 8:58, Colossians 1:15-17) and He is eternal in essence and power, with

the Father (Acts 20:28) In power He is co-equal with God the Father (John 5:18 Philippians 2:6)

B. The Person of Christ - Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35; John 1:14). He is fully God and fully man; one person with two distinct natures (Colossians 2:9). Being one with God, He was sinless (John 8:46; 19:4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 1:19), though He was tempted (Matthew 4:1-10, Hebrews 2:18, 4:15). Being man, he hungered, thirsted, wearied and experienced human emotion as any other man (Matthew 4:2; John 19:28; John 4:6; Matthew 9:36).

C. The Work of Christ - In the past He was one with the Father in creation (Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:17). He manifests Himself visibly in the Old Testament in the form of Christophanies (Genesis 16:7-14; Exodus 3:6, 23:20; Daniel 3:19-25). Jesus Christ's main purpose for coming to earth was fulfilled on the Cross of Calvary. He was the substitutionary Sacrifice for all whom God would call to Himself, thus serving as a ransom to free men from sin and perdition and give eternal life to all who would receive it (1 Peter 1:18,19; 2 Corinthians 5:21). His death and shed blood was a sin offering and fulfillment of the Old Testament types (Hebrews 9:14,22). He arose bodily from the grave on the third day (Matthew 28:6; Romans 1:4). His resurrection is the first fruit of our future resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:23). He later ascended visibly to Heaven (Acts 1:9-11, 7:55,56).

He is our prophet, giving the words of God to His people and instructing us in the way of salvation and godly living (John 6:63).

He is our High Priest, Intercessor and Advocate with the Father in Heaven (Hebrews 1:13; I John 2:1). In the future, He will visibly return to rapture the saints and establish His kingdom on the earth (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:3-6).

He is our Lord and King, (1 Timothy 6:15, Revelation 17:14).

PNEUMATOLOGY

A. I believe the Holy Spirit is one person of the Trinity and is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son (Acts 5:3,4; Matthew 28:19). He is called God, has all the attributes of God and performs the works of God (Acts 5:3,4; Hebrews 9:14, 1 Corinthians 2:9-11, 2 Peter 1:21; John 3:3-5).

B. The Holy Spirit is a person, not a force or influence. He is referred to by a masculine pronoun (John 16:14). He possesses personality, intellect, emotion and volition (1 Corinthians 2:11, Romans 15:30, 1 Corinthians 12:11).

C. During the Old Testament period, the Holy Spirit's work among unbelievers was to convict of sin (Genesis 6:3). He did not indwell every individual believer during this era. Instead, He came upon certain men empowering them to perform certain tasks (Judges 3:10; Judges 6:34; 1 Samuel 16:13).

D. Presently, the Holy Spirit convinces men of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11; He helps and intercedes for Christians (John 16:7-13, Romans 8:26-27). In the church age the Holy Spirit resides in the heart of every believer (Romans 8:9, I John 4:13). I believe the filling of the Spirit is a continuing process, but the regenerating, indwelling, sealing and baptizing of the Holy Spirit are a once for all event that takes place at the time of salvation (Ephesians 5:18; John 3:3-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:13,14).

E. When the Spirit was given to the early church, He was accompanied by miraculous sign gifts; tongues, prophecy, healing and miracles as prophesied by Joel (Joel 2:28). These gifts authenticated the early church and its message. Some modern Christians emphasize these gifts and suggest that they are common to every Believer. I reject this as heresy in those who would divide the Church over it and in those who consider themselves as superior because of them. I do not hold that the cessationist view is substantiated by 1 Corinthians 13:10. Ephesians 2:20 tells us that the Church has been built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. This being so there is no need for these particular gifts in the sense in which they were originally given. I believe that this is confirmed by Hebrews 2:2-4 where we are told that these signs confirmed the message of those who were eye-witnesses of the Lord's ministry.

F. The Holy Spirit does give certain gifts to the church today for service and edification of the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:4-11; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:4-16) However, we have seen some of these listed in the passages above that have passed out of use in the Church as the necessity for them passed with the development of the canon of Scripture; i.e. Apostle, prophet, and other revelatory gifts as well as sign gifts that authenticated the message..

ANTHROPOLOGY

A. I believe in the Biblical account of creation as given in Genesis where it is revealed that man and creation were created in six (6) literal twenty-four (24) hour days by the Godhead apart from any act of evolution (Gen 1 & 2). Man is the crowning achievement of God's creation and made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7; Colossians 1:16,17).

B. Man was created in innocence and sinlessness, and was equally capable of choosing to sin or not to sin (Genesis 2:16,17). Adam freely chose to willfully disobey God (Genesis 3:6,7) falling from innocence to a state of spiritual and physical death with the end result of eternal separation from the presence of God (Genesis 2:13, 3:6-8; 2, Thessalonians 1:9, Romans 5:12). As a result of Adam's sin the entire human race was plunged into condemnation. All mankind sinned in Adam, and inherited spiritual death with him (Romans 5:12-21). However, the sons of Adam are not sinners merely as a result of their inherited nature, but by their own personal conduct as well (Romans 3:10-18). Man is in a lost, sinful condition and therefore unable to save himself or have any spiritual merit before God including the ability to choose God or any moral good (John 5:25, 6:44, Ephesians 1:18-20, Romans 3:10-18, 2 Corinthians 5:20, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). Man is absolutely responsible for his own sin and condemnation (Romans 3:23, 6:2)

C. Man is a bipartite creature and is made up of body & soul (or spirit, heart; generally *pneuma* (spirit) may be described as the principle, *psuche* (soul) as the subject and *cardia* (heart) as the *organ* of life.. The soul or spirit are the immaterial portion of man, though the terms refer to two

different aspects of this immaterial portion. Soul seems to generally refer to the life force, the animating agent, whereas spirit seems to refer to the immaterial portion as a moral agent, susceptible to divine influence. Body, of course, refers to the physical (material) aspect of man. The heart is the link between these aspects of man and is often the source of sinful or righteous actions (Matthew 12:25)

1. Only one living principle was breathed into man at the beginning. (Gen. 2:7)
2. Life and Spirit are used interchangeably in various passages. (Job 27:3)
- 3) Soul and spirit seem to be used interchangeably in some passages. (Gen. 41:8; Psalm 42:6)4) Both Spirit and soul are ascribed to animals, whereas the tripartite interpretation would ascribe only soul to animals. (Eccl. 3:21; Rev. 16:3)
- 5) "Soul" is ascribed to Jehovah. (Amos 6:8, Jer. 9:9, Isa. 42:1)
- 6) Body and soul are said to constitute the whole of man. (Matt. 10:28, I Cor. 5:3)
- 7) To lose the soul is to lose everything. (Matt. 16:26, Mark 8:36, 37)

HAMARTIOLOGY

A. I believe the standard God requires for man's conduct is complete obedience, whether conscious or unconscious, to His law. Sin is failure to be completely obedient. Any lack of conformity to the character of God or His law is sin (1 John 3:4). The first sin was committed when Lucifer lifted himself up in pride and said, "I will" (Isaiah 14:12-14). Sin is any want of conformity to or transgression of the Law of God (Westminster Shorter Catechism Answer 6)

B. Man has a sin nature which is inherited as a result of Adam's sin. The Scriptures teach that all mankind sinned in Adam, and inherited spiritual death with him. This spiritual death entails loss of fellowship with God, loss of innocence and the possession of a sin nature. Because of the sin nature, man is depraved (every faculty is corrupted {Ephesians 4:18}); he is sinful and can in no way change this condition, except by placing saving faith in Christ to change this condition for Him. (Romans 7:18; Romans 5:12-14; Ephesians 6:12; Romans 3:9-16; 1 Corinthians 2:14).

C. All men have sinned. Romans 3:23, Romans 3:10.

D. The penalty of sin is both physical & eternal death to be escaped from only through salvation in Jesus Christ. (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:12-15)

E. God's standard of judgment is the Moral Law, i.e. the Ten Commandments. (Romans 3:19, Galatians 3:10-14)

SOTERIOLOGY

A. I believe that salvation is through the Son of God who by His substitutionary death paid the penalty for all whom the Lord would call (John 6:44; Rom 5:6-10). I believe that salvation is completely dependent upon the grace of God, can be obtained only through the gift of God and that man in his lost condition can in no way merit salvation (Ephesians 2:9; Romans 6:23; Titus 3:5).

B. The Savior died and shed His blood as the perfect, vicarious sacrifice necessary for every man's salvation (John 10:15; Romans 3:24,25; Galatians 3:13).

C. The only condition for salvation is repentance from sin and faith in the substitutionary death in the resurrected Son of God (Acts 17:30; Luke 15:7-10; Matthew 21:32; Luke 13:2-5; Romans 4:5; Galatians 2:16). I refer to these as a condition rather than conditions (plural) because the two are inseparable in Scriptural usage.

D. Repentance is a change of view with regard to sin, God and self, as well as a change of will and disposition. It is not a work, but a condition of the heart that is a result of the work of the Spirit in illuminating us to understand our sinfulness and God's holiness, contrasted with His gracious offer of the Gospel and accompanies our calling upon the Lord in faith (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Acts 2:38). It is also a gift of God as is faith (Romans 12:3, 2 Timothy 2:25).

E. Saving faith is more than just an intellectual assent to the facts of the gospel but includes an awareness of and receptiveness to the personal application of those facts. This faith receives the truth (Acts 16:31; Romans 10:14; Matthew 11:28-29; John 1:12), and produces, in the Believer, a desire to act on what he has believed (Hebrews 11; James 2:14-26)

F. At the moment of salvation, the believer is forgiven of all sin and endowed with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Colossians 1:14; Ephesians 1:3). After salvation nothing is capable of separating the believer from eternal life. This security is dependent upon God's ability to keep the believer and not the believer's ability to keep himself (Romans 8:35-39; John 10:27-30; 2 Timothy 1:12). God's keeping of the believer extends to His commitment to carry the believer on to maturity in Him (Romans 8:35-39).

G. Election is the free act of God whereby He chose in Christ Jesus for salvation all those whom His good pleasure determined before time began (Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:3-5, 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 1:2). It is a sovereign act in that God was under no obligation to elect any one (since it was entirely undeserved). God gives to all whom He chooses the ability to believe and repent (Ephesians 2:8, John 6:44-46)

H. Predestination / Foreordination refer to God's determination to save the elect (Rom. 8:29-30, 1 Peter 1:2).

I. Sanctification is both an act and a process, taking place positionally upon salvation and practically throughout the time of a believer's stay upon the earth. (Romans 8:29)

J. 2 Corinthians 13:5 commands us to examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith. While God-pleasing works are not necessary to obtain salvation (Romans 4:5), and must not be

trusted in for salvation (Galatians 2:16), they are a necessary by-product of salvation (Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:14). The believer's heart is changed to produce a desire for good works (Colossians 3:5-10; 2 Corinthians 5:17). The believer is not sinless, but has a concern for the works of God which the unbeliever cannot duplicate nor comprehend. This concern for good works and obedience to God is the believer's evidence that he is truly a child of God (1 John 2:29).

DEFINITIONS:

Adoption - The benevolent act of God in which He places redeemed sinners into a position of son-ship in the family of God (Galatians 3:26). It is spoken of with reference to the resurrection of the body -- which seems to be the point at which we are adopted into adult responsibility as heirs.

Atonement - All that Christ accomplished in His sacrificial death on the cross. It means literally "to cover" and carries with it the thought of putting sin out of sight, covering it over by blood (Romans 5:11-12, Colossians 2:13-14, Titus 2:14).

Eternal Security - The Security from God of all true Believers unto their final salvation (John 10:27-30).

Faith - Entrusting (to the extent of personal application and appropriation) oneself to the accomplished redemption of Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture (John 1:12, Romans 4:3).

Imputation - It means literally the "reckoning to the account of another" and is the charging of our sin to Christ and Christ's righteousness to us (Isaiah 53:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21). I believe that this is best understood through the idea of Federal Headship.

Justification - The judicial act of God whereby He declares righteous the believing sinner at the moment of salvation (Romans 3:24-28; 5:1).

Propitiation - The satisfaction of all that God's righteous demands for judgments on the sinner by the death of Christ (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17, 1 John 2:2).

Redemption - The payment of the price of sin by the sacrifice of Christ whereby He purchased the believer out of the slave market of sin and set him free, never to be under the yoke of sin's penalty again (Ephesians 1:7,8, Colossians 1:14).

Regeneration - The imparting of a spiritual life and nature to enable repentance and faith (Ephesians 2:1-8, Titus 3:3-5).

Repentance - The act of changing one's inner attitude regarding God, sin and ourselves with the result in a change of direction (Acts 20:21; 2 Corinthians 7:7- 11, 1 Thessalonians 1:9).

Sanctification - The state of being set apart unto God; positionally, (past, Colossians 1:13). practically (present, Romans 15:16) and eternally (future, 1 John 3:2).

ECCLESIOLOGY

A. I believe that the Church, as taught in the New Testament has two aspects, universal and local. The universal church, or the body of Christ, is composed of all genuine believers in Jesus Christ. It is not an organization, but a spiritual organism (Ephesians 1:19-23; 2:11-22, Colossians 1:18; Galatians 3:26-29, 2 Peter 1:1). The local church is the manifestation of the universal church in a particular community. It is an organized body of baptized believers who meet regularly for the purpose of worship, fellowship, observance of the ordinances and the proclamation of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 16:2, Hebrews 10:25).

B. The local church is to be autonomous and self-governing, yet the New Testament offers some provision for dictation of local church policy by external organizations or individuals. (Titus 1:5, Revelation 1:4-5) The Savior is the head of each local assembly and pastors are the undershepherds of His flock (Ephesians 1:22; Acts 20:28).

C. The New Testament church has two Biblical ordinances (sacraments); Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ordinances are symbolic (Covenant Signs) and they possess no authority in the matter of individual salvation, but are a matter of obedience to the Word of God and a means of grace appointed by God, through the Spirit to the obedient.

- Baptism is outward identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:27). It was instituted by Christ (Matthew 28:19-20), and practiced by the early church (Acts 2:38,42; Acts 8:12,13,36; 1 Peter 3:21). Baptism is only for individuals who have trusted Christ as their own Savior (Acts 2:38,41; Acts 8:36,37; Acts 18:8).
 - Though I have spent my entire life in churches that hold a Credo-Baptist view (as demonstrated above) I can see very clearly the Covenant position of the Paedo-Baptists as well. It is, 1) An acknowledgment that God works in Families. 2) That He works through covenant. 3) It is a sign of the strong faith of the parents that God will ultimately act on behalf of the godly offspring produced by the holy state of matrimony and not a salvific rite.
- The Lord's Supper is symbolic of the shed blood and broken body of Christ on the cross (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:17-20). The ordinance is done in memory of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, and is a sign of our on-going obedience to Him. It is only to be practiced by those who are saved and obedient to the Lord, and should be practiced only with the proper attitude and respect (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

D. There are only two Biblical offices in a New Testament church; elder/pastor and deacon. Qualifications for these offices are listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. The terms pastor, bishop and elder are synonymous and only relate different aspects of the same office (Acts 20:17-28; 1 Peter. 5:1,2). The Scriptures always speak of a multiplicity of elders/pastors in the local church (Acts. 14:23; Acts 20:17 Titus 1:5).

E. God's peculiar people originally were the nation of Israel as instituted by God in the Covenant of Grace given to Abraham and identified by the rite of circumcision (Genesis 17:1-14). The New Testament institutes baptism as the sign of faith (Acts 2:38-39) and removes the cultural

and racial distinctions of God's covenant people and abrogates the ceremonial law making Jews and Gentiles equal under the New Covenant (Ephesians 2:13-22).

ANGELOLOGY

A. Angels are created (Neh. 9:6; Psalm 148:2,5) spiritual (Psalm 104:4) beings. The time of their creation is not specified, but it was prior to the creation of the earth (Job 38:4-7). They are greater in intelligence, power, strength, and rank than mankind (2 Samuel 14:20; 2 Peter 2:11; Hebrews 2:9). They are an innumerable company (Hebrews 12:22), and they are immortal (Luke 20:36).

B. There are two categories of angels: those who kept their original position of holiness (Matthew 25:31), and those who follow Satan (Lucifer) in his rebellion (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:4). Fallen angels, known as demons, are active in attempting to hinder the work of God (Daniel 10:13) and oppress, but never possess believers (2 Corinthians 12:7). The remainder of the angels who have kept their holy position have been confirmed in holiness (1 Timothy 5:21). They are God's ministers carrying out His will and ministering to the saints (Daniel 10:12,13; 12:1; Hebrews 1:14). They will accompany the Lord Jesus Christ at His second coming (Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8).

C. The most beautiful angel was Lucifer. Pride and blind ambition caused him to sin and rebel against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; 1 Tim. 3:6; Ezek. 28:11-19). He is a personal being with tremendous power. (Ephesians 6:11,12; John 8:44). Satan is the author of sin and the adversary of God and His people. (1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:10; 20:8,9). At the end of the age Satan is condemned to lose his battle with God, he and his demons will be cast into a lake of fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41).

ESCHATOLOGY

After much study on the subject of eschatology, I am convinced of one thing, it is not as cut and dry as many would like to make it.

At this point I *lean (pretty strongly) toward* an Idealist, Amillennialism, largely because it harmonizes the various views with the expectation of multiple fulfillments. At one time I thought that the study of prophecy was of little importance, primarily since most people I knew who did study it were out of balance, taught only prophecy and profited from the fear which they imposed. With my study of theology and especially historical theology I am seeing a far greater value in the study of prophecy and have engaged in a serious study of this subject. Though this is a thorny and difficult subject, I approach these doctrines as any other, with a full study of the texts and their literary, cultural and historical interpretation and application and relationship to the narrative of Redemptive History.