

# APK's Doctrinal Exposition

## Based on the Doctrinal Questionnaire for the Christian and Missionary Alliance

1. There is one God, who is infinitely perfect, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - a. In what sense is God infinitely perfect?

God has full and complete knowledge of all things—past, present, and future (Job 38-39). In this complete knowledge there is no deficiency or error. This includes, but is not limited to man's thoughts (Ps 139), the expanse of the universe (Heb 11:3), the intimate details at the microscopic level, good, and evil. While God has full knowledge of the nature and consequences of evil and sin (Gen 3:22), there is not even a hint of the presence of evil or sin within Him or any aspect of His being (1 John 3:5). His holiness demands absolute perfection and purity (Matt 5:48; Lev 22:2).

- b. Explain your understanding of "one God" and "existing eternally in three persons."

There is one God (Deut 6:4; 1 Cor 8:4) who is a personal God, who is manifested in three distinct and coeternal persons known as the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-5, 14; 14:16; Matt 3:16-17). Each of these three persons of this Triune God serve a distinct purpose or function within the Godhead, but none of them are subordinate to the others in essence or deity (Rom 1:7; John 20:28; Acts 5:3-4). The three functional distinctions are God the Father as the righteous judge, God the Son as the only One who can satisfy the judgement of the Father, and God the Holy Spirit as the active agent who works in the hearts of men and women to convict them concerning sin and righteousness and judgement (John 16:8). (For further information, see: <http://buildingchurch.net/media/holyspirit.pdf>)

2. Jesus Christ is true God and true man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice; and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest. He will come again to establish His Kingdom of righteousness and peace.

- a. What do you understand by "true God and true man" as applied to Jesus?

Jesus Christ is the second person in the eternal, triune Godhead, as stated in section 1b. This means that he is fully, eternally, and essentially God (John 8:58). He is eternally begotten, or protruding forth, from God the Father (John 1:14; 3:16). The divinity of Jesus demands his holiness and perfection, thus guarantees his sinlessness (Heb 4:15). However, Jesus was fully man (1 John 4:2-3), which means he identified fully with our weaknesses and temptations (Heb 4:15), and has the right to become the atoning sacrifice for man's sin (Gal 4:4-5).

- b. Outline briefly your concept of Christ's atonement for sin indicating your understanding of His "substitutional sacrifice."

As sin came to all mankind through Adam, Jesus Christ is the second Adam, without sin. Jesus Christ dies the cruelest of sinners' deaths, yet was without fault (Lk 23:4). In so doing, in His death, Jesus was able to take on our sin (Is 53:6; Ro 5:19). All sin requires the shedding of blood for atonement, and apart from perfection, continual sacrifices are need to atone for ongoing sin. Jesus Christ is the only source for this perfection, offering himself up has the sinless pure sacrifice, once for all (Heb 7:26-28).

- c. What is the significance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ rose from the dead in order to prove that he could redeem us (1 Pe 1:3) and deliver to us eternal life through salvation found in Him (2 Cor 4:14).

3. The Holy Spirit is a divine person, sent to indwell, guide, teach, empower the believer, and convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

- a. What is your understanding of the Holy Spirit as a "divine person?"

The basic role of the Holy Spirit within the Godhead has been established as the acting agent to accomplish God's

will. As previously stated, the Holy Spirit is coeternal, coexistent, and coequal with both the Father and the Son. He is the person who indwells believers and enables them to discern and accomplish the will of the Father (Jo 16:4ff; 1 Cor 2:14).

b. Describe the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the believer and to the unbeliever.

In regards to the unbeliever, the role of the Holy Spirit is to convict them of sin, righteousness, and judgement (Jo 16:8-11) and to open their eyes to the spiritual nature and the things of God (1 Co 2:10ff).

In regards to believers, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to indwell us, direct us, counsel us, reveal the will of God to us, convict us of sin, empower us for service in the Kingdom of God, minister through us, intercede for us (Jo 14, 16; Rom 8; 1 Cor 2:24; 12:4ff).

4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice.

a. What do you understand the following to mean in the above statement?

i. "Inerrant"

In regards to the Bible, the original autographs were without any mixture of error in regards to faith, practice, history, and science. The literal accuracy of this inerrancy is full and complete within the limits of the genre of literature. This means that generalizations, hyperbole, symbolism, parables, and other figures of speech are contained in Scripture, but is limited to the literary genre of a given passage, and should be both understood and interpreted accordingly (Prov 30:5-6; John 10:35).

ii. "Verbally inspired"

While the term "verbally inspired" does not necessarily mean that the original writers literally heard the voice of God as they wrote, the depth of the impression of the message upon them at times was much stronger than an audible voice could have been. God, by the Holy Spirit, used the vocabulary and personalities of the prospective writers to reveal Himself to people through the written Word. Within these limits, God carried the men along to write His message fully, completely, and accurately (2 Tim 3:16; 1 Pe 3:15-16; 2 Pe 1:21).

iii. "Only rule"

As the "only rule" for faith and practice, the Bible is the Church's and the individual Christian's only sure and fully reliable source for discerning the full and perfect will of God. While emotions and experience inform and help believers understand the realities around them, all understanding must be weighed against the unchanging truths of Scripture. When experience or emotions conflict with a previous understanding of Scripture, either a person's understanding of their experience or emotion is in error, or their understanding of Scripture is in error. After searching out truth on the matter in Scripture, if conflict still occurs, the understanding of the experience or emotion is to be considered in error (Prov 30:5-6; 1 Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12).

iv. "Faith and practice"

In regards to faith, the Bible is to be considered the Christian's only final source for an understanding God, His nature, His will, the nature of man, the sinfulness of man, redemption, hope for things to come, and realities of things unseen (i.e. the spirit world and character issues such as trust) (Mk 14:49; Lk 24:27-45; Jo 2:22; 10:35; Ro 1:2; 15:4; Gal 3:8, 22; 1 Ti 4:12; 2 Ti 3:15-16; 1 Pe 1:23).

In regards to practice, the Bible is "Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth." The Bible gives complete and full instructions on how to live daily in this world and to prepare oneself for the world to come (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).

5. Man was originally created in the image and likeness of God. He fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All men are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The prospect of the impenitent and unbelieving person is existence forever in conscious torment, and that of the believer in Christ is everlasting joy and bliss.

a. What do you understand the following to mean in the above statement?

i. "created"

Originally, God created all things *ex nihilo*, out of nothing. From there, God took the sands of the earth and formed man (not by evolutionary process, but as a sculptor shapes clay). God then proceeded to breathe into man the breath of life, which is more than the ability to fill one's lungs, but includes spiritual life, as both the Hebrew and Greek words for spirit and breath are the same. Therefore Genesis 2:7 might better be translated, "then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the *spirit* of life" (or "*Spirit* of Life").

ii. "born with a sinful nature"

Following the fall of Adam and Eve, all of creation is marked with the curse of sin. All people (except Jesus) inherit the curse through the line of Adam. As a result, we are all born with a propensity to sin, and all will commit sin. The sinful nature is a desire to please and exalt oneself, rather than the creator, God (Rom 5:12-21).

iii. "separated from the life of God"

God created us to have a personal relationship with Him (John 17:3). Through this relationship, we were to exalt and represent God to all of creation (Gen 1:26-31). However, since God is holy, He can not allow sin or sinful beings in his presence (Is 59:2; Rom 6:23).

iv. "existence forever in conscious torment"

Simplified with the term "hell," the eternal conscious punishment of the unredeemed is clearly indicated in Scripture. Hell is a place of eternal fire, where the lost are tormented consciously forever, along with Satan and the fallen angels (Matt 25:30,41-46; Mark 9:43-48). By nature of the fall, the eternal punishment, at least in some form, includes the deterioration of the body and consequences of sin that are experienced in this life. The term "eternity" not only includes activities outside of time, but also experiences realities within time.

v. "everlasting joy and bliss"

Jesus Christ came to give life, and to give it abundantly (John 10:10). This includes both here and hereafter. As believers, we experience the joy and peace of a personal relationship with God and redemption from the death imposed by our sin. This reality primarily entails spending eternity in the presence of the Lord, enjoying Him and basking in His glory. However, the hope of eternal salvation and glory in the presence of the Lord extends the reality into this life. The prospect of redemption also brings elements of health, life, joy, and peace into this life (Ps 51:12; 95:1; Jer 33:6-9; Acts 9:31; Rom 5:1; 14:17; 15:13).

b. Is there salvation without personal faith in Jesus Christ?

"This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you . . . and there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (John 14:6).

c. What of those who have not heard the Gospel?

Ezekiel 33:1-9 gives a vivid and clarion call to those who have access to the Gospel. Those who have not ever heard the Gospel are responsible for their sin. However, if someone who has the Gospel and is called to take it, but fails to do so, they hold a level of responsibility for the eternal punishment of the one who has not heard. However, while those who have not heard the Gospel are responsible for their sin, and will die in their sin, they are still without excuse, for they are responsible to respond to the whatever level of revelation God has given them. When they respond to this "common grace," eventually God's kindness should lead them to repentance (Rom 2:4). When lost people fully responds to God's revelation, God will be faithful to deliver the Gospel message to them.

6. Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all men, and those who repent and believe in Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life, and become children of God.

a. What do you understand by the following terms?

i. "salvation"

Salvation, in its simplest form, is to be rescued from the curse of sin and the eternal punishment of hell (1 Thes 5:9). However, salvation also includes the restoration to a right and glorious relationship with God through Jesus Christ . . . including an inheritance in glory, eternal hope, and the praise and glory of Christ (Eph 1:11-14).

ii. "repentance"

To "repent" means to "turn" away from one thing and "turn" toward another. Repentance is far more than regret for actions done, repentance affects both the heart and the mind, thus yielding a change of thee will away from sin and self-glory and toward God and His glory (2 Cor 7:10). Regret yields greater sin and continued lostness. Genuine repentance yields salvation and godliness (Heb 6:9-12).

iii. "believe"

To "believe" is more than mental ascent, for even the demons believe that God is one (James 2:19). Genuine belief in the Lord Jesus Christ is a life-changing faith (1 Pe 1:8-9). Genuine belief both changes the mind and touches the heart (Rom 10:9-10; 1 John 5:10). The faith to believe is the result of the Holy Spirit's work in a person's heart (Eph 2:8; 1 John 3:23-24). A genuine belief and faith will lead to salvation.

iv. "regeneration"

"Regeneration" is the work of God within a person that makes them into a new creation as a believer (2 Cor 5:17). It is the washing away of the old self and bringing in of the new (Tit 3:5). Regeneration is a specific part of salvation that is entirely a work of God, and is a passive change on the part of the believer (Ezek 36:26-27; John 1:13). Regeneration occurs only once, at the point of salvation. Whether it is the initiative moment of salvation, simultaneous to it, or immediately following it is an insignificant point. For all practical purposes, regeneration is one of several simultaneous events at the moment of salvation.

v. "justification"

In spiritual terms, justification is being brought into a right legal standing before God. Our justification is the result of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. While it is effectually one of the simultaneous events of salvation, it is the result of our repentance and faith (Rom 3:26; Gal 2:16). There are two primary aspects to justification: (1) God considers our sin forgiven and applies (imputes) the righteousness of Christ to us, and as a result, (2) God declares us righteous in his sight (Rom 4:5).

b. In what sense is salvation provided "for all men?"

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a clarion call to all men, women, and children to recognize their inherent sinful nature, their need for a Savior, and to subsequently repent and believe. God is "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" ( 1Pe 3:9). God's revealed will is that all would recognize their sinfulness and come to Him. This revealed will should empower us and embolden us to boldly preach the Gospel to everyone, "making the most of every opportunity" (Col 4:5, NIV). However, the Bible also clearly teaches that all will not come to repentance because of their hardness of heart (Eph 4:18). There is, therefore, God's permissive or hidden will that allows some to remain in their sin and not accept the free gift of salvation. The effectual nature of salvation is reserved for the elect, those whom God has, by his own will, not the will or merit of man, chosen to come unto salvation by the wooing of the Spirit and in faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 13:48; Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-6). But we must preach the gospel to everyone, for we are not knowledgeable of this hidden will, and we will find a whole lot more of the elect when we are looking for them.

c. Explain the divine aspects and human aspects in statement six.

In the purest sense, the entirety of salvation is a work of God, for even the faith to believe is a gift of God (Eph 2:8-9). Left fully to their own devices, no one would seek restoration to a relationship with God (Rom 3:10ff). It is only by the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit within a person that he/she has the ability to realize any aspect of salvation (1 Thes 1:4-5; 1 Cor 2:10-14). However, in an effectual sense, the person must respond to the prompting of the Spirit.

7. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion,
  - a. Summarize your understanding of sanctification in the life of the believer.

Sanctification is the ongoing work of salvation in the life of the believer. Whereas a person is justified before God at the point of salvation and will one day be glorified forever in heaven, sanctification is the ongoing bridge between the two. Sanctification is the ongoing work of both the Holy Spirit and the Son in the life of the believer (Rom 15:16; Eph 5:26). Sanctification is the ongoing process of removing the tarnishes of sin and developing purity, blamelessness, and Christlikeness in the life of the believer (1 Thes 5:23; 1 Pe 1:2). Sanctification is wrought through obedience (Lev 20:8).

- b. What do you understand by

- i. "filled with the Holy Spirit"

At salvation, the believer is baptized with, or receives, the Holy Spirit into their lives (Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 12:13). However, subsequent to salvation, the believer should seek to yield him/herself to the work of the Spirit. In this yielding, the Holy Spirit's presence is made known in a greater fashion, and is often considered a "special anointing." Being filled with the Holy Spirit yields the characteristics of spiritual fruit (Rom 15:13; Gal 5:22-23). While the work of the Spirit is God's sovereign will, it is the choice of the believer to receive it on an ongoing basis. It is a command of God to receive it (Eph 5:18). As the believer learns to experience the Christian life more fully, his/her experience will be much like that of the early church as recorded in Acts. Early in their walk, they will be able to identify specific instances where they experience the filling of the Spirit, as Peter and Paul did early in their ministries. But, as the believer learns to walk more in step with the Spirit on an ongoing basis, the filling becomes more of an ongoing leading by the Spirit than a momentary event. As the book of Acts progresses, the recording of the Spirit's work takes much the same perspective in the lives of the early church leaders.

- ii. "sanctified wholly"

As previously stated, the believer will in fact not reach absolute purity in this world, but will attain it in the life to come. However, the prayer of Paul for the believers to be sanctified "completely" is a prayer for the upward goal that every believer should strive to attain (Phil 3:12-14; 1 Thes 5:23). Every person in this world occasionally sins (1 Ki 8:46; Ecc7:20; James 3:2).

- iii. "separated from sin"

To be "separated from sin and the world" is not to hide out in a holy huddle, for that would deny believers of their responsibility to seek and to save that which is lost. In fact, Christ himself prayed that believers would be in the world . . . but not of the world (John 17:11-19). No believer continues life in a conscious pattern of sin (1 John 3:4-10). When a believer becomes conscious of a specific sin or sin pattern in their life, they confess it and repent of it . . . they do not continue in their sin.

- iv. "fully dedicated"

Genuine Christians are not lukewarm (Rev 3:16). Genuine Christians have a passionate white-hot desire to see the Lord Jesus face-to-face and to make His glory known to the ends of the earth, because this is the ultimate will of God from the very beginning (Ge 1:28; 9:1-2; 19:18; 26:5).

- c. How may sanctification be designated a crisis?

There are many times in the life of a believer where a "crisis event" will lead to a large step in the sanctification process . . . whether this event could be wrought through many events, such as the death of a loved one, being caught in and repenting of a grievous sin such as adultery, a positive experience such as a retreat or particularly anointed service, or any one of numerous other crisis events that could occur in the life of the believer. The first and greatest crisis event in the sanctification process is the event of salvation.

- d. How may sanctification be designated “progressive?”

Through continually seeking after God, the believer will continue to progress through the sanctification process as he/she makes a habit of confessing and repenting of sin and finding new truths of the glories and nature of God (Rom 8:11).

- e. What, in your opinion, are evidences of a sanctified life?

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal 5:22-23). “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Pe 2:12). “Love must be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good . . . Outdo one another in showing honor . . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:9-21).

8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures and are privileges for the Church in this present age.

- a. What is the scriptural basis for the position that physical healing is provided in the redemptive work of Christ?

Isaiah 53:4-5 states the “he has borne our griefs . . . and with his stripes we are healed,” which refers to both the physical and spiritual accomplishments of Christ on the cross. This same image is echoed in 1 Pe 2:24. Matthew clearly ties this reference to physical healing in Matthew 8:16-17.

- b. Do you believe divine healing is the privilege of the believer today?

Jesus told his disciples, “Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father” (John 14:12). I see no clear references anywhere in Scripture where these privileges will be taken away at any time prior to the return of Christ. This includes miraculous physical and emotional healing. While healing is a privilege, it is not a guarantee. Sometimes God, in His sovereignty chooses not to heal. Although we do not understand the whys or why nots, “we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28).

- c. Have you known anyone who has been miraculously healed? Explain.

Yes, on multiple occasions. One person in particular sticks out in my mind (for many reasons.) Miss Shirley was one of our most precious prayer warriors in our church. However, she was also a diabetic. Twenty years ago, as is common among diabetics, Miss Shirley was told that if she did not have her feet amputated, she would die within a few months. Within weeks, Miss Shirley was spending her days walking the streets in the worst parts of Opelika, Alabama, sharing her testimony with countless residents. In fact, numerous times Shirley would be in the hospital with the same diagnosis . . . and numerous times her response was, “Jesus hasn’t told me to get my feet amputated, and Jesus hasn’t told me it’s my time to go yet. When it’s my time, he’ll let me know. Until then, he will heal me enough to continue.” And numerous times, He did. This past year He did not . . . and Miss Shirley knew it, as she peacefully and joyfully left this soil to go home.

- d. In your opinion, how does divine healing fit into the modern scene of medical science?

Divine healing can both run counter to and alongside modern medical science. God often uses the wisdom and technology of modern medicine to compliment or accomplish His healing in the body. However, at times, God chooses to step outside the norms of this world and bring about healing well beyond the explanations of science. By doing this, he demonstrates the abilities he gave man to study, learn and accomplish . . . but he keeps man humble by stepping beyond the wisdom of this age.

9. The Church consists of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of the Body, the Church, which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the gospel to all nations.

The local church is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together for the worship of God, for edification through the Word of God, prayer, fellowship, the proclamation of the gospel, and observance of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

a. What is the relationship of each local church to the total Body of Christ, the universal Church?

Each local congregation is a manifestation of the Body of Christ within a given area. The Church is God's chosen instrument to represent himself to all of creation. The Church must be spread out over all the earth in order to accomplish God's will (Gen 1:28). Each local church ought to be cooperating in unity with the universal Church in order to accomplish God's mission throughout the world (Acts 15).

b. Why are corporate worship, prayer, and fellowship essential for the local church?

Worship is ascribing to God his great and wondrous worth. There is no greater activity in the Christian life, or in the life of the church. God created each person in a unique way for a specific role in the church, to live out worship in a practical way (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12-14). If any person does not fulfill their particular role in the church, the whole Body will suffer (1 Cor 12:26). When believers gather together, they worship not only in lifting up praises and thanksgiving to God, but also in building each other up and nurturing each other (Acts 2:42-47; 2 Cor 14:26).

Prayer is the lifeblood of the Christian life and of the church. When believers fail to pray, they fail to remain filled with the Holy Spirit and in touch with the will of God (Heb 7:25; James 4:8). Our healing of all kinds of infirmities – emotional, spiritual, and physical – is dependent upon the corporate nature of prayer (James 5:13-16).

Fellowship is the result of an intimate kinship that only believers can share. When preChristians see our love and good works – the intimacy we share with each other – our love for each other is the most powerful evangelistic tool available (1 John 4:7-5:5). When we meet together, we encourage each other to press on, and we energize each other for the trials we face (Heb 10:25).

c. What is the role of the Church in the proclamation of the gospel and edification of the believer?

The local church is the primary avenue in which God chooses to accomplish His mission. The command of God is "make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:18). Without a local church to build up, train, and edify a believer, the result is immature converts, not fully devoted disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the local church, mature believers can teach and admonish younger believers (Titus 2). While the pulpit of the local church is a viable and appropriate place for the proclamation of the gospel, the individual believers in the local body should be equipped to share their faith outside of the walls of the church in order to affect the community and bring new believers into the local fellowship for edification and discipleship.

d. Why is it important to establish local churches?

Local churches are needed in order to give people everywhere an opportunity to gather together for corporate worship, mutual edification, congregational care, prayer, and the ministry of the Word of God, and to be a light shining out on the hilltop to the surrounding community (Acts 2:42-47).

e. What do you believe is the scriptural mode of baptism? Why?

The word baptize is a transliteration of the Greek word, βαπτίζω, meaning to dip, immerse or to cleanse or purify by washing. Baptism is by immersion, and is for the believer – not for infants. Baptism is an act of obedience and a public profession of a person's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is symbolic of a person's identification with Christ's death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. Baptism is a symbol of a believer's death to the old self and resurrection to new life in Christ Jesus. Baptism is a command of Jesus, given to us by his example in the Jordan River. (Mt 28:18-20; Rom 6:3-5; Col 2:12-13)

f. What is the purpose and meaning of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is an ongoing reminder to believers of the fullness and richness we share in Christ's passion for us on the cross. It proclaims Christ's death and the believer's identification with the redemption wrought through the atonement (1 Cor 11:26). Partaking in the Lord's Supper provides spiritual nourishment as it reminds us of our awesome salvation (John 6:53-57). The Lord's Supper builds and renews unity in the Body of Christ (1 Cor 10:17).

10. There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the former, a resurrection unto life; for the latter, a resurrection unto judgment.

a. What does the term "bodily resurrection" mean?

At the time of final judgement, all people of all ages will be resurrected with true physical bodies to face the judgement and reward or punishment allotted to them. For the believer, this will be a perfected and glorified body with which to spend eternity in the presence of God. For the unbeliever this will be a physical body in which to eternally experience the pain and suffering of eternal separation from God in the lake of fire.

11. The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial. This is the believer's hope and is a vital truth that is an incentive to holy living and faithful service.

a. In connection with the return of Christ, define the following terms.

i. premillennial

At the end of the church age, regardless of the timing of the tribulation, Christ returns and catches believers up in the air – the dead in Christ first, followed both those who are still alive. Then, Christ descends to the earth with the believers and reigns over a worldwide kingdom for a millennium (not necessarily 1000 years), while Satan is bound. At the end of the millennium, Satan is loosed, a final battle takes place, the unbelievers are resurrected, the final judgement takes place, and the eternal state begins.

ii. amillennial

There is no literal millennium in any sense. The millennium spoken of in Revelation 20:1-10 is the present church age. The reign of Christ is currently taking place, not on earth, but in heaven. At the end of the church age, all the end times events recorded in Scripture will occur virtually simultaneously, beginning with the return of Christ, and the eternal state will immediately follow.

iii. postmillennial

The millennium is not necessarily a literal 1000 years, but a period of time at the end of the church age where Christian influence is the predominant influence throughout the world and breeds a general worldwide society of peace and righteousness. Following this period of time, Christ will return, believers and unbelievers will be raised, and the judgement will occur.

b. Which position do you accept?

While I consider eschatology to be one of my weakest areas of study, the study I have done has led me to a premillennial viewpoint. However, I do not take a specific or strong stand on the timing of the tribulation within a premillennial viewpoint.

c. How do you define "imminent?" In what sense is the Second Coming of Christ "imminent?"

"Imminent" means that an event is ready to or on the verge of taking place. The Second Coming of Christ is imminent in that Christ could return at any day, at any time. While certain prophecies must be fulfilled prior to the return of Christ . . . with world events proceeding as they are and the Gospel of Jesus Christ reaching more and more to the uttermost parts of the earth, the return of Christ becomes more genuinely imminent every day. Come quickly Lord Jesus!