

# Doctrinal Statement

## Bibliology – THE BIBLE

I believe all Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters to which they speak.

### A. Revelation

Revelation is the communication from God to man of truth which man could not discover for Himself. It is the supernatural self-disclosure of God to man in some form of communication. (2 Peter 1:19-21) All divine revelation can be categorized under two broad headings: general revelation and special revelation. General revelation is the manifestation of God to man through natural phenomena, creation and nature. (Psalm 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-21; Rom. 2:14-16) Special revelation is God's message in what was codified in the Bible as communicated by various means (mighty acts of God in human history Gen. 9, 1 Kings 17:19, Psalm 135:7-9; physical appearances of God Ex. 13:21-22, Ex. 19:1-3, Gen. 32:24-30; dreams and visions Dan. 7:1, Num. 12:6, 1 Sam 3:1; Jesus Christ John 1:14-18, Col.2:3,9; the written word of God/the Bible 2 Tim. 3:16-17, Ex. 31:18)

### B. Inspiration

Simply defined, inspiration is the Holy Spirit's superintendence of the human authors of Scripture, the result of which was that those authors wrote exactly what God longed and intended for them to write. All Scripture, the entire Bible, is inspired by God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13) Specific elements of the inspirations of Scripture are it is inexplicable [not capable of human explanation], it is limited to Scripture, it can be applied only to the writings not the writers, writers were kept from all error and omission, and it allows for the human element. Because Scripture is God-breathed it is inerrant, infallible, eternal and profitable.

### C. Inerrancy

The Bible is in perfect accord with truth and free from all error. Truth can and does include approximations, free quotations, the language of appearances, and different accounts of the same event as long as these do not contradict. (Prov. 30:5-6; Matt. 5:17-18)

### D. Infallibility

The product of inspiration is the completed canon of Scripture, the 66 books of the Old and New Testament, which constitute the fully authoritative written Word of God and thus becomes our rule of life. (1 Cor. 14:37; Josh. 1:7-8; Matt. 5:17; Luke 11:51)

### E. Illumination

Illumination is the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by which He enables men to understand and embrace the truths recorded in the Bible. Jn. 16:7-11; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; Ps. 119:18-19)

## Theology Proper - GOD

I believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite intelligent Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love.

### A. Existence of God

There are four rational arguments for the existence of God. First the Cosmological Argument [cause and effect], Teleological Argument [order and useful arrangement in a system imply intelligence and purpose in the originating cause], Moral Argument [the mental and moral condition of man for the existence of an author, law giver, and an end], Historical Argument [states that among all the groups of people on the earth there is a sense of God]. (John 1:18) God has revealed Himself to us through general and special revelation. Mankind has always seen in nature a revelation of God, the universe is a manifestation of His power, glory, divinity and goodness. God reveals Himself through Scripture in His names and by His works. (Ps. 8:1-4; Acts 14:15-17; Rom. 1:19-21)

### B. Attributes of God

These are the characteristics of His divine being which are taught in Scripture and are visibly used by Him in His works of creation and redemption. The divine attributes of God include omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, immutability, and eternal. Omniscience, which means God knows all things past, present, or future. (1 John 3:20; Is. 46:10) Omnipotence, which means God is all-powerful, He is able to do whatever He wills. (Psalm 115:1-3) Omnipresence, which means God is present everywhere in all parts of space, time and eternity. (Ps. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24) Immutability, which means God is unchangeable, He is completely and fully perfect in all His being and attributes. (James 1:17) Eternal, which means God's ever presence, He existence with no beginning or end. (Ps. 90:1-2; Ex. 3:14) The moral attributes of God are the attributes that are shown in the relationship between God and man, and are therefore communicable to a certain degree to mankind. His holiness (Is. 6:3; 1 John 1:5; 1 Peter 1:15; Rev. 4:8), righteousness (Gen 18:25; Ps. 89:14), faithfulness (Deut 7:9; 2 Tim 2:13, 1 Thes. 5:24), justice (Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Thes. 1:8-9; Rom. 12:19), loving (Jn. 16:27; 3:16), mercy (Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4), goodness (Rom. 8:32), and grace (Eph. 1:6-7; 2:7-9; Titus 2:11,3:4-7).

### C. Triunity of God

There is only one God, but in the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and equal persons. (Deut. 6:4; Is. 48:16; Matt. 28:18-20) God eternally exist in three persons, the Father (Jn. 6:27; 1 Peter 1:2), the Son (Jn. 1:1-14; 20:28), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 2:11, 12:4-6).

### D. Sovereignty of God

God is absolutely sovereign; the supreme ruler over all things visible and invisible, and works out all things according to His perfect plan. (Is. 46:9-10, Rom. 8:28-30, 11:33-36)

## Pneumatology – HOLY SPIRIT

I believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature. He is active in His work in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. His ministry is to implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost and empowering the believer for godly living and service.

### A. Personality of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a person as evidenced by:

1. The fact that personal pronouns are used when referring to Him. (Jn. 16:7-8,13-14)
2. The fact that the actions of a person are ascribed to Him: speaking (Rev. 2:7; Matt. 10:20), interceding (Rom. 8:26; Heb. 7:25), testifying (Jn. 15:26), calling and directing (Acts 13:2, 16:6-7, 20:28).
3. The fact that He has personal characteristics: intellect (1 Cor 2:12-11), emotion (Eph. 4:30), and will (1 Cor. 12:11).

### B. Deity of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is fully God, as evidenced by:

1. Divine names are given to Him (1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 8:15)
2. He possesses divine attributes: eternal (Heb. 9:14), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7,10), omnipotent (Luke 1:35), omniscience (1 Cor. 2:10,11).
3. Divine works are ascribed to Him: creation (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30), regeneration (Jn. 3:5-7), and resurrection (Rom. 8:11).

### C. Works (Ministry) of the Holy Spirit

Specific ministries of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament were the restraint of evil in wicked men (Gen. 6:3; Neh. 9:20,30), enable men to perform special service (Ex. 31:3, 2 Chron. 15:1-7), and enabling those in rule and authority [no parallel to the indwelling of New Testament believers] (1 Sam. 10:1-9, 16:14).

In the earthly life of Jesus Christ, Christ was anointed by the Spirit (Jn. 1:32-34), filled with the Spirit (Jn. 3:34; Lk. 4:1), led by the spirit (Lk. 4:1; Jn. 8:29), and empowered by the Spirit (Matt. 12:28).

In relation to the New Testament believer, the Holy Spirit regenerates (Jn. 3:3-7; Titus 3:5), indwells (Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19), baptizes (1 Cor. 12:13, Eph. 1:13-14), seals (2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:13, 4:30), fills (Eph. 5:18). In a person's life we can see the results of the work of the Spirit (John 3:8).

In the church, the Holy Spirit gives gifts for service to all believers, according to His sovereign will (1 Cor. 12-14). These spiritual gifts are for the carrying out of God's work and edification of the body of Christ.

## Ecclesiology – THE CHURCH

I believe the Church is the spiritual body and family of God which Christ is head. The Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. I believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies whose members have confessed faith in Christ and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism, for fellowship, and for service. Ordinances of the local church are baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

### A. Definition of the Church

The English word "church" is derived from the Greek work *kyriakon* which means "belonging to the Lord". The Greek word, *ekklesia*, means assembly, or congregation, and is used in the New Testament in a general sense (Acts 7:38, 19:32, 39, 41), and in a technical sense to denote the assembly of believers in Jesus Christ, both universally and locally.

The universal Church is comprised of all regenerated persons. (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23) The local church is comprised of professed believers in Jesus Christ who meet together regularly to worship God. (Acts 2:41, 8:1, 14:23; 1 Cor. 1:2)

### B. Leadership of the Church

Christ, as the head of the church (Col. 1:18), has given the leadership of local churches to qualified men (1 Tim. 3; Titus 1) under His guidance (Eph. 4:11-16). The New Testament sets forth two offices in the local church, elders and deacons. The principal ministry of the elders consists of overseeing the work of the church in all its aspects. The elders general oversight includes presiding (1 Tim. 5:17) and leading (Heb. 13:17), not as lord or dictator, but with control and authority (1 Pet. 5:3). General oversight also includes guarding the truth (Titus 1:9). This is why elders must be able to teach. (1 Tim. 3:2) Deacons are called to serve and assist the elders with material concerns. (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8-13) A generalized summary would be bishop [Senior Pastor, lead elder], elders [Staff, lay spiritual leaders], deacons [lay servants].

### C. Ordinances of the Church

There are two ordinances that are to be observed by the local church as commanded by Christ in the New Testament. The first is baptism (Matt. 28:19-20), which is the immersion of professed believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41, 8:41), as an outward sign of an inward change in their life (2 Cor. 5:17). The second is communion, or the Lord's Supper, which is a remembrance of the death of Christ. (1 Cor. 11:24, 26) Communion should be observed by professing believers in Christ. (1 Cor. 11 23-34)

### D. Autonomy of the Local Church

I believe each local church has the duty to govern itself (Rom. 12:16; 1 Cor. 1:10), it is responsible to maintain pure doctrine and practice (Jude 3; 1 Thes. 5:21), it should elect its own officers and leaders (Acts 6:1-6; 2 Cor. 8:19), and it has the authority to settle its own internal affairs (1 Cor. 6:1-5; Matt. 18).

## Christology – JESUS CHRIST

I believe that Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son, and has precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. I believe further that He is not only true God, but true man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. I also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible, return from Heaven.

### A. The Wonder of Christ: His Personal Majesty

Christ existed before the incarnation (John 8:58; Ex. 3:2,4; John 1:1-2; Is. 40:3), which provides a fundamental proof for the deity of Christ. The incarnation of Christ is when He took upon Himself humanity and was born of a virgin (Matt. 1:23; Lk. 1:35). Jesus was and is perfectly and completely human. He was truly God in eternity, and He maintained perfect deity in the incarnation. But at that time He also took upon Himself genuine human nature. His humanity was and is full and authentic, in form and nature. (Heb. 2:14; Matt. 26:38; Lk. 23:46) Jesus exercised all the attributes of human existence: His birth (Lk. 2:5-12), His growth and development (Lk. 2:40-52), and His emotions (Mark 3:5; Jn. 11:35, 13:23, 12:27). He also maintained perfect deity, He partakes of the very essence and nature of God; He is one with the Father, co-equal and co-eternal (Col 2:9; Is. 9:6; Jn. 1:1; Rom. 9:5; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3,8; Rev. 1:8). Kenosis was the voluntary nonuse of certain attributes during His earthly life. His deity is evidenced in that divine titles given to Him in the New Testament (Jn. 5:18, Heb. 1:8, Jn 20:28; 1 Cor. 12:8; Acts 3:14), divine attributes are ascribed to Him (Jn. 1:4; Eph. 3:8, Heb. 5:9; Jn. 5:19-21; Jn. 1:48; Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor 1:24; Heb. 13:8; Eph. 3:19), and divine works are attributed to Him (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:17, Jn. 14:14, 11:24-25).

### B. The Warfare of Christ: His Propitiating Ministry

The death of Christ is the central theme of all Scripture. His death was a substitutionary atonement providing redemption from sin, reconciliation of man, and propitiation towards God. (Is. 53:6; Rom. 3:21; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 Jn. 2:2, 4:10) Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day, in the same body, albeit glorified, in which He lived and died, and ascended bodily into heaven, where He now exercises His ministries of advocacy and intercession. (Lk. 24:42; Jn. 20:20; Acts 1:9-10; 1 Cor. 5:1-18; Eph. 1:20-23 1 Jn. 2:1) His resurrection provides the guarantee and hope for the future resurrection of the believers. (1 Cor 15; Phil. 3:20-21)

### C. The Work of Christ: His Present Ministry

Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the offices of prophet, priest, and king:

1. Prophet: the essence of Christ's prophetic ministry is that Jesus represents God to man, He speaks to God for man. (Jn. 8:26-30; Matt. 24:3-35; Acts 1:1)
2. Priest: the essence of Christ's priestly ministry is Jesus represents man before God, the work of intercession. (Jn. 17; Heb. 7:25-27, 5:1-10; Rom. 8:34)
3. King: the essence of Christ's Kingly ministry is that Jesus reigns as sovereign over all creation and occupies the place of authority. (Eph. 5:23; Jude 24-25; Rev. 20:6)

## Anthropology - MAN

I believe God created man, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. But by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless state, in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, continuing to choose to sin; therefore, man is under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

### A. Creation of Man

Man was created supernaturally, directly by God. (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7) The entire human race descends from Adam and Eve. (Gen. 5)

### B. Character of Man (Trichotomy)

God designed man in His own image (Gen 1:26), having personality (Gen 9:6), dominion over creation (Gen. 1:26-28), a spirit (Col. 3:10), and a moral nature (Rom. 2:14-15). The Bible speaks specifically of man as possessing spirit, soul, and body. (1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; Lk 1:46-47) The soul and spirit, although may not be separated, may be distinguished in that the soul is man's immaterial part that gives him life (Rom. 13:1; Is. 10:18; 1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 4:12), while the spirit is the immaterial part of man with the capacity to know and enjoy God (Rom. 8:16; Matt. 5:3; Rom. 1:9).

### C. Contamination of Man

Man, created in a state of innocence, fell into sin through an act of disobedience (Gen 3:1-6). As a result, man incurred physical, spiritual, and eternal death (Gen 2:17; Eph. 2:1-3). By virtue of every man's relationship to Adam, every individual is conceived in a state of sin and depravity (Mark 7:21-22; Rom. 5:12-21). For example I don't have to teach my son to hit his sister and be bad, I have to teach him to be good.

## Hamartiology - SIN

I believe that sin is directed against God Himself and that all men are born into sin, our sin nature. The Bible has clear teaching on the definition of sin and its consequences. The only remedy of sin is forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

### A. Definition of Sin

Sin has generally been defined as lawlessness, that is, defection from any of God's standards. It is the "lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition or state" (*Systematic Theology, [Philadelphia: Judson, 1907] p.269*). Sin is missing the mark, including hitting the wrong mark (Ex. 20:20; Judges 20:16; Prov. 8:30). It includes the moral wrong (Gen. 3:5; 38:7; Matt. 7:11; Rom. 12:9), unrighteous conduct (2 Thes. 2:10), deceit (Matt. 24:5-6), and going astray (Ps. 58:3; Rom. 5:15-20).

### B. Essence of Sin

Although it would be inadequate to define sin as "selfishness", it is accurate to say that the essential nature of sin is "selfishness". All sin can be ultimately traced to an exaltation of self and a corresponding contempt for God's person and glory (Gen. 3:5; 2 Thes. 2:3-4).

### C. Origin of Sin

1. The origin of sin in the universe was the fall of Satan (Is. 14:4-21; Ez. 28:11-19). Satan became overwhelmed with his own majesty and decided to rebel against God and seize His throne.
2. The origin of sin in the human race is the fall of Adam (Gen. 3:1-6).
3. The origin of sin in the individual is man's depravity. By the virtue of man's relationship to Adam, every individual is conceived in a state of sin and depravity (Mark 7:21-22).

### D. Imputation of Sin

All men existed in Adam and when Adam sinned all men in Adam sinned (Gen. 3:20; Rom. 5:12). Therefore man is pronounced guilty because of Adam's sin. This is the Augustinianism, Seminal Headship view; which can be summarized this way. Man's state of birth is depraved and under condemnation. Because of actual sin in Adam, all descendants are depraved. All took part in Adam's sin, nature thus fallen; that nature works itself out in sins. By trusting in Christ's work, being made one with Him, receiving His righteousness is how men are saved.

## **Soteriology - SALVATION**

I believe in eternally secure salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. I further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, and was purchased by Christ on the cross, being of unlimited atonement; and is received by man through faith, apart from any human merit, works, or ritual.

### A. Principles of Salvation

Man is totally unable to save himself by reason of depravity (Is. 64:6), condemnation (Rom. 5:12; John 3:36), alienation (Eph. 4:17-19), and a corrupted will (Rom. 3:11). Salvation is the work of God; it originates with the plan of God (Eph. 1:4), is made possible only by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-10), and is brought to completion by the power of God (Phil 1:6). Finally, God's ultimate motive in saving man is for His own glory (1 John 4:9,10; Eph. 2:7).

### B. Preparation for Salvation

1. Grace is God's favor to sinners who don't merit it, cannot earn it, cannot repay it, and who do not want it. The basic reality from which all other salvation truth issues, is this: God is gracious (Rom. 3:24).
2. Concerning election, I believe God's electing activity had no immediate connection with persons but rather a plan. God elected how and fully to save rather than who to save (Eph. 1:4-5).
3. The Holy Spirit's calling is the act of God by which men are invited to accept by faith the salvation provided in Christ. God's general call is the invitation through which all who hear are offered salvation through Christ (Is. 45:22; Matt. 11:28). God's special call is the calling of God, which results in the individuals responding in faith and being saved (Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:18; 2 Tim. 1:9). The instrument of this special call in the Scriptures and the agent is the Holy Spirit.

### C. Plan of Salvation

1. Generally, to have faith is to trust; to cast yourself upon that which is dependable. To have faith in Christ unto salvation means to have confidence that He can remove the guilt of sin and grant eternal life. Faith includes the knowledge of the truth (James 2:19), ascent to the truth (Matt. 13:23), and the choice to exercise trust (John 1:12). The object of that faith must be the person and work of Jesus Christ.
2. Biblical repentance is that voluntary change in the center by which we turn from sin to God (Acts. 20:21; Rev. 9:21). Like faith, repentance involves the whole man. There must be knowledge of the truth concerning sin (Ps. 51:3), a genuine hatred from sin and love for the Truth (2 Cor. 7:9-10), and a change of purpose, decision to seek pardon (Ps. 51:10-13).
3. Conversion is the turning away from sin and towards God (1 Thes. 1:9). The results of conversion are removal of sin (Acts 3:19), forgiveness of sins and an inheritance from God (Acts 26:18), spiritual enlightenment from God (2 Cor. 3:16), and Christian service and hope of the rapture (1 Thes. 1:9-10).

### D. Products of Salvation

Biblical realities, which become the experience and possession of the believer the moment he places his faith in the finished work of Christ. The three concepts are: union with Christ, justification, and regeneration. Do not regard these three as separate and sequential experiences. They are three distinct ways in which the Bible portrays that which occurs at the moment of salvation.

1. The term "union with Christ" is not used in Scripture, in fact the Scriptures simply speak of the relationship between Christ and the believer as a union of the most intimate nature, and various means are employed to represent the intimate and precious nature of that relationship (John 14:23; Col. 3:3-4). Our union with Christ secures for us complete identification with Christ and His redemptive work (Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:20), secures our participation in all spiritual blessings in Christ (Rom. 8:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:30), secures an ideal and perfect completeness (Col. 2:10), and secures a vital and blessed union with all other believers (Gal. 3:28).
2. Justification is the judicial act of God by which He declares the sinners righteous and treats him as such (Rom. 5:1). The source of justification is grace (Rom 3:24), the basis is the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9), the appropriation is by faith (Rom. 3:28), and the evidence of justification is godly works (James 2:24).
3. Regeneration is the work of God which gives new life to the one who believes. God regenerates according to His will (James 1:18) through the Holy Spirit (John 3:5) when a person believes the Gospel as revealed in the Scriptures (1 Peter 1:23).

### E. Progress of Salvation

This is the Biblical concepts which come to the believer as a result of salvation, but which become his progressively, as he grows as a child of God.

1. The concept of sanctification is to be set away from one thing and unto another. Sanctification is a process that has to do with deliverance from the penalty of sin (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Heb. 10:10,14), the power of sin (1 Pet. 1:14,15; John 17:17), and the presence of sin (1 Thes. 3:12,13; 1 John 3:2).

Although in regeneration the governing disposition of the soul is made holy, there still remains a tendency to evil within the soul of the believer (Rom. 6:12). Because of this, there continues to be a conflict in the believer's life; sanctification is not automatic or easy (Gal. 5:17). In this struggle, it is the Holy Spirit who enables the believer progressively to conquer the sinfulness in his nature (Rom. 8:13,14).

2. Concerning eternal security, God secures and guarantees the salvation of all true believers (John 6:39; Rom. 11:29; Phil 1:6). Eternal security encourages true believers to work for God, it gives assurance and joy to the believer, it gives hope to a timid and fearful Christian, and it produces consistent Christian living.
3. Glorification is the culmination of the work of salvation; it is the divine act by which the believer becomes finally and fully conformed to God's image (Rom. 8:30).

### **Angelology - ANGELS**

I believe in the reality of the existence of angels, demons and Satan. They are at work around us, some for the good of God and other for evil of the world.

#### A. The Existence and Nature of Angels

Angels are created beings (Ps. 148:5), created by God (Col. 1:16). They are spirit beings (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:14), can take human form (Gen. 18:1; Heb. 13:2), have might and power (Matt. 28:2), and have great knowledge (2 Sam. 14:20). Angels differ in rank and order: Cherubim who are guardians of God's throne (Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:20), Seraphim who are concerned with the worship and holiness of God (Is. 6:1-2,6-7), and Archangels (1 Thes. 4:16). Their heavenly ministry is to praise and worship God (Is. 6:2,3; Rev. 5:11,12) and their ministry on earth includes guiding the believer (Acts 8:26), cheer and strengthen God's people (Matt. 4:11), defend and protect the believer (Dan. 6:22; Acts 12:7-11).

#### B. The Existence and Nature of Satan

Satan is the prince of demons (Matt. 12:24). He was an anointed cherub (Ez. 28:11-17), who fell into sin through pride (Is. 14:12-14), becoming the chief adversary of God. He is active in temptation (Gen. 3, Matt. 4:1-10; Luke 22:31), accusation (Rev 12:10), blinding men to spiritual truth (2 Cor. 4:4), and spiritual harassment (Eph. 6:11-17; 1 Peter 5:8). He is the ruler of the world (1 John 5:19), but has been judged already (John 12:31; 1 John 3:8), and will finally be defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 20:7-10).

## Eschatology – END TIMES

I believe Christ will return personally and bodily to the earth to overcome Satan, to judge the living and the dead, and to establish His millennial kingdom and fulfillment of God's eternal plan. I believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost. The believer shall be raised to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord in heaven; and the unbeliever, to everlasting and conscious punishment in hell.

### A. The Intermediate State

Scripture clearly teaches that there is a period of existence between physical death and resurrection. The redeemed and the lost are clearly divided already, and are aware of that division (Luke 16:19-31). The saved are immediately, upon death, received into the presence of God (Heb. 12:23; Luke 23:46, Eccl. 12:7). They are truly alive and conscious (Matt. 22:32; 1 Thes. 5:10; John 11:26, Rom. 8:10) and "at rest" (Rev. 14:13). They are still in a state of imperfection, they have not yet become all that God intends for them to be. The resurrection body is not yet received (1 Thes. 4:16,17; 1 Cor. 15:52; 2 Tim. 4:8). The lost are under constraint and guard and endure conscious torment (Luke 16:19-24), already receiving punishment from God (2 Peter 2:9).

### B. The Advent of Christ

This is a two-fold event; the two stages may be termed the Rapture and the Return. The purpose of the Rapture is for Christ to receive His own unto Himself (John 14:3), to judge and reward believers (1 Cor. 3:11-15), and to remove the restrainer and prepare the way for the tribulation (2 Thes. 2:6-8). The purpose in the Return of Christ is to reveal Himself and His own (Zech. 14:5; Col. 3:4), to bind Satan (Rev. 20:1,2; Rom. 16:20), and to establish His Kingdom (2 Sam 7:8-17; Dan. 2:44,45; Is. 9:6,7). The Rapture is in the air (1 Thes. 4:15-17), the righteous taken from among the wicked (1 Thes. 4:16,17), the righteous meet the Lord in the air and go away to heaven with Him (1 Thes. 4:17; John 14:2), and it is always imminent (Mark 13:35,36; James 5:8; Rev. 22:12). The Return of Christ comes to the earth (Zech. 14:4), the righteous enter into the Kingdom (Matt. 25:34), and is preceded by definite signs (Matt. 24:27-31). I hold a pretribulation position meaning the Church, both dead and alive, by resurrection will be removed before any part of the seven year Tribulation takes place (1 Thes. 1:10; 5:1-11; Rev. 3:10). I also hold a premillennial view, which means the second coming of Christ, Return, will be followed by the establishing of His kingdom on earth for 1,000 years (Dan. 2:34,44; Is. 9:6,7; Matt. 19:28; Rev. 5:10).

### C. The Judgment of the Saints

Following the rapture (2 Tim. 4:8) all believers will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) to be judged according to their works (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; Col. 3:25).

### D. The Tribulation

A period of seven years broken into two three and half year parts, the first a time of peace and the second a time of terror (Dan. 9:24-27; Rev. 3:10). It will be during this time that the appearance of the Antichrist takes place and his rise to power

(Dan. 7:8; Rev. 13:1; 17:12). There will be those who are saved during this time (Zech. 12:11-14; Rev. 7). The purpose of the tribulation is wrath and preparation.

E. The Millennial Kingdom

Upon the return of Jesus Christ, He will establish His 1,000 year reign upon the earth (Rev. 20), in fulfillment of the covenants. This will be a time of righteousness, peace, and prosperity, in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies (Is. 9,11,65; Amos 9:13-15).

F. The Final Judgment

At the close of the 1,000 year Kingdom, there will be a final rebellion from Satan (Rev. 20:7-9), which will be crushed. Then the end will come, in which Christ will hand over His Kingdom to God the Father, thus ushering in the eternal state (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21:1-4). There will be a resurrection of the wicked (Rev. 20:13) at which time they will be judged according to their works at the Great White Throne Judgment, and cast, along with Satan into the lake of fire, in which they will experience eternal conscious torment (Rev. 20:11-15).