
DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF

REV. BRADLEY ROSS LLOYD

11/16/94

I. Bibliology (The Scriptures)

Process of Revelation

I believe that the Bible is God's written revelation of God given to mankind through the process of special revelation-by this I mean that He disclosed Himself and the scriptures to select men through supernatural means. Thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Inspiration

I believe that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and

God-breathed. I believe the literal, grammatical-historical, interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in a six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17).

Authority

I believe that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Animation, Inerrancy

I believe that God spoke His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human Authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

Illumination

I believe that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application of the principal is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

II. Theology Proper (God)

Existence of God

I believe that God exists and can be personally known through both natural and supernatural means. In terms of nature, I believe the order of creation and the created world speak of His existence. I believe with C.S. Lewis that mankind's unique design; ie. that he is a mental, personal, moral and spiritual creation shows that there is a powerful, vast, awesome and personal creator in the universe who I call God. In terms of supernatural means, I believe God—being a supernatural being—can so superintend over any human being so as to reveal Himself to them.

Essence of God

I believe that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

Nature and Works of God

I believe that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31); Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18).

Decrees of God

I believe that God has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

III. Biblical Anthropology

The Origin of Man

I believe that it is an undeniable fact that man was created by God. The fact is that the act of creating man was based on the deliberate counsel of God. Though all that God had done in Creation (Genesis Chapter One) up to that point was pronounced as good, Creation was incomplete without man. I reject the notion that man was an afterthought. His creation was the result of deliberate forethought on the part of the Godhead. And after God created man He then said that everything He had made was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). It did not involve any Naturalistic or Theistic evolutionary processes. I am also opposed to Progressive or Threshold Creationism which says that God intervenes at certain points of the evolutionary process.

The Nature of Man (Man as Created)

I believe that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, personality, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7; 15-25; James 3:9). God created both male and female in His image each with differing strengths and weaknesses. Man is bipartite in nature-i.e. he is both a material and non-material entity, the two aspects being distinguishable. Physical death is described as the separation of the body and spirit-the body ceases to live while the spirit lives forever (James 2:26). The spirit of the wicked experience eternal torment in Hell while the spirit of the righteous enjoy endless abundant-life in Heaven. The body is the flesh and blood (or material) aspect of man, while the spirit encompasses the immaterial elements of the intellect emotions and will. (Hebrews 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 15:44; Revelation 6:9; 20:4; 1 Peter 2:11; Mark 12:30; Hebrews 10:38)

The Nature of Man (Man as Fallen) (Harmartiology)

I believe that sin is missing the mark of God. This is not only a negative idea but includes the positive idea of hitting some wrong mark-it includes the ideas of badness, rebellion, iniquity, going astray, wickedness, wandering, ungodliness, crime, lawlessness, transgression, ignorance, and falling away (Psalm 51:4 Matthew 1:21, John 1:29; Acts 2:38; Romans 5:12; 6:1; 8:7; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; James 1:15; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 1:7; 2:2; 3:4). The origin of sin is not clearly established in the pages of Scripture, but the fact that it exists is. Sin entered the world and became a part of human experience when Adam and Eve made the fateful choice of Genesis Chapter Three. They fell for the serpent's lie and ate of the fruit which God had commanded that they avoid. Ultimately the test was whether Adam and Eve would obey God or not. Eve was tempted and she rationalized why to eat the fruit. Having justified what she was about to do, she took fruit from the tree and ate it. The penalties of this sin were wide-spread, effecting all mankind for all eternity. There were the physical effects of disease and death (Romans 5:12; Genesis 3:14-24). There were also multiple spiritual effects such as moral corruption (or inherited sin). This is that sinful state into which all people are born. Every facet of man's being is affected by this sin nature. (1) His intellect is blinded (2 Corinthians 4:4). His mind is reprobate or disapproved (Romans 1:28). His understanding is darkened, separated from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18). (2) His emotions are degraded and defiled (Romans 1:21, 24, 26; Titus 1:15). (3) His will is enslaved to sin and therefore stands in opposition to God (Rom. 6:20; 7:20). The label itself indicates how original sin is transmitted from one generation to the next and the next and the next. It is inherited from our parents as they did from theirs, and so on back to the first parents, Adam and Eve. After they sinned they could only propagate after their kind; that is, their children were sinners by birth (Genesis 4:1; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12). This means that everyone born into this world is a sinner. No one is born good, nor is anyone born partly good and partly sinful. All are equally sinful in God's sight (Romans 3:23). There also exists a legal condemnation (or imputed sin). To impute means to attribute or reckon or ascribe something to someone. It is not mere influence but involvement that is at the heart of the concept. Imputed sin is transmitted directly from Adam to each individual in every generation (Romans 5:12-14). The last spiritual effect of sin is that of behavioral failure (or individual sins). In Romans 3:9-18 Paul demonstrates the condemnation of all people on the basis of their committing sins personally. The condemnation is universal and based on evil acts of both word and deed (see 1 John 1:6; James 2:4, 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Galatians 5:19-21).

The Nature of Man (Man as Regenerate)

I believe that the grace of God displayed through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death on the cross has the power to transform a sinful unregenerate life into one which is free from the curse and condemnation of sin (Romans 6:18; 8:1; Galatians 5:24). Sin can continue to affect the regenerated man but only as he allows himself to fall prey to it. The regenerated man has Christ's power within to be forgiven and conquer the power of sin (1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:13).

The Nature of Man (Man's Responsibilities)

I believe man has the responsibility to support and obey governments, as God commanded through Paul (Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13). Man is also responsible to and through his family (1 John 1:5-10). And finally, man is responsible to and through his church (Matthew 18: 5-22; 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

IV. Christology

Divinity/Humanity

I believe that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and co-eternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

I believe that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

I believe that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

I believe that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9).

I believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

I believe that, in the incarnation, the second person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God, assumed the place of a Son, and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes (Philippians 2:5-8).

Scandal of the Cross

I believe that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

I believe that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

Resurrection

I believe that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

I believe that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning Work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

Return/Judgment

I believe that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and, returning with His church in glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20).

I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- a. Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- b. Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46)
- c. Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15)

As the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the head of His body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

V. Soteriology

The Necessity

I believe the Bible indicates at least three reasons why God wanted to save sinners. (1) This was the greatest and most concrete demonstration of the love of God. His good gifts in nature and through His providential care (great as they are) do not compare with the gift of His Son to be our Savior. (John 3:16; Romans 5:8) (2) Salvation gives God a display of His rich grace throughout all eternity (Ephesians 2:7). (3) God's holy attributes of love, justice, mercy, holiness and grace demand that He provide mankind an escape from condemnation. Man is totally helpless and eternally hopeless without this gift. (Romans 3:9-23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:3).

The Nature

I believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. In saying this, I truly believe in the vicarious, penal satisfaction of Christ's death satisfying the penalty that should have been borne by man. I reject the notions of the Ransom to Satan theory which said that the death of Christ was a ransom paid to Satan to satisfy any claims Satan had against man. I believe that the Biblical perspective of justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Isaiah 55: 6-7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10) and confesses Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

The Application

I believe that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

I believe that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

I believe that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

The Effect

I believe that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13;

Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

VI. Pneumatology

The Person of the Holy Spirit

I believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternity (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and Jeremiah 31:31-34; with Hebrews 10:15-17).

The Works of the Holy Spirit

I believe that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. I recognize his sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

I believe that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

I believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (by saying this I mean, controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

I believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

VII. Angelology

Holy Angels

I believe that angels are created beings (Psalm 148:5) and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7,14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9). Basically and essentially good angels are servants (Hebrews 1:14). God sends them for service or help of believers, and in so serving the angels function as priestly messengers. Angels are found to praise, worship serve, and appear before God. They are organized in the following ways: Archangel (only Michael is designated as the archangel or high ranking angel -Jude 9; 1 Thessalonians 4:16), Chief Princes-the phrase (Daniel 10:13), referring to a group of superior angels, Governmental Rulers (used numerous times by Paul to describe both good and evil angels; ie. Rulers or principalities, Authorities or powers, Powers, Thrones or dominions.), Cherubim-evidently a high rank since Satan was a cherub (Ezekiel 28:14, 16). [They seem to function as guardians of the holiness of God.], and finally Seraphim-they were apparently similar to the cherubim acting as attendants at the throne of God and agents of cleansing (Isaiah 6:2, 6).

Unholy Angels: Satan and Demons

I believe that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

I believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20), and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

VIII. Ecclesiology

The Universal Church

I believe that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

Its Origin

I believe that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Its Distinctiveness

I believe that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32).

Its Purpose and Mission

I believe that the purpose and mission of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by communicating with Him through prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2,15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42), and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

The Local Church

I believe that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23,27; 20:17,28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local, tangible, geographical assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

The Officers

I believe that the one, supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

The Organization

I believe that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7,17). I believe that the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). I believe that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

Ordination

I believe that ordination in the New Testament was simply a recognition of approval and support (1 Timothy 5:22). It should not be done hastily, and is not restricted to "pastors." Elders, deacons, and even missionaries may be ordained according to the New Testament example.

Ordinances

I believe that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42). I believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). I also believe that the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ.

IX. Eschatology

Immortality & The Intermediate State

I believe that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will come until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) which initiates the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-6), when soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

Personal Resurrection / Rewards and Punishment

I believe the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15). I believe that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The Rapture of the Church

I believe the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ before the seven-year tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Tribulation Period

I believe that immediately following the removal of the church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), the righteous judgments of God will be poured out upon an unbelieving world (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16), and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth (Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). At that time the Old Testament and tribulation saints will be raised and the living will be judged (Daniel 12:2-3; Revelation 20:4-6). This period includes the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15-31; 25:31-46).

The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

I believe that after the tribulation period, Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David (Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30) and establish His Messianic kingdom for a thousand years on the earth (Revelation 20:107). During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth (Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16). This reign will be preceded by the overthrow of the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and by the removal of Satan from the world (Daniel 7:17-27; Revelation 20:1-7). I believe that the kingdom itself will be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel (Isaiah 65:17-25; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Zechariah 8:1-17) to restore them to the land which they forfeited through their disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68). The result of their disobedience was that Israel was temporarily set aside (Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:1-26) but will again be awakened through repentance to enter into the land of blessing (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:22-32; Romans 11:25-29). I believe that this time of our Lord's reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness, and long life (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38), and will be brought to an end with the release of Satan (Revelation 20:7).

The Judgment of the Lost

I believe that following the release of Satan after the thousand-year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:7), Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9). Following this, Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10) whereupon Christ, who is the judge of all men (John 5:22), will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne Judgment. I believe that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment (Romans 14:10-13), they will be committed to an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15).

Eternity

I believe that after the closing of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers (2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15), the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved (2 Peter 3:10) and replaced with a new earth wherein only righteousness dwells (Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21-22). Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21,22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

Doctrinal Statement Clarification

By Rev. Bradley Ross Lloyd

June 9, 1992

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (ie. "Sign" Gifts):

My view on Spiritual Gifts is rather simple--I see the whole issue as secondary to the primary issue of who Jesus is and what He has done. I refuse to be dogmatic about secondary issues, but I do have some personal thoughts on this subject. To start with, I do not believe there is scriptural evidence to prove that all the "sign gifts" have ceased. I know there are various arguments about verses like 1 Corinthians 13:10 ("but when the perfect comes, the imperfect disappears."), but I don't think it is speaking about Spiritual Gifts leaving after the Bible was written (Many believe that the "Perfect" is the scripture).

I don't believe that most of the modern Charismatic Practices are evidence of the ongoing validity of Sign Gifts. Much of what is done today is an emotional experience designed to promote the person's ego, not the work of God. I will not go so far as saying that it is all of the Devil, because I believe that borders on the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit (which most commentators say is "attributing the works of God to the Devil")(see Matthew 12:31-32). I know there are many abuses of things, but simply because something is abused doesn't negate it's potential blessing. (ie. a car may be used for ill-purposes, and may even kill, but when used properly, it can be a tremendous blessing).

I understand the gift to Tongues to have two scriptural forms. One is a known language (as was seen on the day of Pentecost, when foreigners from all-over heard the "wonders" of God in their own language--Acts 2:1-13), the other is a Spiritual language--some call it an ecstatic utterance--not discernible by the human mind, without Spiritual interpretation (as seen in Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 12: 29-31, and 1

Corinthians 14:2, 4, 14-15, 18-19, 28, 39-40).

I believe the main use of the second type of Tongues to be as a personal prayer language, not for public display unless accompanied with specific interpretation. I have personally experienced the use of private prayer Tongues and find it benefits me when I don't know how to pray intelligently for a situation, or when I can't adequately express (in English) my thanks for all God has done. I am quite aware that this issue has split churches, and divided peoples for many years, however, I am determined not to let this be a divisive issue in my ministry. I am committed to keeping it between myself and my Savior, unless someone specifically questions me on the issue. If questioned, I will always try to explain the issue in such a way as to promote love, unity and peace.

I believe Spiritual Gifts are sovereignly given by God in His time and way, as He sees fit. I have witnessed many (so-called) displays of the Spiritual Gifts, but I believe most were simply a display of emotional frenzy. I cannot be the ultimate judge in these matters, but, as I am commanded in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21, I will not "...put out the Spirit's fire; or treat prophecies with contempt (a feeling of hatred or disgust), but I will **TEST** everything (with God's Word) and hold on to the good!"