



Theological Triage

Finding the Right Hills to Die On

Why Does this Matter?

- Unnecessary division harms the unity of the church (which harms the mission of the church)
- Quarreling about non-essential doctrines harms the godliness of the church

YET

- Non-essential doctrines are significant to scripture, church history, the Christian life, and to essential doctrines

Theological Triage, a Tiered Approach

1. **Essential to the Gospel** (trinity, deity of Christ, soteriology, resurrection, reliability of scripture, etc.)
2. **Urgent for health and practice of the church** (ordinances, complementarianism/egalitarianism, nature of spiritual gifts, etc.)
3. **Important to Christian theology** (how to treat alcohol, observe particular holidays, school choice, etc.)
4. **Unimportant to Gospel witness and ministry collaboration** (worship style and dress, liturgy, etc.)

How do we Rank Different Doctrines?

1. Biblical Clarity
2. Relevance to the character of God
3. Relevance to the essence of the gospel
4. Biblical frequency and significance
5. Effect on other doctrines
6. Consensus among Christians (past and present)
7. Effect on personal and church life
8. Current cultural pressure to deny a teaching of Scripture

Drawing Theological Boundaries

1. Certainty
2. Effect on other doctrines
3. Effect on personal and church life
4. Historical precedent
5. Perception of importance among God's people
6. Purposes of the organization
7. Motivations of advocates
8. Methods of advocates

Simply Put...

1. How clear is *the Bible* on this doctrine?
2. What is the doctrine's importance to *the gospel*?
3. What is the testimony of the *historical church* concerning this doctrine?
4. What is this doctrine's effect upon the *church today*?

What About the Millennium?

Urgent for health and practice of the
church

OR

Merely important to Christian theology?

Article 7 - Satan

CURRENT ARTICLE	PROPOSED w/ WORK	PROPOSED CLEAN
7-1 Satan is a created angelic being who fell from his first estate.¹ He is the god of this age, ruling by the permissive will of God.² He exercises authority over the unsaved, tempts the believer to sin, and continually accuses the brethren before the throne of God.³ 7-2 He has been defeated by the finished work of Christ on Calvary. During the millennium he will be confined to the abyss,⁴ to be released at the end of that period to lead the armies of evil against God. He will be finally judged and doomed to the lake of fire.⁵	7-1 Satan is a created angelic being who fell from his first estate.¹ He is the god of this age, ruling by the permissive will of God.² He exercises authority over the unsaved, tempts the believer to sin, and continually attacks <u>accuses</u> the brethren before the throne of God.³ 7-2 He has been defeated by the finished work of Christ on Calvary. During the millennium he will be confined to the abyss,⁴ to be released at the end of that period to lead the armies of evil against God. Yet for a time, he prowls around like <u>a lion seeking someone to devour, disrupts church unity, disguises himself as an angel of light, and tries to thwart the plans of God's people, his deception of the nations cannot stop the spread of the gospel and Christ's deliverance of His people from the domain of darkness.</u>⁴ He will be finally judged and doomed to the lake of fire.⁵	7-1 Satan is a created angelic being who fell from his first estate.¹ He is the god of this age, ruling by the permissive will of God.² He exercises authority over the unsaved, tempts the believer to sin, and continually attacks the brethren.³ 7-2 He has been defeated by the finished work of Christ on Calvary. Yet for a time, he prowls around like a lion seeking someone to devour, disrupts church unity, disguises himself as an angel of light, and tries to thwart the plans of God's people, his deception of the nations cannot stop the spread of the gospel and Christ's deliverance of His people from the domain of darkness.⁴ He will be finally judged and doomed to the lake of fire.⁵

Article 24 - Resurrection

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24-1 The bodily resurrection of Christ is the basis for the resurrection of man.¹ At the return of the Lord the bodies of the righteous dead will be raised, and the living believers will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.² Believers will, at the resurrection, receive spiritual and immortal bodies like Christ's own glorious body.³ 24-2 The event of the resurrection is divided into two stages, separated by a period of a thousand years and differing in respect to both their subjects and their issues.⁴ The first resurrection includes only the righteous dead.⁵ The second resurrection is universal and occurs at the close of the millennium when all the unregenerate dead are raised to be brought before the great White Throne for judgment.⁶	24-1 The bodily resurrection of Christ is the basis for the resurrection of His people.¹ At the return of the Lord the bodies of the righteous dead will be raised, and the living believers will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.² Believers will, at the resurrection, receive spiritual and immortal bodies like Christ's own glorious body.³ <u>The bodies of the unrighteous dead will be raised in shame to be brought before the great white throne for judgment.</u>⁴ 24-2 The event of the resurrection is divided into two stages, separated by a period of a thousand years and differing in respect to both their subjects and their issues.⁴ The first resurrection includes only the righteous dead.⁵ The second resurrection is universal and occurs at the close of the millennium when all the unregenerate dead are raised to be brought before the great White Throne for judgment.⁶	24-1 The bodily resurrection of Christ is the basis for the resurrection of His people.¹ At the return of the Lord the bodies of the righteous dead will be raised, and the living believers will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.² Believers will, at the resurrection, receive spiritual and immortal bodies like Christ's own glorious body.³ The bodies of the unrighteous dead will be raised in shame to be brought before the great white throne for judgment.⁴

Article 25 – The Second Coming of Christ

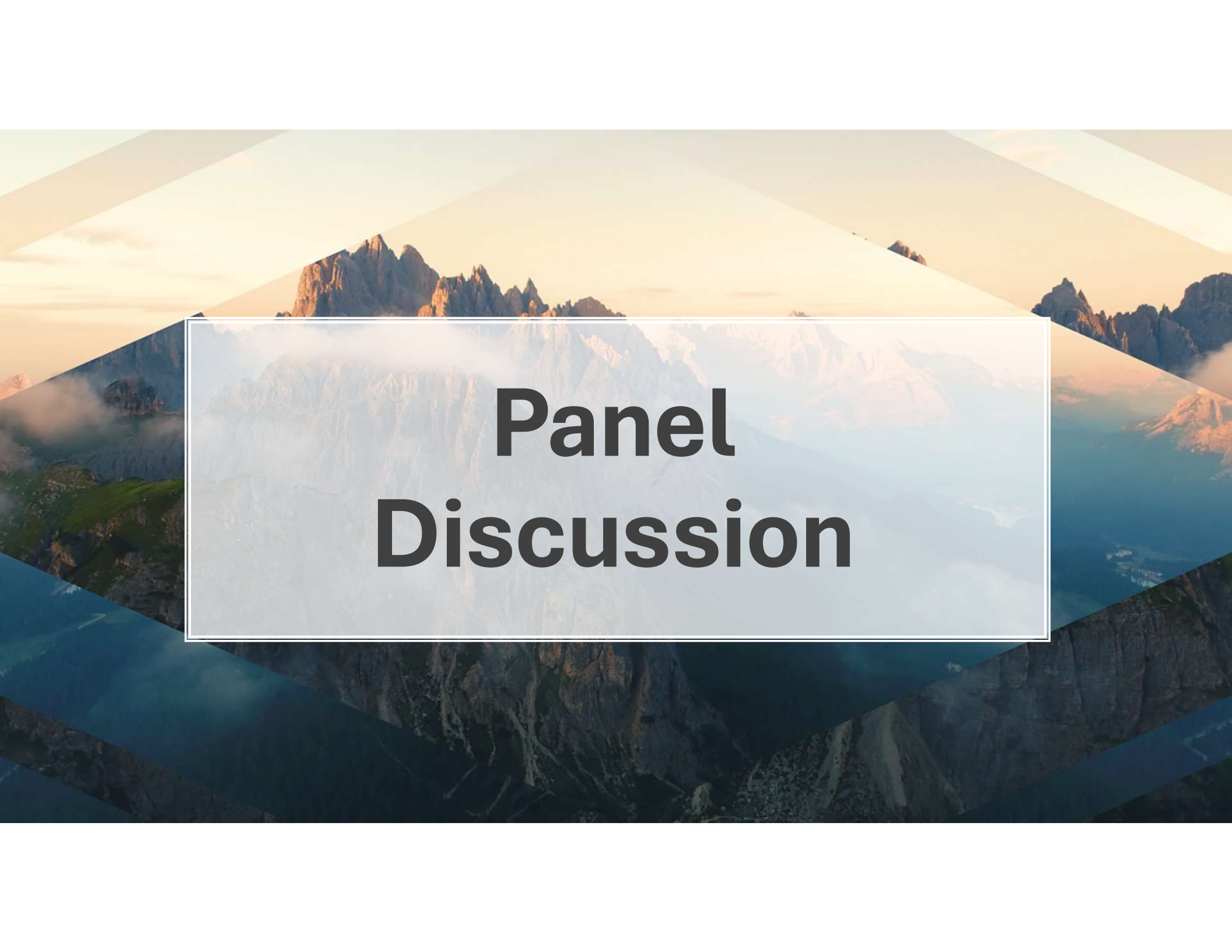
CURRENT ARTICLE	PROPOSED w/ WORK	PROPOSED CLEAN
25-1 The Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the personal, visible, bodily return of our Lord to this earth¹ to conform believers to His image and to establish the millennial kingdom. In connection with Christ's return there will be the resurrection of the righteous dead,² the rapture of the saints,³ the salvation of Israel,⁴ the great tribulation,⁵ and the inauguration of the millennial reign.⁶ Following the millennium will be the resurrection and judgment of the unrighteous. The righteous will be eternally glorified with Him; the unrighteous will be eternally punished. 25-2 The Second Coming is the believer's source of encouragement and comfort inspiring him to active service for Christ, and is a motive for purification and holy living.⁷	25-1 The Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the personal, visible, bodily return of our Lord to this earth¹ to conform believers to His image² and visibly manifest the to establish the millennial kingdom³. In connection with Christ's return there will be the resurrection of the righteous dead,^{2,4} the rapture of the saints,^{3,5} the salvation of Israel,^{4,6} the great tribulation,^{5,7} and the inauguration of the millennial reign.⁶ Following the millennium will be the resurrection and judgment of the unrighteous⁸. The righteous will be eternally glorified with Him; the unrighteous will be eternally punished.⁹ 25-2 The Second Coming is the believer's source of encouragement and comfort inspiring him to active service for Christ, and is a motive for purification and holy living.^{7,10}	25-1 The Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the personal, visible, bodily return of our Lord to this earth¹ to conform believers to His image² and visibly manifest the kingdom³. In connection with Christ's return there will be the resurrection of the righteous dead,⁴ the rapture of the saints,⁵ the salvation of Israel,⁶ great tribulation,⁷ and judgment of the unrighteous⁸. The righteous will be eternally glorified with Him; the unrighteous will be eternally punished.⁹ 25-2 The Second Coming is the believer's source of encouragement and comfort inspiring him to active service for Christ, and is a motive for purification and holy living.¹⁰

Article 27 – The Kingdom of God

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27-3 The millennial reign of Christ is a further advancement of the kingdom whereby Jesus, through His second coming, brings His inaugurated kingdom to earth and makes it visible. During this reign, Christ will fulfil kingdom promises as He establishes righteousness, justice and peace throughout all creation.⁷ At the start of this period, saints will be resurrected bodily to join in the reign with Christ. Satan will be bound and his deceitful activities suspended. Nevertheless an undercurrent of human sinful resistance will continue through the millennium, though held in check as Christ rules with a rod of iron. At the end of this millennial reign, Satan will be released to lead a rebellion against God's people and the Lord Jesus. In a climactic manifestation of His kingship, Christ will defeat the rebellion.⁸	<u>REPLACE EXISTING WITH THIS STATEMENT.</u> 27-3 The believer is to live waiting in active anticipation of Christ's return.⁷ <u>The church will not experience an age of earthly peace and prosperity until the Lord returns and crushes his enemies and makes his reign visible.⁸ The church exists during the remainder of this present evil age as strangers and exiles, whose citizenship is in heaven waiting to be revealed.⁹ Believers are called to suffer with Christ and endure until the return of Christ.¹⁰</u>	27-3 The believer is to live waiting in active anticipation of Christ's return.¹ The church will not experience an age of earthly peace and prosperity until the Lord returns and crushes his enemies and makes his reign visible.² The church exists during the remainder of this present evil age as strangers and exiles, whose citizenship is in heaven waiting to be revealed.³ Believers are called to suffer with Christ and endure until the return of Christ.⁴

Article 28 – The Eternal State

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Article 28 - The Eternal State 28-1 There are two final, eternal destinies for man: heaven for the righteous and penitent, and hell for the unrighteous and impenitent.¹ At the great white throne judgment, all of the enemies of God will be consigned to the place of eternal conscious punishment, from which there is no escape.² The new heavens and the new earth shall be created³ as the final state in which the righteous shall dwell forever in the presence of God.⁴	Article 28 - The Eternal State 28-1 There are two final, eternal destinies for man¹: heaven for the righteous and penitent, and hell for the unrighteous and impenitent. At the great white throne judgment, all of <u>the unrighteous and impenitent</u>, the enemies of God, will be consigned to the <u>lake of fire</u>, a place of eternal conscious punishment, from which there is no escape.² The new heavens and the new earth shall be created³ as the final state in which the <u>penitent</u> righteous shall dwell forever in the presence of God.⁴	Article 28 - The Eternal State 28-1 There are two final, eternal destinies for man. ¹ At the great white throne judgment, all of the unrighteous and impenitent, the enemies of God, will be consigned to the lake of fire, a place of eternal conscious punishment, from which there is no escape.² The new heavens and the new earth shall be created³ as the final state in which the penitent righteous shall dwell forever in the presence of God.⁴

The background of the slide is a high-resolution photograph of a mountain range. The peaks are rugged and partially covered in snow, with some areas appearing to be shrouded in mist or low clouds. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. Overlaid on this image are several large, semi-transparent geometric shapes in shades of light blue and white, creating a layered, modern aesthetic. In the center of the image is a white rectangular box with a thin black border. Inside this box, the words "Panel Discussion" are written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.

Panel Discussion