



Sound Doctrine: Applying Core Beliefs to Everyday Life

“Angelology: The Unseen Multitude Around Us”

Hebrews 1:1-14

In recent years that has been an increasing openness to spirituality—not Christianity—that is an interest in a spiritual dimension beyond science and reason—there are currently 62 TV shows related to angels, demons, and the spiritual dimension.

Others have declared spirituality, and specifically angelology to be futile speculation with no practical relevance for the Christian life—however, the more than 500 direct references to angels & demons, and the more than 1,800 verses that refer to angels and angelic activity—says otherwise.

There is not enough time this morning to dive deeply into the spiritual realm of angels and demons—instead, we will dip our toes into the waters of angelology (which is the branch of theology that studies what the Bible says about angels, demons, and Satan).

There is a lot of speculation surrounding angels and demons—scenarios of elaborate methods of spiritual warfare—or belief in personalized guardian angels—or even the portrayal of holy angels sent from God but with dubious morality—all these unbiblical images of angelology **ARE** spiritual warfare—**2 Cor. 10:3-5.**

As we review some biblical truths about angelology—John Calvin’s rule of modesty for his treatment of angels is worth noting—*Let us remember here, as in all religious doctrine, that we ought to hold to one rule of modesty and sobriety: not to speak, or guess, or even seek to know, concerning obscure matters anything except what has been imparted to us by God’s Word. Furthermore, we ought ceaselessly to endeavor to seek out and meditate upon those things which make for edification.*”

This morning, I want to follow Calvin’s rule—and by seeking some of the biblical truth about angels—I pray that we will find encouragement, hope, example, and edification by answering 3 questions about angels: (1) Who are they? (2) What do they do? (3) Why should they matter to us today?

ANGELS: WHO ARE THEY?

- Angels are special eternal beings directly created by God – Neh. 9:6; Col. 1:16

- They are not departed saints—especially seen in the fact that they are not recipients of grace—**2 Pet. 2:4**.
- Not to be worshiped:
 - In **Col. 2:18**, Paul describes the Colossian heresy, which included the worship of angels
 - On 2 occasions in **Rev. 19:10; 22:8**, John attempts to bow down and worship an angel—NOTE the angel’s reply in **Rev. 22:9**, “*Do not do that, I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.*”
- Not greater than Christ – **Heb. 1:1-14**
- But they are greater than us – **2 Pet. 2:10b-12**—not even Michael, the archangel rebuked Satan (**Jude 9**) see also **Zch. 3:1-2**.
- They are innumerable – **Rev. 5:11** – “*myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands*” – it is a phrase that expresses an amount beyond calculation—“innumerable.”
- There are several categories of angels with different purposes and ranks:
 - Heavenly hosts, angels, seraphim, cherubim, and archangels.
 - Thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, rulers, authorities.

ANGELS: WHAT THEY DO?

- There are two categories of angels
 - Holy Angels
 - They perfectly obey God’s will – **Ps. 103:20-21**.
 - They are ministering spirits – **Heb. 1:14** – the following represents what the Bible tells us angels have done, but it is not a guarantee that angels will do the same in every circumstance.
 - They watch out for us – **Mt. 18:10**, “*See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.*” – nowhere in Scripture or Jewish tradition of the NT period is there any suggestion that there is one angel for one person—*there* is a collective pronoun that refers to believers being served by angels in general—angels are pictured always watching the face of God so as to hear His command to them to help a believer when needed.
 - They protect us – **Dan. 6:22**.
 - They deliver us – **Acts 12:7-10**.
 - They fight for us – Elisha at Dothan (**2 Kgs. 6**); angel fought the Assyrians (**2 Kgs. 19**).
 - Fallen Angels/Demons
 - The fall of Lucifer – **Isa. 14:12-15; Ezk. 28:13-18**.
 - One third of the angels fell in Lucifer’s attempted coup – **Rev. 12:4**.

- The eternal destiny for Satan and his angels (demons) is hell – **Mt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10.**
- Satan and his demons roam about on the earth trying to harass the saints—**Job 1:7; 2:2; 1 Pet. 5:8.**

ANGELS: WHY THEY SHOULD MATTER TODAY?

- Because God created them to serve believers forever – **Heb. 1:14:**
 - **Heb. 2:5-9** – vv. 6-8 is a quote from **Ps. 8:4-6.**
 - **Phil. 2:5-11** – Christ was highly exalted above every name.
 - So, where do we come in?—we who will inherit salvation are only temporarily lower than the angels—because – **Rom. 16-17** “*The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.*” – this means that what Christ gets, we get! So, as recipients of grace and heirs of eternal life in Jesus Christ, who demonstrated God’s love for us—angels will be ministering spirits, not just on earth, but also in heaven serve the heirs of salvation—when the “*for a little while*” of **Ps. 8:5**, gives way to the *forever* of our eternal state in heaven.
- Because they are examples of perfect obedience in heaven—which is how we should obey on earth—**Mt. 6:10**, “*Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*”
 - Unholy angels have been expelled from heaven.
 - The only residents in heaven who receive commands from the Lord are angels—and the only angels in heaven are holy angels who perfectly obey God’s will – **Ps. 103:20-21.**

Angels were created by God to serve His purpose and glory—Puritan, Thomas Watson sums up angels like this, “*The angels are of the saint’s lifeguard...The highest angels take care of the lowest saints.*”

But our faith in Him does not depend on miracles and angelic interventions—faith is a relationship to the sovereign God through Jesus Christ, independent of the miraculous.

May we forever be thankful for God’s creation of ministering spirits—may we always obediently do the will of God as it is done by the angels in heaven—and may we, like the angels glorify God with every thought and action.