

# Faith Bible Church

## “Problem” of Evil-9: Job and More Suffering

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.  
<sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have the Word (πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος).

- The Word of God is the sword of the Holy Spirit, Eph. 6:17; 1 Cor. 2:9-13. Its power comes from God alone.
- We must never separate the Word of God from God Himself. Note how naturally the transition is from verse 12 to 13 from a description of the alive-powerful-sharp *Word* to a *Person*, who alone could have such qualities.

**Any Questions?**

These slides are available  
at <http://www.fbcweb.org/sermons.html>

# Philosophical/Theological/Doctrinal & Spiritual Foundations

## Bible Doctrines

Eschatology  
 Thanatology  
 Ecclesiology  
 Israelology  
 Dispensationalism  
 Doxology  
 Hodology  
 Soteriology  
 Hamartiology  
 Natural Law  
 Anthropology  
 Angelology  
 Pneumatology  
 Christology  
 Paterology  
 Trinitarianism  
 Cosmology  
 Theology Proper  
 Bibliology  
 Prolegomena

Broad and deep understanding of BD

The nature and importance of maturity (τέλειος, teleios).

Maturity is always related to Bible doctrine/divine viewpoint working under the salubrious ministry of God the Holy Spirit (enlightening and empowering).

One of the primary goals of FBC is to equip believers to be systematic Christian thinkers, instead of superstitious and pagan minded

Logos Philosophy  
 ○ Logic (32)  
 ○ Truth (17)  
 ○ Metaphysics

**1 Corinthians 2:9** but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.

Enough BD to be overcomer

1 John 2:14, "you are strong, and the word of God abides in you"

Lacks BD, DV

Eph 4:14, children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming

## Mature Believer – Level 3- Metaphysical Maturity

- High abstract metaphysical understanding of BD; Esse, HU, Trinity, Evil, Good,
- Enormous capacity for synthesis of BD and grasping of spiritual realities.
- Required to understand Trinity, free will, evil, good, the human soul, the hypostatic union, substances and properties, philosophy of mind.

## Young adult – Level 2- Doctrinal conceptualization

- Cf. Doctrine of evil
- Systematic understanding

## Baby – Level 1 = Basic Bible verses

- Basic passages on evil, good, God.
- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Compare this level of understanding in the sciences where one starts with only the particulars of science.
- Lack of cohesion
- Empirically oriented (empiricism always leads to skepticism)

# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

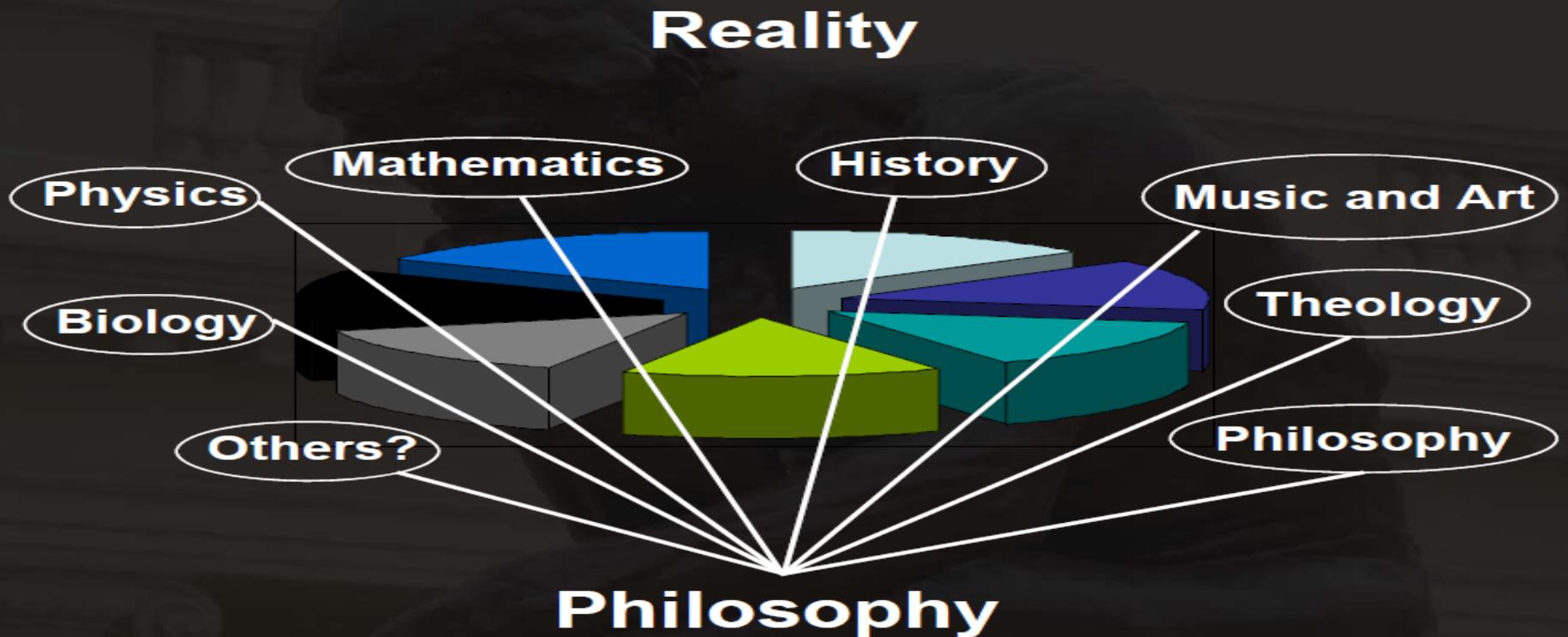
- ❖ The 6 contemporary views of truth
  - Coherence
  - Pragmatic
  - Functional
  - Existential
  - Fragmented: Fundamentalist (transcendentals), Scientism (materialism)
  - ✓ CORRESPONDENCE = Total Truth = Metaphysics, Esse, esses; Total Reality. Unlike fundamentalism, it includes the material and science; unlike scientism, it includes the transcendentals (logic, truth, love, justice, the soul, value, meaning, good, evil. Esse).

# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Correspondence Truth:
  - ✓ Christianity is not a series of truth in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital “T.” Truth about total reality, not just about religious things.
  - ✓ Biblical Christianity is Truth concerning total reality—and the intellectual holding of that total Truth and then living in the light of that Truth.
  - ✓ Let’s stop this “pious” nonsense about logic being antithetical to the ways of God. Christ is the Logos, the Alpha and Omega of Truth.
  - ✓ It is correspondence truth with is commitment to Reality/Metaphysics as such that *proves* the existence of God.

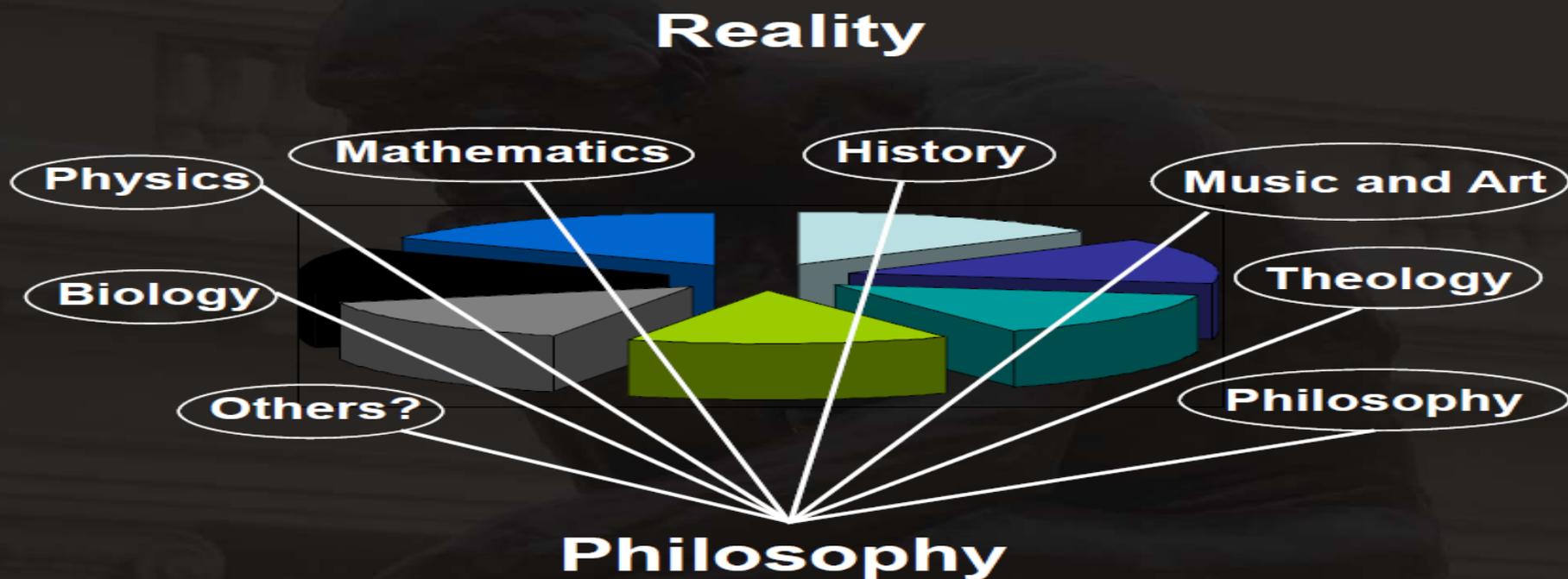
# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

The history of the West can be summed up as going from one fragmented view of reality/metaphysics (biology) to another (scientism). The “switching” out of fragmented lenses has resulted in “loss” of the nature of God and man.



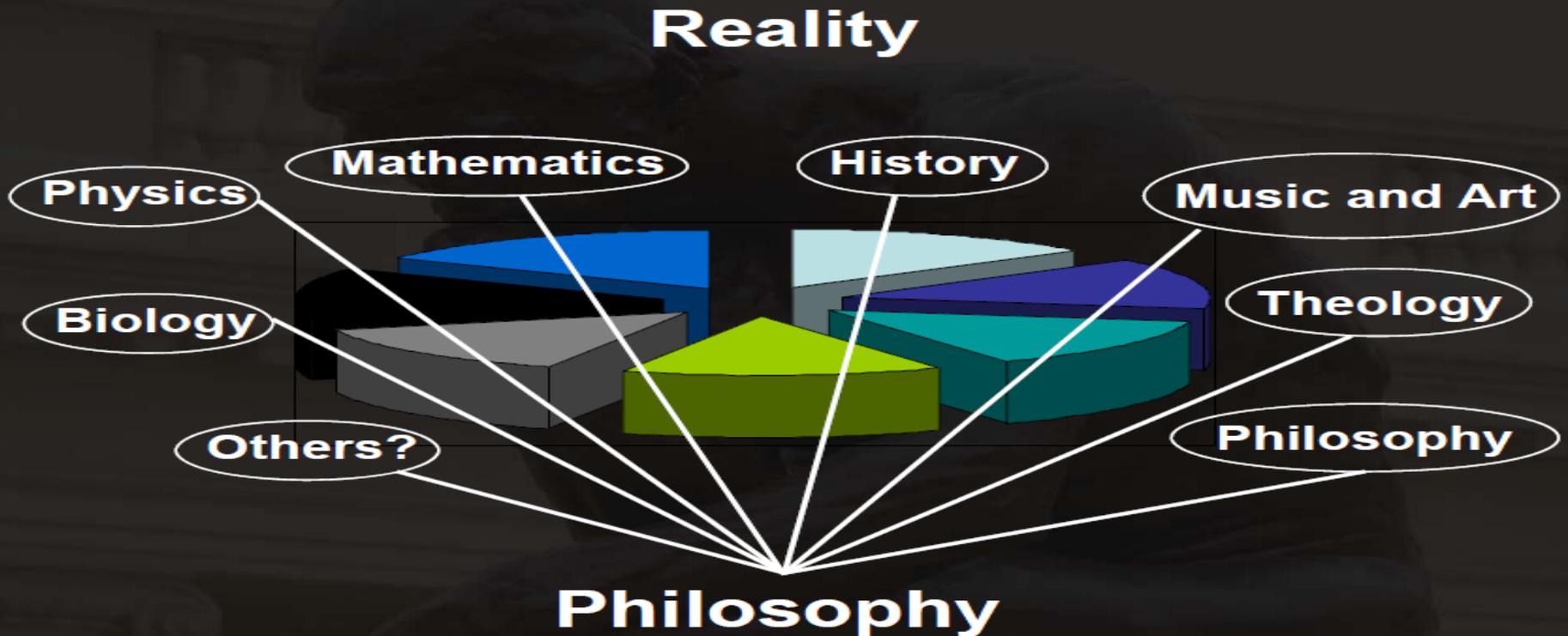
# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Science is no more the be-all or end-all or do all of Truth than any of the disciplines. There are many slices of reality/Truth. All science is the *empirical* study of physical entities—no more or no less. However, to be anti-science is to go against Total Truth as such.



# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ The solution to the problem of fragmentation of truth is the study of reality as such, metaphysics: being as being—not being as living or being as moving, or being a quantifiable or being as beauty, but being as such: metaphysics, the science of being or reality—this is what they all have in common: reality, existence.



## Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ When one penetrates sensible objects he gets to the inner act of existence within the being itself. This inner act of existence is *esse* or “to-be” of a being, that which makes a being precisely to be a *be-ing*—is not a *what*, an essence or nature, making a being to be *this-kind* of being. It is, rather, an *active presence* which posits the entire essence, with all its properties, in the real order of actual existence, making it actually to be what it is.

## Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ With the understanding of esses, the whole center of gravity of metaphysical explanation shifts from essence, *what* a being is, to deeper level of the *acts of existence* which alone gives actuality and value to everything within the being, both to its essence and all its attributes.

## Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Total Truth, Ultimate Reality in Esse and esses. All the vast multiplicity and diversity of beings in the universe are now revealed as so many diverse modes of participation, through limiting essence, in the one great central source of all actuality and perfection, existence itself, which exists in its pure unparticipated, unlimited state in God alone, as the unique infinite Source of all being, not constricted within the bounds of any limiting essence, but pure subsistence *Esse* or Act of Existence, in all its inexhaustible richness and fullness.

## Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ The Total Truth, Ultimate Reality of God, Rom. 1:18-20. Reality (metaphysics) both on an intuitive level as well on the high abstract level *proves* the existence of God. This proof is so powerful that God says that man stands without excuse, Rom. 1:18-32. Therefore, it is not a matter of “probability.” The Word of God teaches that sensible objects and reality as such *prove* the existence of God.
  - ✓ **Romans 1:20** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ There are four major categories of apologetics. Only Classical apologetics offers absolute *proof* of the existence of God via laws of logic, cf. Rom 1.
  - ✓ #1, Classical: reason, the laws of logic, 2-step process (Aquinas, Geisler, Moreland, Craig). Absolute proof by *beginning* with the laws of logic. Rational approach.
  - ✓ #2, Evidentialism: empirically and historically verifiable facts, 1-step process (Butler, Montgomery). Can only yield probability. Empirical approach.
  - ✓ #3, Reformed: form of fideism, starts with the Word of God not logic (Calvin, Cornelius Van Til). Argues in a “circle.”
  - ✓ #4, Fideism: “just believe” (Martin Luther, Kierkegaard, modern theological liberalism). Stresses personal experience. Intuitive approach.

# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ All men know that God exists:
  - ✓ **Romans 1:18-22** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **repress the truth** in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because that which is **known** about God is **evident** within them; for God made it **evident** to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, **have been clearly seen**, being **understood** through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup> For even though they **knew God**, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools,

# Truth-17 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ It is fallen man's nature to *repress* the truth concerning God's *true* nature.
  - ✓ **Romans 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who repress the truth in unrighteousness (τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικία κατεχόντων,
    - Repression is the process by which unacceptable desires and impulses are excluded from consciousness and thus being denied direct satisfaction are left to operate in the unconscious.
    - The truth of God is actually “held” in an evil way.
    - The confessions of famous atheists are very revealing about their former self-delusion as a result of repression (cf. J. Budziszewski).

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

## **Job 1:1; 12-22, and the issue of Theodicy.**

- Theodicy: θεός (God) + δίκη (justice).
  - ✓ Theodicy is the vindication of God's goodness and justice in the face of the existence of evil.
  - ✓ Theodicy is the branch of theology that is concerned with defending the goodness, the justice, and the power of God in light of physical and moral evils of the world.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- Theodicy: θεός (God) + δίκη (justice) –
  - ✓ David Hume (following Epicurus), “Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? When then is evil?”
  - ✓ Ask ten non-Christians at random to give two objections to the Christian faith, and very likely nine of them will mention what is known as the problem of evil” How is it that there is evil in the world created by an all-powerful and all-loving God?
  - ✓ As this is probably the number one objection to the Christian faith, we need to be able to respond in Truth without vexation.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- Theodicy versus defense
  - ✓ Theodicy demonstrates the compatibility of God and evil/human suffering in the world.
  - ✓ A defense, on the other hand, sees to provide a *possible* morally sufficient reason why an omniscient, omnipotent, perfectly good God might allow evil (Alvin Plantinga, Eleonore Stump).

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- Theodicy versus defense
  - ✓ What distinguishes a defense from a theodicy is that a defense does not claim to be able to provide a definite answer to the problem of evil. All it does is destroy the problem of evil as a argument against Christianity. The defense is similar to what a defense attorney does.
  - ✓ The point of a defense is to undermine confidence in the argument against God from evil (Plantinga's free-will defense).

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- Defense and Medieval theodicies
  - ✓ The medievals were able to provide a rich, sophisticated, elaborate, and full defense due to their grasp of philosophy, theology, and metaphysics (especially Aquinas). They had a far better grasp on virtue, character, love, the nature of God, and the nature of man than does our “scientific” fragmented worldview (which in all practicality does not distinguish between a brain event and a mind event due to scientism).

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- Animadversions (strong criticisms) against theodicy
  - ✓ Some argue that theodicies are immoral because they blind us and desensitize us to the horror of evil, and they make us comfortable with suffering we might otherwise strive against.
  - ✓ Pure philosophical analysis of the problem of evil can border on the obscene if the human emphatic dimension is excluded. No matter how successful theodicy is, it cannot possibly alter the fact of suffering.
  - ✓ To be uneducated or heartless about the problem of evil is to be less than human.

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and More Suffering

## Principles:

1. Note the results of Job's first episode of testing, 1:18-22. This is Job's response to excruciating external and internal suffering. There was enough here to make an average person experience a nervous breakdown. Job is such a hero; obviously, he does not love God because of the blessings. He has great personal love of God.
  - a. 1:20, "tore his robe." To feel sorrow is to be human. Spirituality does not destroy natural emotions (cf. Christ weeping over Jerusalem). Rather, it guides, controls, curbs, comforts, and brings blessings out of them.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and More Suffering

- b. 1:21, “naked . . . naked.” The recognition of loss and sorrow as the certain and fixed law of life—all earthly possessions are transient. Death at the end will take them all.
- c. 1:21, “the Lord gave, and the Lord takes away.” This is a step far beyond the former. To bring in the thought of *the Lord* makes a world of difference. Job knew that ultimately it was not about the Chaldeans and Sabeans, and natural causes, and fire and wind. Job did not forget about all of the blessings that come from God.
- d. The grand corrective to all of the circumstances is the full theistic idea, that *Esse* is the ultimate cause of all.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and More Suffering

2. The excruciating internal and external suffering of Job in no way minifies the love or the goodness of God. Remember the twofold aspects of the perfect love of God:
  - a. God's love always seeks the *good* of the beloved (Satan, Job, and the children)
  - b. God's love always desires to be closer with the beloved (Satan, Job, and the children)

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and More Suffering

3. Job is a far greater man and much closer to God after the first test. All sufferings in life are designed to refine us and thus infuse us with virtue and drive us closer to God. Oh, that we would learn that lesson! This concept is found throughout the New Testament.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

4. What Satan cares about most is Job's relationship with God. Satan's real aim is to use difficulties, testing, suffering as a means to drive Job into alienation from God. He will use anything and everything to drive a wedge between the believer and God. It takes a believer with a lot of doctrine and virtue to be like Job.
5. Job's virtue and power resided in his commitment to God. This is what life was all about for Mr. Job.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

6. God puts all believers on notice that Satan continues to prowl about to destroy their spiritual lives, but that God is always there to use difficulties to shape the believer into true greatness.
  - ✓ **1 Peter 5:8.**
    - 5-6, the need to develop virtue of humility.
    - 7, stop fretting (τὴν μέριμναν) and start trusting God (FRT) 7.
    - 8, be alert (γρηγορήσατε). The need to be “alert” to the issues of the spiritual life. Consider how Satan requested to sift Peter as wheat and how Peter failed miserably at Gethsemane. He knows from experience of what he is speaking.

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

## ✓ 1 Peter 5:8.

- 8, your adversary (ἀντίδικος), the devil (διάβολος) has great power on earth as the ruler of kosmos diabolicus (John 14:30; Eph. 2:2; 2 Tim 2:25-26).
- Note the adversary in **Revelation 12:10-11** And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for **the accuser of our brethren** has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. <sup>11</sup> "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

## ✓ 1 Peter 5:9.

- “resist him . . . firm in the faith (ἀντίστητε στερεοὶ τῇ πίστει);” same language in Eph. 6:11-13 and James 4:7.
- “the same experiences of sufferings (τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων).” We are not alone in our experiential sufferings. These are sufferings due to being believers who stand up for what they believe.
- “in the faith” – this refers to the Christian faith, Bible doctrine.

# Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

- ✓ **1 Peter 5:10.**
  - “But” (δὲ, not “after”) shows the contrast between satanic cosmic opposition and God’s purpose and enablement.
  - “Called you to His eternal glory” stresses God’s sovereign working through all the details to the very end (Rom 8:30). The eternal glory is contrasted with the temporal trials we all face.
  - 4 purposes of God via suffering to move the believer into greatness (all future active indicatives):
    - #1 – Mature you - καταρτίσαι
    - #2 – Confirm you - στηρίξει
    - #3 – Strengthen you - σθενώσει
    - #4 -- Establish you - θεμελιώσει

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

7. Satan's attempt to get Job to reject God backfired. Job is even more an impressive and admirable person than he was in the beginning.
8. After wave 1 of suffering, Satan now has the opportunity to change his views on self, God, and Job. One might be tempted to think that this was going to be the end of the story; but it is only the beginning.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

9. Satan's tone and language changes in the second episode. He is more desperate. Note how his veneer of moral concern in 1:9 has been dropped in the second episode in 2:4-5. At first he actually seemed to have some moral indignation at Job. Yet, look what he did to Job's children--"all that he has."
10. In the second episode Satan abandons any attempt at self-justifying morality.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

11. Unfortunately, Satan's response to his first failure with Job was not to recognize and admire true goodness and virtue. Rather, it is to insist, urgently, on Job's being struck again, worse than before, till suffering goads him into rebellion and hostility to God. Again, Satan also pushes for Job's being afflicted at God's hands. Satan answers without retraction, even though he was entirely wrong about Job. Satan is as evasive as before only with more intransigence than before. Satan gives his vague and insouciant answer in the face of the fact that he and God both know and care about where he has been and what he has been doing there.

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

12. A key question here is why would God respond to Satan in this manner? Why would God not rather scorn and repudiate Satan's overheated attempts to impel God Himself to attack Job?

## Problem of Evil-9, Job and Suffering

13. Why God allows Satan to afflict Job in episode 2? Job 2.
- Job would never have attained the measure of his greatness if his suffering after the first episode between God and Satan had been the end of the story.
  - Job was stretched into even greater understanding of God and the plan of God—unlike any other person in the Bible.
  - Although Job is vehemently indignant against God, that anger and indignation are one way to hold on to a relationship of love.
  - Job's passionate accusations against Job, in some ways, actually move him closer to God.