



“Problem” of Evil - 17

1st Person & 2nd Person Knowledge of God

The Crucial Need for Fellowship for a Healthy and Powerful Spiritual life

John 15:1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He lifts up (αἶρει = lifts and places in favorable conditions); and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. ³ "You are already clean [positionally] because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- ✓ There is no greater power and motivation in life than living in the reality of a personal living experiential relationship with JC.
- ✓ The distinction between 1st & 2nd person knowledge.
- ✓ The ministry of the Holy Spirit & 2 the two categories of sin against Him (grieve through personal sin; quench through apathy).

Philosophical/Theological/Doctrinal & Spiritual Edification

Bible Doctrines

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

Philosophical Foundations/Prolegomena

Broad and deep understanding of BD

In one sense, our new birth is the most important event in our lives because it is the beginning of everything else in the POG. Yet in another sense, our birth is the *least* important event, because it is merely the starting point.

We are born and born again to grow up. All healthy growth requires 1st person & 2nd person knowledge of God.

- Reality as such
- Logic (32)
 - Truth (26)
 - 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.

Carnal believer lacks integration with God and True due to human viewpoint

Philosophical Foundations: Truth 26 (Dichotomization of Reality)

Our culture's dichotomizing/fragmentation of Total Truth

Upper Story of metaphysics

Nonrational, Personal feelings, Values, Truth, Metaphysics

Faith, Religion (e.g., Mormonism & Christianity)

Meaning & purpose of life, justice, love,

POST-KANTIAN DICHOTOMY

Secularism
Requires a blind
Irrational leap
of faith

Lower Story of "Facts"
Rational, Verifiable, Scientific
The "Real" Empirical World

Secularism
mocks Christianity
for its blind irrational
faith – yet secularists
must steal our values to
function in life

The 4 Apologetic approaches to removing the dichotomy

#1: Classical Approach

**Upper Story of Metaphysics:
God, Christianity, the Bible, Bible Doctrine, the Supernatural**

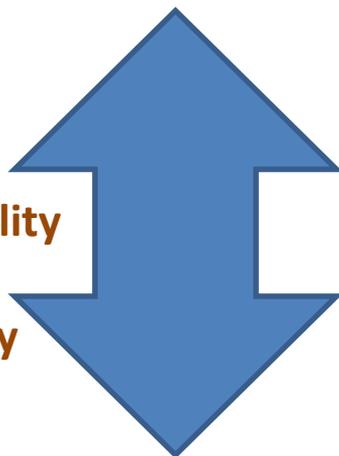
Classical Approach*

3 Step Approach

1- Logic, Truth, Reality

2- God

3- Bible/Christianity



Classical Approach

**- Emphasis on deduction,
logic & reason for
its foundation**

**Lower Story of “Facts”
Rational, Verifiable, Scientific
The “Real” Empirical World**

*Norman Geisler, C.S. Lewis, Benjamin Warfield, William Lane Craig, Peter Kreeft.

The 4 Apologetic approaches to removing the dichotomy

#2: Evidentialist Approach

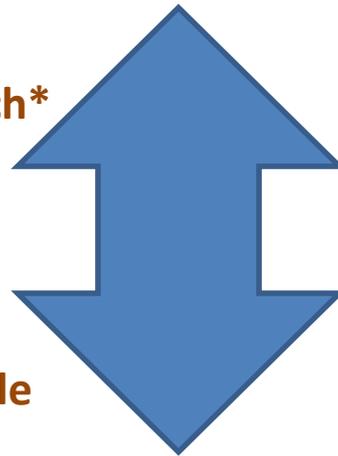
Upper Story of Metaphysics:

God, Christianity, the Bible, Bible doctrine, the Supernatural

#2- Evidentialist Approach*

1 Step Approach

- Emphasis on facts
- Resurrection of JC
- Creation and design
- Prophecies in the Bible



Evidentialist Approach

- Emphasis on induction
- Probabilistic

Lower Story of “Facts”

Rational, Verifiable, Scientific

The “Real” Empirical World

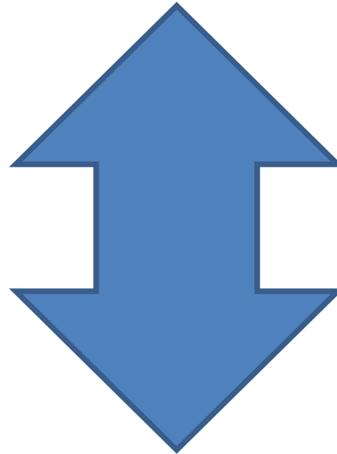
*Joseph Butler, John Warwick Montgomery, Richard Swinburne, Hugh Ross, Simon Greenleaf, Philip Johnson, Gary Habbermas, Josh McDowell, Lee Strobel

The 4 Apologetic approaches to removing the dichotomy

#3: Reformed Approach

**Upper Story of Metaphysics:
God, Christianity, the Bible, Bible Doctrine, the Supernatural**

#3- Reformed Approach*
1 Step Approach
- Presuppositionalisms
- Revelatory emphasis
- Start with axioms of Bible



#3- Reformed Approach
- Underestimates the value of empirical evidence

**Lower Story of “Facts”
Rational, Verifiable, Scientific
The “Real” Empirical World**

*John Calvin, Cornelius Van Til, Gordon Clark, Alvin Plantinga, Greg Bahnsen,

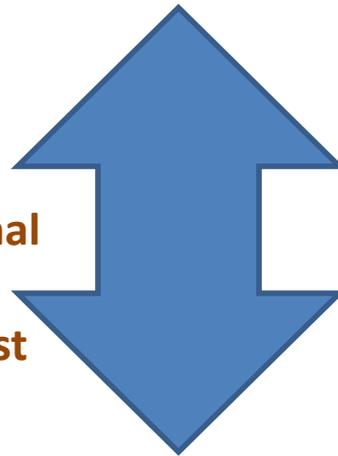
The 4 Apologetic approaches to removing the dichotomy

#4: Fideistic approach

**Upper Story of Metaphysics:
God, Christianity, the Bible, Bible doctrine, Supernatural**

Fideistic Approach*

- Emphasis on personal dimension of God
- Pits personal against propositional



Fideistic Approach

- Underestimates the role of reason and knowledge in the realm of faith.
- Undermines confidence in the Bible

**Lower Story of “Facts”
Rational, Verifiable, Scientific
The “Real” Empirical World**

*Martin Luther, Blaise Pascal, Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Barth, mystics

“Problem” of Evil-17: Job 8– 1st and 2nd Person Knowledge of God

1. Outline of Job 8: Bildad Defends the Justice of God
 - Bildad tells Job to repent and God will restore him, 8:1-7.
 - Bildad “demonstrates” God’s justice by way of analogies, 8:8-22.

2. The importance of understanding the distinction between 1st person and 2nd person knowledge of God.

3. Characteristics 1st person knowledge.

- ✓ This is the knowledge that you have of your own thoughts and the doctrine in your soul.
- ✓ This includes Background knowledge.
- ✓ This is a “that” knowledge or knowledge “about.”
- ✓ This is where we do our analytical thinking. This has also been called gnosis.
- ✓ As far as God and Bible doctrine, this knowledge is the how and what knowledge.
- ✓ E.g., How do I abide in Christ? How to walk by the Spirit? How do I live the spiritual life?
- ✓ “What” is God like?
- ✓ Weaknesses if not coupled with 2nd person knowledge: legalism, self-righteousness (cf. Eliphaz and Bildad), religion, dry.

4. Characteristics of 2nd person personal knowledge.

- ✓ Knowing God personally.
- ✓ Exceeds 1st person knowledge.
- ✓ Relationship knowledge. Acquaintance knowledge.
- ✓ Impossible apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ Greatest source of power.
- ✓ Weaknesses: without correct 1st person knowledge, this knowledge is fallible and can lead to mysticism, fanaticism, and heretical views as per liberalism.
- ✓ On a human level deficiencies in 2nd person experiential knowledge have analogies to autism (serene self-sufficiency, lack knowledge of persons and their mental states, lack of personal connectedness).
- ✓ Biblical narratives provide aid in translating 1st person truths to 2nd person knowledge. Narratives tend to resonate more than formulas.

5. The key to a dynamic spiritual life and entrance into the supergrace life is in growth in both 1st person and 2nd person knowledge as they work in tandem—e.g., Bible doctrine and fellowship with God.
- ✓ Growth in knowing God personally.
 - ✓ Growth in correct Bible doctrine.
 - ✓ Correct background context for doctrine.
 - ✓ Failure of 1st or 2nd leads to serious problems in the CWL.
 - ✓ Without correct 1st person knowledge one lives a lie (cf. Mormonism, Roman Catholic mystics).
 - ✓ Without 2nd person knowledge, the believer moves to some form of Gnosticism.
 - ✓ Focus only on BD as an end leads to problems.
 - ✓ Focus only on fellowship leads to problems.
 - ✓ We need both.

6. Adversities and the tests of life are often God's most effective ways to move the believer from 1st person knowledge of God to 2nd person knowing God personally. Neither Job nor his "pals" had a developed second person knowledge.

7. God's perfect love for man translates into
 - a. A desire for what is best for man
 - b. A desire for more and closer communion with man

8. It is in sufferings of life that we really come to know God personally in fellowship and not just think of Him analytically in doctrinal terms.
9. How would you describe your fellowship knowledge of God (in terms of 2 person knowledge of God), especially in times of difficulties? What are the characteristics of your fellowship with God?

10. However, focus on fellowship alone (2nd person knowledge) that is not undergirded by accurate 1st person knowledge and proper background knowledge always leads to heresy.

11. Bible doctrine is never to be an end in and of itself. It is wonderful to learn these things, but God Himself must be the point of it all. Doctrine is crucial as the means of knowing Him and reality as such. However, when BD is the end in and of itself, Gnosticism always follows.

12. 1st and 2nd person knowledge illustrated in 1 John 1.

- a. Note the 1st and 2nd person knowledge in 1 John 1 and how they work in tandem.
- b. John's foci in this epistle are on abiding in God (fellowship), truth (walking in the light) and the nature of God's love.
- c. God is light which is a symbol of life, knowledge, joy, and purity. It is light that conquers darkness of ignorance, sorrow, and sin. There is absolutely no darkness in God at all, 1:5.

- d. To walk in darkness is to live out of fellowship, when the believer is out of fellowship there is no hope of really getting it no matter how much doctrine you take in.

- e. We are not told what God is (light) simply that we may know, but that, knowing, we may be and do, 1:6-10. It is not about emotionalism. To make God a liar is worst than to lie or deceive ourselves, 1:10.