

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B

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

- 5: Hermeneutics
- 4: Linguistics
- 3: Epistemology 32
 - Existence 50
 - History 44
- 2:Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50
- 1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

Opening: The greatest issue in life is relationship with God that is characterized by a mind that knows God and a will that loves God (Matt. 22:37-39; 2 Cor. 5:9; Matt. 6:24).

Preparation: Mat 11:25; 16:13-17.

2 Parts to Bible class: 20 min on spiritual and philosophical foundations and 1 hour on love. A few words about change and our journey of Truth. There are two books of God’s revelation (we must not be afraid to look through Galileo’s telescope). Rejection of natural revelation of God is just as serious as rejection of special revelation, for it, among other things, effects our interpretation of special revelation.

Spiritual foundations: In making a distinction between the faith/conviction based on propositions and the faith/conviction that comes through the Holy Spirit, we also need to recognize that the same holds truth of the infused virtues of hope and love. This means that every Christian starts out with the faith, hope, and love, Rom. 5:5; 1 John 4:19; 5:8.

1. At the point of salvation all Christians first “see” the Goodness of God and love Him, 1 John 4:19.
2. After salvation, the issue is faith seeking understanding apart from which faith, hope, and love become distorted.

Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God, creation, the spiritual life, man, and Bible doctrine.
- Transcendent relationship with God rather than nominal relationship with God.

Stage 3

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

- Still Nominal understanding of God.
- Increase in perinoetic truth about God & the spiritual life. However, still plagued with pagan philosophy in view of God’s nature due to lack of metaphysics, which is due to modernism’s philosophical assumptions. He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.
- Orientation still more about words than the reality.

Stage 2

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 1 – Christian baby = life of ups and downs.

- Utilitarian understanding of God.
- All baby believers have a great deal of pagan views of God due to pagan horizon of meaning. All baby believers are tossed here and there by kosmos diabolicus, Eph. 4:14.
- For baby believers it is primarily about pragmatism. In other words, if it works or feels good , they think it must be true.

Stage 1

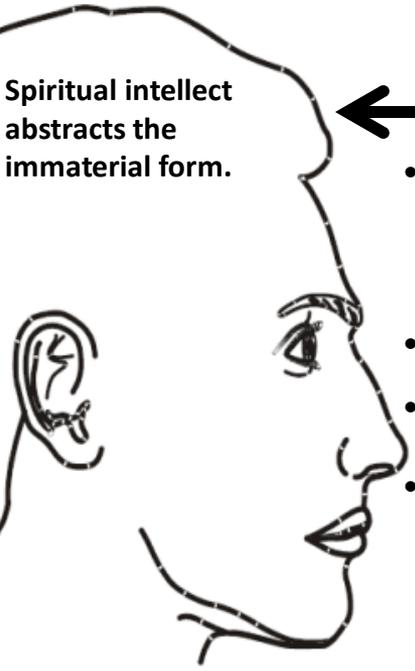
Philosophical Foundations for a Realist Christian Worldview (Epistemology: History-44–Realism vs. Bulldustisms)



Spirituality of the intellect is manifested by its ability to go beyond the material sensed images and form the immaterial universals like triangularity, justice, and love that cannot be imaged. Yet, because of hylemorphism, Realists recognize the very close connection between physical and immaterial.

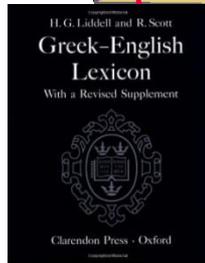
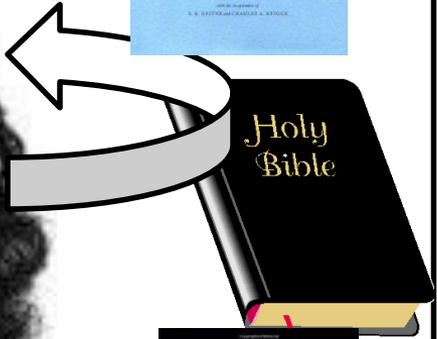
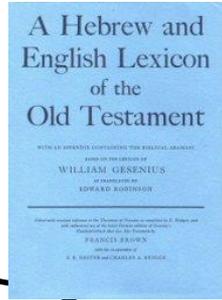


Spiritual intellect abstracts the immaterial form.



- Only the Realist believes in forms and thus in beings as such. This means that only the Realist believes that Dawkins and atheistic scientists exist. In PR there is a unity of the various parts acting for the good of the whole.
- Only two systems PR vs. bulldustism/Alice in Wonderland.
- PR and divine creation.
- PR teaches that man can know the form (essences) and final causes (purposes) of beings without appeal to God and Scripture (though incomplete) because reality is grounded in the natures of things rather than subjectivity. The PR is not a relativist or an anti-intellectual (like Billy Sunday).
- The Realist never fears contradiction for two reasons: (1) stands on unshakable ground of first principles of reality; (2) is eager to make adjustments in the details. He submits to all truth and is not interested in language games that cover up truth and protect “kingdoms” and pride. He loves truth and understands the nature of deception and thus the nature of the father of lies, Satan, and his influences throughout culture.

2. Rene Descartes' (1596-1650) epistemology: Rationalist's view of God and BD.

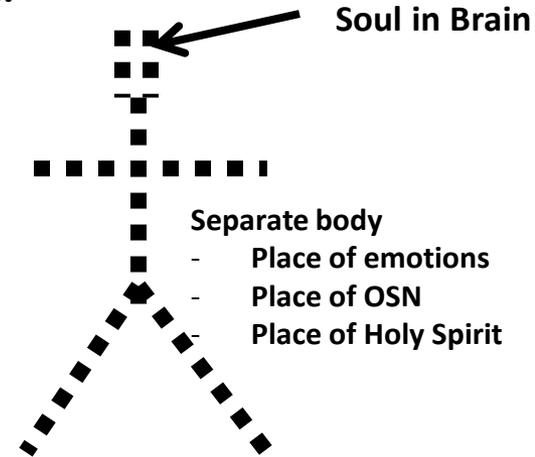


- Building reality on word studies and tenses is demonstrable fallacious. We will have to deal with this in linguistics.
- We must press on in the journey of Truth even if at first it is painful. We must never react to truth as if was false, bad, or ugly instead of TGB.

Cartesian corruption of modern Christianity:

- Rejection of metaphysics.
- Rejection of formal and final causes.
- A return to Greek philosophy.
- Dualism.
- Flat and weird views of human nature.
- Rationalism.
- Fallacious word studies.
- Skepticism.
- Fideism.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



Cartesians are very rational and more or less ground fundamental reality their own thinking, which is why they are generally very arrogant.

They tend to be skeptical about anything that is not clear and distinct.

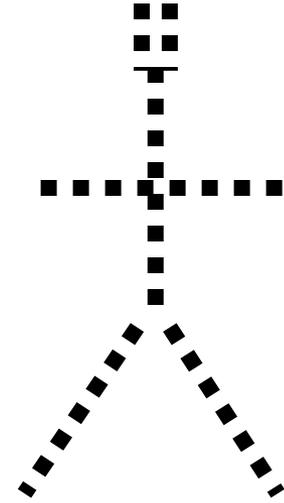
3. Francis Bacon's (1561-1624) epistemology: Inductivist's view of God and BD.



**Baconian
corruption of
modern
Christianity:**

- Rejection of classical metaphysics.
- Inductive approach to God, the Bible, and spirituality.
- Flat view of reality of God, creation, and man.

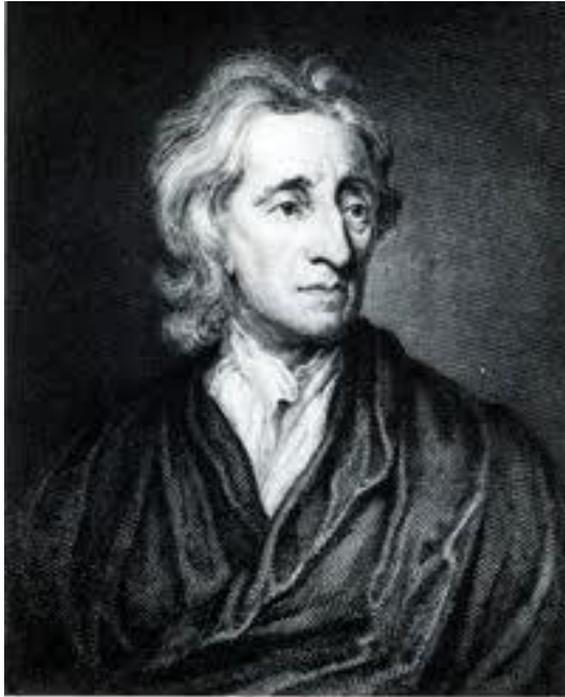
No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



No direct access to the inner workings of the intellect and will.

A Baconian influenced believer has no objective ground or anchor from which to place the various passages in Scripture. Naturally, he will default into favorite passages.

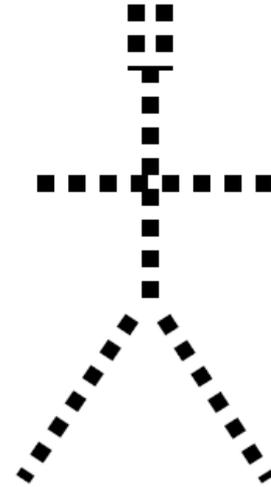
4. John Locke's (1634-1704) epistemology: Empiricists view of God and BD.



Lockean corruption of modern Christianity.

- Rejection of classical metaphysics.
- Lack of orientation to forms.
- Subjectivity.
- Greater orientation to sensations as a ground of truth.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



No direct access to the inner workings of the intellect and will.

- **Collapses to making experience the basis of reality.**

5. David Hume (1711-1776) epistemology: Skeptics view of God and BD!

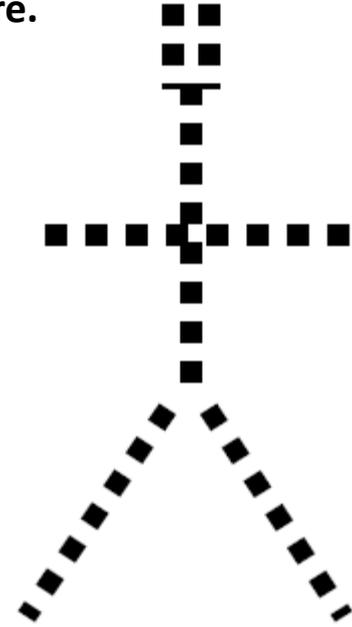


A Humean influence is one of doubt and skepticism about causality proving God and has a distrust of the supernatural (cf., Doubting Thomas). **Collapses to skepticism regarding miracles.**

Humeanism
corruption of
modern Christianity.

- Rejection of classical metaphysics.
- Separation of cause and effect as two separate things, which destroys any basis for the proof of God based on causation.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



There is no identity, no intellect and will, just stream of consciousness.

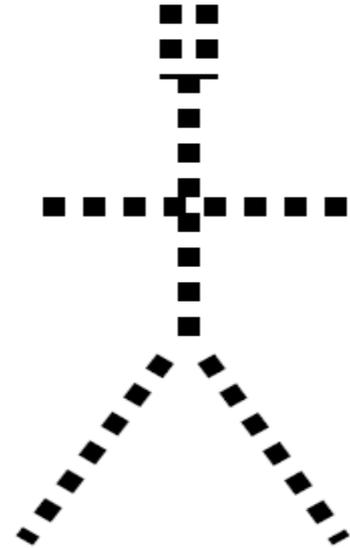
6. Thomas Reid's (1710-1796) epistemology: Intuitionists view of God and BD.



Reidean corruption of modern Christianity.

- Rejection of classical metaphysics.
- Orientation to subjective intuition (common sense) with regard to God, creation, the Bible, and man.
- A system that is used by Unitarians, mystics and some Christians.
- Anti-intellectualism.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



No direct access to inner workings of the intellect and will.

A Reidian doctrinal believer lives in a world dominated by “common sense” gained from his culture and/or his brand of Christianity (denomination).

Collapses to intuition, anti-intellectualism, and fideism.

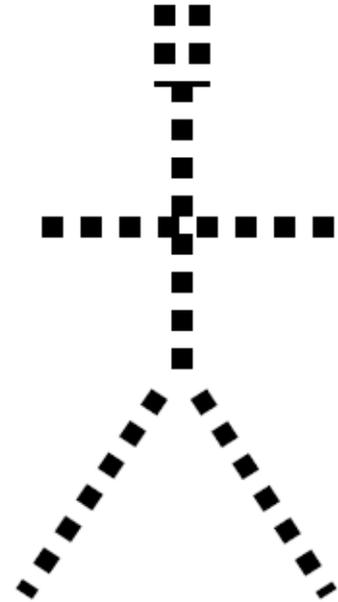
7. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): Phenomenologist's view of God and BD.



Kantian
corruption of
modern
Christianity:

- Relativism.
- Anti-intellectualism
- Christianity is allocated to the realm of the subjective and personal.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



A Kantian doctrinal believer does not believe God can be proved through natural revelation. Also does “good for goodness sake.”

Collapses into lack of confidence in proving the existence of God.

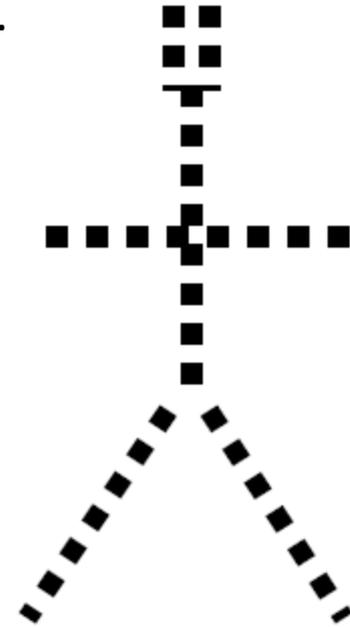
8. Augustus Comte (1798-1857): Positivistic view of God and Bible doctrine.

No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



Comtean corruption of modern Christianity.

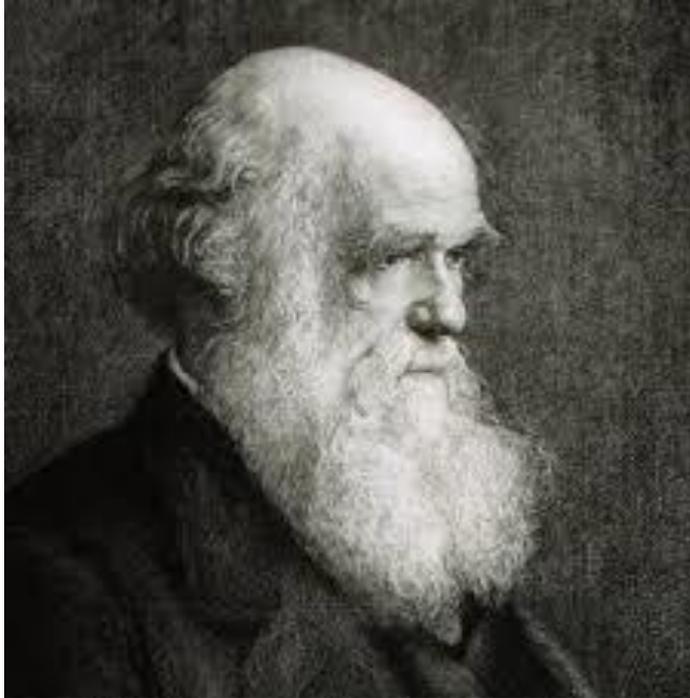
- Positivism and naturalism.
- An example is our kids taught that that it is the brain, not the intellect, that is the source of human thinking.



A Comtean influenced believer believes that physical reality is autonomous—no need for *Esse*. God is not needed as a direct cause of the effects in the world. Such a believer tends to view matter as autonomous.

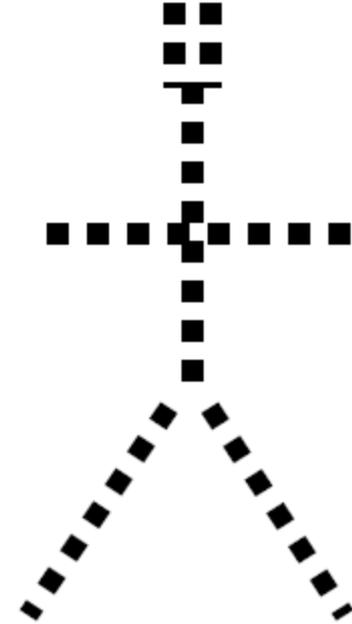
Collapses into making truth a matter of physics.

9. Charles Darwin's (1809-1882): evolutionist's view of God and Bible doctrine.



- Darwin was not an atheist. He was a deist or agnostic.
- *Darwin letter to Asa Gray wrote:* 'I have never been an atheist in the sense of denying the existence of a God, ... I think that generally (& more & more as I grow older), but not always, that an agnostic would be the most correct description of my state of mind.'
- He did lose faith in Christianity, however, primarily because of the "problem" of evil.

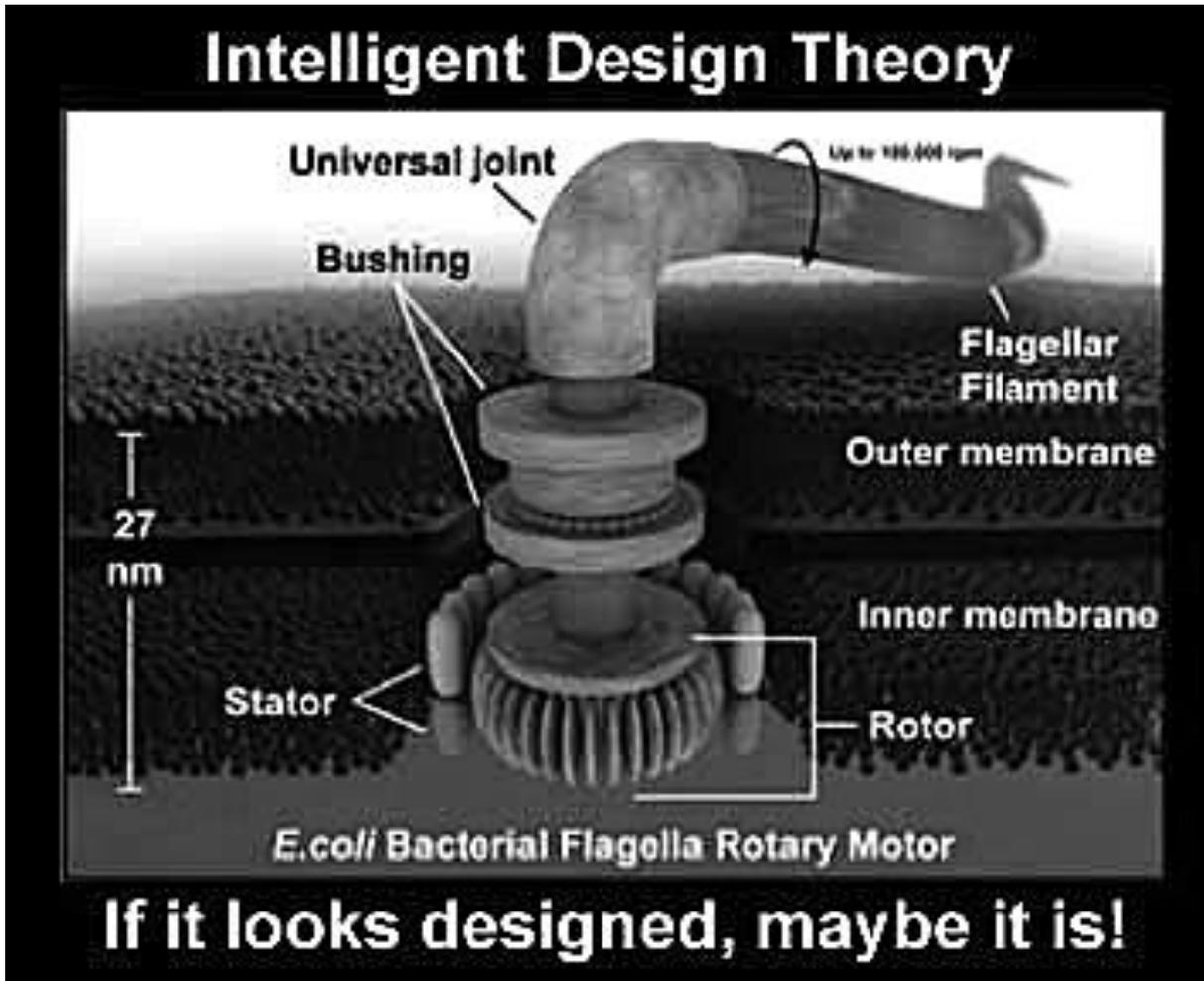
No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



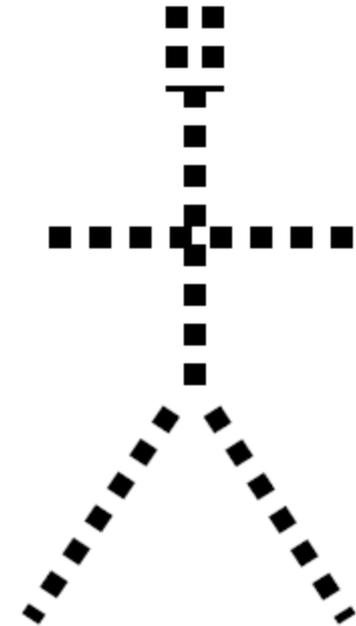
Darwinian influences make it easier for Christians believe creation has power in itself to evolve.

Again, there are no forms.

10. The ID movement: mechanistic view of God and BD.



No hylomorphism: No forms or final causes = no objective standards for ethics or happiness rooted in human nature.



An ID influenced doctrinal believer believes that the existence of God can be proved by material, external causation, physical science.

Collapses into deism (cf. Paley's Watchmaker)

Love 21

1 Cor. 13:1-13.

1. Only knowing and loving God as our Supreme Good in a 2nd person dyadic relationship can truly bring transcendence to life, which is the only way to really “solve the problems” of life.
 - a. Consider the amount of sin and evil that is spawned simply by not loving God and loving all that God loves, that is, seeing Him and His Plan as the Ultimate Good. Failure to love God is the root of all sin, evil, carnality, apathy, and disbelief.
 - b. It is love for God alone that is the fountain of all other virtues (Gal. 5:22-23). For example, there can be no joy in God or peace in all circumstances apart from 2nd person dyadic relationship with God. The conduit model cannot be biblically or experientially supported.

- c. The 2nd person personal dyadic relationship with God goes far beyond loving God for what He has done for us in grace.
- Until and unless the believer moves into this 2nd person dyadic friendship love, he will never have a flourishing *relationship* with God.
 - It is one thing to love Christ as Sin Forgiver because one loves being guilt free, it is one thing to love Christ as Rescuer from Hell because one loves being free from eternal pain, it is one thing to love Christ as Protector because one loves being safe, it is one thing to love Christ as Blessor because one likes the blessings, it is one thing to love Christ as Righteousness because one likes the idea of (forensic) righteousness—it is one thing to love Christ for a million reasons all having to do with the gifts that we love.
 - However, it is quite another thing to love Him for who He is and move into a stable friendship relationship with Him, being concerned with pleasing Him for His own sake. This is what the 2nd person relationship is all about it. Only in 2nd person relationship is there really a deep and rich relationship—which is why the Word asserts that it is God's will that we pray continually. Only in 2nd person relationship is God truly more satisfying than anything in life.

2. Single greatest obstacle to loving God and Goodness of His plan is man's fragmented wills—his willed autonomy. We all grow up with a struggle (love-hate relationship) between our own autonomy (and sensed "goods") and God (and the things of God). We all have powerful preferences for our own ways and what we think is good even if that means living a fragmented, and self-alienated life—one cannot have proper, biblical love for self without being integrated around the Good.

3. The solution to fragmentation is found in sanctification. It is in sanctification that God changes our first order wills in response to our 2nd order desires around Him and the Good. This is the only way He can change what we will on the first order without violating our free will (cf., Psa. 19:13-14 with Romans 1:24-32).

4. Sanctification does not occur through the popular conduit model of spirituality. Change never takes place in a passive state or apart from man's active free choice regarding a desire for virtue.

5. The issue in sanctification is more about 2nd person relationship and what we really want than merely doing all of the mechanics (fellowship, Bible doctrine, application of Bible doctrine so God can work through us as if we were a conduit).
 - a. Overview of conduit model.

 - b. Overview of concurrent model.

6. In other words, life with God is a life that actively pursues Him first and foremost rather than actively pursuing the mechanics to get to Him. God is far more interested in our attitudes in seeking Him than some idea of having everything in working order so He can work through us. It is more about what we really want than divine power flowing through a believer. It is all about a settled attitude toward God rather than being plugged into God's powerstrip.

7. The biblical model for true spirituality and a thriving spiritual life with God is the active concurrent model (both and) rather than the passive conduit model (God does it all automatically as long as we stay in fellowship, have Bible doctrine, and apply it), cf. Matthew 7:7-11; 2 Tim. 2:7; Prov. 2:1-6; Luke 10:27; 2 Pet. 1:4-11; Mat. 6:19-24; Philip. 1:20-23, 3:8; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Eph. 5:1-10.

8. The fundamental issue in loving God is seeing Him as our Supreme Good, Psa. 16:2-3, 5-6, 8-9, 11. This is what it means to love God. Note how the dynamics of David's spiritual life are found in the New Testament.
- a. The way we glorify God is by knowing Him, loving Him, treasuring Him above all things, and by living in a way that shows He is our supreme treasure. We do not glorify Him just because we appreciate His benefits.
 - b. When the believer truly loves God, all other "goods" pale in comparison, Psa. 16:2. When God becomes the only true good, all things from God are only good in respect to their relationship with God. Hence, "I have no good besides/over you (טוֹבֹתַי בְּלִ-עֲלֶיךָ)."
 - c. What we think about "continually" is often a reflection of what we truly treasure, Psa. 16:8.

9. Overview of the goods that man seeks for meaning, purpose, and happiness. I have listed them **from the stupidest to the wisest**. The Realist understands this both from the *nature* of man as well as from the supernatural revelation of Scripture.

#1 - Wealth.

- ❖ This is the most popular but the most inadequate.
- ❖ Why does happiness seem to consist in wealth? Because it can buy things! However, money can only buy things that money can buy. It can't buy peace or wisdom or a transcendent relationship with God.
- ❖ Money is just a means to another end and therefore cannot be an end in itself. It is a means of exchange. Besides, "what does it profit a man if he gains the world but loses his own self?" What profit is the Christian life that loses its faith due to materialism?
- ❖ The richest countries have the highest suicide (Holland, Sweden, United States). If money was the ultimate end, then why do those at the top of the ladder have so much trouble finding meaning in life?
- ❖ What did Jesus Christ and Paul say about love for mammon and love for God?
- ❖ Wealth is compatible with evil, brings only partial satisfaction, can have harmful results, and is external.

#2 - Fame/honor. Another stupid goal in life for attaining happiness.

- ❖ Fame or honor cannot be a goal because it is simply recognition of something honorable, some virtue. However, virtue is what brings the happiness, not the sign. No one wants fame or honor that is phony.
- ❖ What we really long for is some good in us, an internal good. Fame, honor, or glory is external and can even be given by fools. Besides, the only honor the believer should be interested in is being honored by the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:9 Therefore also we have as our ambition (φιλοτιμούμεθα), whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.

#3—Power.

- ❖ Happiness may seem to consist in power because we fear losing power more than almost anything else. We will even endure suffering as long as it is freely chosen (within our power).
- ❖ But why do we hate powerlessness so much? Because it hinders our good use of power.
- ❖ Power, like wealth, is a means to an end.
- ❖ We have far more power in our age of technology than those in the past, and yet live in more weakness and fear of pain and death.

#4- Health.

- ❖ “If you have your health, you have everything.” However, this is only relatively true. What is the point of health?
- ❖ It is true that health is greater than anything external, but it is less than the good of the soul. The health of the body is not the greatest good.
- ❖ What good is it to have a healthy body if the soul is sick?
- ❖ What good is having perfect health if you go around looking down on those who do not?

#5- Pleasure.

- ❖ Pleasure seems to be an answer to what happiness is because both pleasure and happiness are sought for their own sake, as ends and not means. It is also true that whenever we have happiness, we are pleased.
- ❖ However, pleasure is not a means but the results of possessing something good. So, pleasure does not tell us what happiness essentially consists in. We can regret pleasures but never happiness. If there are harmful pleasures then pleasure cannot be the same as our true good.
- ❖ The pain of hedonism is well documented. Often moments of pleasure leads to a life of pain and agony. Hence, pleasure is not the end in itself.

#6- Wisdom/Virtue.

- ❖ By this point we must deduce that happiness is internal, not external, so happiness must consist in the good of the soul.
- ❖ The good of the soul is wisdom (good of the mind) and virtue (good of the will).
- ❖ However, the soul cannot be its own goal or ultimate end. He cannot be its own last end. It has to exist for something else. After all, it does desire goodness outside of itself.

#7- God. This is the proper end of man as revealed by natural revelation of the nature of man (PR) as well as Scripture.

- ❖ Man has a longing for perfect happiness that he cannot gain in this world. There is no perfect happiness anywhere in this world.
- ❖ Hence, happiness must transcend this world.
- ❖ The goods of this world are all limited, but our desire is unlimited.
- ❖ Therefore according to our nature and the Word of God there must be an unlimited good which alone can satisfy all our desires. Our goal, telos, is nothing less than God. We are indeed restless until we find rest in Him. All other goods are compatible with evil, give only partial satisfaction, can have harmful results, and are transient.

Psalm 19:7-14.

1. Note David's orientation to the revelation of God in creation, 1-4. The revelation is metaphysical not in terms of natural science. David understood Esse and divine concurrence.
2. Note David's love for the Word of God, 7-11.
3. Note how the Word of God motivates David to reflect on his unknown sins, 12.
4. Note how the Word of God motivates David uses his second order volition for God's help on his first order, 13.
5. Note how comprehensive nature David's attitude is regarding his life with God, 19:14. He is asking for God's help to be pleasing to God in all things. This most definitely is the concurrent model rather than the conduit model.

Survey of the characteristics of David's love/desire for God: Psalm 23; 25:4, 15; 27:4, 8-9; 31:7, 19; 34:1-10; 36:7-9; 42:1-2; Psalm 51.

Survey of second person dyadic and triadic love relationship with God in the New Testament: Matt 5:43-48; 2 Cor. 5:9; 12:7-10; Eph. 5:1-11; 6:5-6; Col. 3:22-4:4; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; James 1:5.