

# Faith Bible Church

## “Problem” of Evil-10: Job’s Excruciating Sufferings

**2 Peter 1:2** Grace and peace be multiplied to you ~~in~~ by means of (πληθυνθείη ἐν ἐπιγνώσει) the *epignosis* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true *epignosis* knowledge (διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως) of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

**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). Compare the characteristics of a baby vs. normal adult when it comes to understanding the meaning of life

- Babies have no idea about meaning of life
- With normal growth the "problem" of life's meaning becomes acute.
- The person who does not grow up adopts a hobo theory of life.

Logos Philosophy

- Logic (32)
- Truth (18)
- 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

- Things in terms of Bible doctrine that is undergirded by biblical passages

## Baby & meaning of life

- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Does not apply doctrine or divine viewpoint to all the issues of life
- Fragmented understanding of truth.

# Let's Never Forget that God is in Control

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# Calling All Solipsists!

*The International Society of Solipsists is currently accepting applications for new members. All interested persons are invited to apply. Please send a brief Vita and three letters of recommendation from yourself.*

## •Purpose

- To form a sense of community with other solipsists worldwide
- To interact intellectually with fellow solipsists on a local, national, and international level
- To convince others to become solipsists

## •Activities

- Official Anthem: "My Way"
- Ethics symposium next fall: "The Me Generation" Followed by a reception in the Hall of Mirrors
- Spring Seminar: "Minimizing Ontological Commitments"

**Solipsists of the world, UNITE!**

Downloaded from The University of Mississippi Department of Philosophy Web Site at <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/philosophy/humor.html>

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ The 6 views of truth
  - Coherence
  - Pragmatic
  - Functional
  - Existential
  - Fragmented: Fundamentalist (transcendentals), Scientism (materialism)
  - ✓ CORRESPONDENCE = Total Truth = Metaphysics, Esse, esses; Total Reality.

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Total Truth is all about Total Reality, the Ultimate Reality that is behind all sensible objects. It is called metaphysics or the study of being as being. It includes first cause, principles, and the reality behind all of the laws and causes of sensible objects.
- ❖ The mistake throughout history has been in the attempt to take one slice of reality to determine reality and first causes and laws behind all sensible reality—the attempt to take isolated opinions to discover Ultimate Reality.

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Man by nature cannot escape the fact that he is a metaphysical creature. It is in his very rationality to know beings and attempt to discover causes and attributes of things, cf. his desire to know causes in sensible objects (scientific knowledge) as well as everything else in life.

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Man desires to know metaphysical causes of beings.
  - ✓ This desire comes from human nature itself.
  - ✓ This desire is universal.
  - ✓ This desire is inescapable
  - ✓ This desire is implanted by God.
  - ✓ A desire was implanted in human nature by God must be intended not for frustration but for fulfillment.
  - ✓ To grasp ultimate reality is to fulfill this desire.

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Human thought is always about being; each and every aspect of reality, or even of unreality, is necessarily conceived as being, or defined in reference to being, it follows that the understanding of being is the first to be attained, the last into which all knowledge is ultimately resolved and the only one to be included in all our apprehensions.
- ❖ Man intuitively understands beings. We must always start with ontology rather than epistemology.

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; Esse

- ❖ Since being is the first principle of all human knowledge, it is a fortiori the first principle of metaphysics. There is nothing more basic, more fundamental, or more real than being as such. Take any child or adult and the thing they cannot not know is being as such. It is the most obvious thing and yet the most difficult thing to penetrate. Why is there something rather than nothing (The German philosopher G. W. *Leibniz* (1646-1716). God is the TOE.
- ❖ The problem throughout history is that man tends to lock himself in one of the parts of reality thereby precluding himself from seeing the whole of reality—Esse.

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ Man's intuitive grasp of being, sensible objects, and reality is so strong that he innately knows that God exists—regardless of the development of his epistemology, Rom. 1:18-20.
- ❖ The existence of esses (sensible objects) prove the existence of God (Esse). This proof is so powerful that God Himself says that man stands without excuse, Rom. 1:20. Therefore, it is not a matter of “probability.”

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ Paul's vocabulary in Romans 1:20 bears the imprint of Hellenistic philosophical thought in regard to perception of God through creation. God did not leave man without a witness, Acts 14:17.
- ❖ All men could not be held to be without excuse for not believing in God if it were simply an inference. This also tends to show that there is something else such as a basic and proper belief system in mankind.

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ However, 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 confessions of famous atheists are very revealing about their former self-delusion as a result of repression (cf. J. Budziszewski).

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ The Bible focuses on two types of evidences, proofs, and convictions that point to Ultimate Reality, God, Esse: external convincing evidence and inward convincing of the Holy Spirit. Both are important!
- ❖ By the internal ministry of the Holy Spirit we can *know* truths whereas by external evidence we can *show* them to be true. Although we know our faith to be true primarily through the witness of the Spirit, we must show our faith to be true through rational argument and evidence. To tell someone else we are sure does nothing to show him that our faith is true.

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ Outward sensible evidence in reality demonstrates Christianity to be true (cosmo-teleo-moral arguments, miracles), Luke 11:20; 24:25-27; John 3:2; 9:30-33; 10:38; 14:11; 20:31; Acts 2:22-32; 17; 1 Cor. 15:3-8.
  - ✓ **John 3:2** this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."
  - ✓ **John 20:31** but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ It is the inward witness and conviction by the Holy Spirit that enables us to know these things are true (and thus stop repressing them).
- ❖ It is one thing to see all of the evidence and believe that Christianity is true, it is quite another thing to know “experientially” the fact that Christ lives in us (Gal 2:20) as the hope of glory (Col. 1:27).
  - ✓ **Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

# Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to enable us to know Truth
  - ✓ **Galatians 4:6** And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
  - ✓ **Romans 8:15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ✓ **1 John 3:24** And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.
  
- ✓ This shows how crucial it is to live in adjustment to the Holy Spirit:
  - Quench not the Spirit, 1 Thess. 5:19
  
  - Grieve not the Spirit, Eph. 4:30
  
  - Walk by means of the Spirit, Gal. 5:16-17

## Truth-18 – Total Truth; Total Reality; Metaphysics; God

- ❖ The only way to really have a robust growing spiritual life is to grow in both in both areas of knowledge. They actually work in tandem. The reality of God helps us appreciate the arguments for the existence of God, Esse, and philosophy. But these arguments also fortifies our faith and enables us to be effective ambassadors.
- ❖ Again, the key is total truth, avoid being fragmented (cf. Dake, or an apologist with no spiritual life or a sensate believer who in effect believes that the spiritual life is just about trusting God when you are in a jam—mostly caused by living the sensate life).

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

1. The work of God. While we often think that God has only one (or perhaps a few) purposes in evil and sufferings, He is actually working in love and towards union with every person touched by the suffering under consideration. (Some have likened this to fractals: set of points with this peculiar feature: when it is graphed, the shape of each part of the whole resembles the shape of the whole; and the shape of each of the parts of any one part also resembles the whole, indefinitely. A graphed fractal is thus a picture within a picture within a picture, and so on. The point is that all of the points of dealing with Satan, Job, the others, and even the non-human entities are very much the same.)

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

2. God's love and desire to be nearer plays an essential role in dealing with Satan, Job, Mrs. Job, the ten children, and Job's associates. God is working on everyone involved even though there may be cross-purposes between the individuals, like in warfare.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

3. The only way suffering that can truly be “redeemed” for the sufferer is through a love relationship with God where the heartbreak and sufferings are woven into joy through the reciprocity of love.

**1 Peter 1:6-8** In this you greatly rejoice (ἀγαλλιᾶσθε), even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, <sup>7</sup> that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; <sup>8</sup> and though you have not seen Him, you love Him (ὄν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπᾶτε), and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

4. God's asking Satan where he has been stems from care and love, not from malice, Job 2:1-6.
  - ✓ It was designed to get him to reflect on his activity and alienation from God.
  - ✓ The fact that Satan is now in the presence of the "sons of God" would also remind him of his estrangement. It was designed to bring Satan insight into himself and his activity.
  - ✓ Further, Satan will also have to acknowledge that he is culpable for sufferings on Job and its resultant truths revealed for millions throughout history.
  - ✓ Consider the moral outrage of Satan against Job in the context of justification of his own activity.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

5. As far as Satan's intransigence, even if it were true that reform of Satan were impossible, God continues to love Satan and this love is unconditional and still is designed to bring Satan insight into himself and his actions. Even if all that God could do would be inefficacious to make Satan better, God's love for Satan continues for Satan's good and that would include enlightening Satan as to himself and his actions.
6. Again, even to intransigent Satan, divine love does not stop when it meets an irrevocable hostile response? Consider the love in a mother's trying to minimize the distance between herself and a hostile grown-up child. Surely, it would not be better for her or the world if she became hostile in return.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

7. Before we move into the horrible pain and suffering of Job, remember that it was these sufferings that took Job beyond goodness and virtue to a new love for God that was sufficient to remove all of his preceding indignation and pain. Also, do not forget what we have learned about pain, e.g. natural childbirth, and professional athletes. Pain in and of itself is not a prima facie case of for the problem evil. People *voluntarily* do all kinds of things that require pain on a regular basis because the results are seen as worth it.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

8. Note how the contemporary explanations of evil fail in Job. For example:
- ✓ God can't do anything about it once He creates a vulnerable world. This is just the way it is going to be.
  - ✓ Freewill defense (Alvin Plantinga)
  - ✓ This is the best of all possible worlds (Molinism).
  - ✓ All suffering is due to sin. There is no unjust suffering.
  - ✓ Open theism (God is neither omnipotent nor omniscient).
  - ✓ Sole objective in all suffering is to develop character in sufferer (Hick)
  - ✓ God arbitrarily does what He wants—command theory of virtue.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

### 9. Overview of Job's physical sufferings.

**Job 2:7** Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

- “Boils” ( **יִחַשׁ** ) was a skin disease which was one of the ten plagues brought by the Lord on Egypt (Exod. 9:9-11). God is viewed as the ultimate reason for the disease, even in the case of Job, where the more immediate agent is Satan (Job 2:7).

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

### 9. Overview of Job's physical sufferings.

**Job 2:8** And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

**Job 2:12** And when they lifted up their eyes at a distance, and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept. And each of them tore his robe, and they threw dust over their heads toward the sky.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

### 9. Overview of Job's physical sufferings.

**Job 3:24** "For my groaning comes at the sight of my food, And my cries pour out like water.

**Job 3:25** "For what I fear comes upon me, And what I dread befalls me.

**Job 7:5** "My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt; My skin hardens and runs.

**Job 9:18** "He will not allow me to get my breath, But saturates me with bitterness.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

### 9. Overview of Job's physical sufferings.

**Job 16:16** "My face is flushed from weeping, And deep darkness is on my eyelids,

**Job 19:17** "My breath is offensive to my wife, And I am loathsome to my own brothers.

**Job 19:20** "My bone clings to my skin and my flesh, And I have escaped *only* by the skin of my teeth.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

### 9. Overview of Job's physical sufferings.

**Job 33:21** "His flesh wastes away from sight, And his bones which were not seen stick out.

**Job 30:27** "I am seething within, and cannot relax; Days of affliction confront me.

**Job 30:30** "My skin turns black on me, And my bones burn with fever.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

10. Job's sufferings were in the good will of God.

- ✓ Charles Ryrie, "The good will included physical suffering for Job at this time, as it does for many today."
- ✓ Not only did God permit it, He also stood by and let Job suffer. Why? How can this be the love of God? Consider the child with leukemia who is suffering from the pain of a bone marrow transplant in the hospital who wants to know from her mother why she does not help her—just take me out of the hospital! Would the mother respond by going into the details of cytotoxic drugs that destroy diseased stem cells in the bone marrow.

## Problem of Evil-10, Job 2-3

11. Job became the personification of misery. Not only was he experiencing excruciating physical pain for months, he was rejected, isolated, and relocated to the place where they burned the city's garbage and rubbish and human excrement. It was a place of wild animals, maggots, and stench.
12. One can only imagine the horrors Job experienced as he went from burying his ten children to noticing the appearance of skin ulcers to the realization that he had a disease that would only add pain to his misery.