

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 46
- 2:Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50
- 1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

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Opening: the greatest issue in life is relationship with God that is characterized by a mind that truly knows God and a will that truly loves God. However, such love and knowledge is only possible in the context of God's love for us (Matt 22:37-39; 1 John 4:19; Jer. 31:3; Eph. 2:4).

2 Parts to Bible class: both philosophical realism and knowledge of supernaturally revealed truth are required for the Whole Truth.

Spiritual foundations:

1. God gives spiritual wisdom to the believer according to the principle of concurrentism (not conduitism), 2 Tim. 2:7; Prov. 2:1-5; Matt 7:7-12.
2. Supernatural faith/conviction, hope, and love and do not come automatically as per conduit Christianity, 1 John 5:9; Mat. 11:25; 16:13-17. There is nothing about reason that can either prove nor disprove supernatural truths, like the incarnation and sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ. This comes from God Himself.
3. Confession of sin and fellowship is a personal issue and not a state or sphere one is in or out of. Moreover, confession has more to do with integration and a personal relationship than anything else.

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-46--overview)



1. Realist epistemology: 1st principles of being & laws of thought.

Realism is the only Christian and objective biblical hermeneutic



Spiritual intellect
abstracts the
immaterial form.

1. Illustration of the epistemological framework of realists regarding particulars and universals.
2. The manifest spirituality of forming universals is not the type that can be undermined by any finding in neuroscience, or any other empirical science for that matter. They are not “soul of the gaps” arguments anymore than metaphysical arguments for the existence of God. The bottom line is that it is impossible, conceptually impossible for the intellect to be accounted for in a materialistic way. The intellect can no more be identified with processes in the brain than two and two could make five. The implications are vast.
3. Moreover, only this realist epistemology accounts for the existence of beings as per hylomorphism. This points to the superiority of the realist Christian position in contrast to all of the other positions. Only in Realism are there essences for grounding of natural and objective values & human *telos*.
4. Only Realism sees the ultimate issue as existential rather than material and thus breaks one free from the positivism of kosmos diabolicus, which has been able to shift the metaphysics of “why” to the “how” of natural science. Only the Realist can love science without being spellbound by it as first principle (like Thales and Comte).

2. All other systems are forms of anti-realism in that they epistemologically reject metaphysics and thus forms and final causes. All other systems are materialistic and inherently anti-biblical and anti-Christian. See if you can identify the influence behind the following statements made by modern Christians:
- a. “My soul is the real me, my body is just a way of getting around.” (cf., *Freaky Friday, Ghost*).
 - b. “This rock can exist by itself” (returning us to philosophy of Thales and all of the problems of modern philosophy due to rejection of existence as first principle).
 - c. “We do not need Realism or metaphysics; we can just assemble and compare the various passages of Scripture with each other.”
 - d. “We do not need Realism or metaphysics; we can just use common sense in understanding the Bible.”
 - e. “We cannot prove the existence of God by cause and effect in the world. I cannot not see God in all of the *effects* in the world.”
 - f. “Man is progressing, the latest is the greatest, so we do not need to learn about the past, certainly not the metaphysics of the Medieval Ages.” This system is also called a “constructivist science” by those in hard science (e.g., physics).
 - g. “We can build objective human rights and freedom apart from acknowledging forms.” Consider how rights today are based on subjective opinion and polls.
 - h. “Science is real, religion just deals with the subjective and personal.”
 - i. “We can prove God by the irreducible design in biology.”

Love 23

1. 1 Cor. 13:1-7. Given all of the love, grace, forgiveness, and value God has showered on believers, how is that believers could ever be proud about their spiritual gifts (1), spiritual knowledge (2), faith (2), loveless sacrifices (3); and be so impatient, unkind, jealous (4), as well as selfish, arrogant (5), easily provoked, unforgiving (5); and rejoice in unrighteousness, but not rejoice with the truth (6); and when it comes to God and His plan fail so miserably to bear all things, believe all things, hope in all things, and endure all things (7).
 - a. What is the only virtue that is needed to overcome all of the vices and failures in the moral, ethical, and spiritual life?
 - b. What are the two fundamental interrelated sources of all human sin, evil, and spiritual adultery?
 - (1) Disordered love—a false view of the good (TGB). No man loves evil unless it is perceived as a good.
 - (2) Arrogance—rejection of the truth (TGB). Pride suppresses, rejects, and refuses the light of Whole Truth (cf., Satan).

2. In our last Bible class, we noted the charge of “adultery” in the Bible made by Jesus against the Jews as well as writers of the New Testament against Christians. This is a serious charge and has implications that “sin” or “violation” do not have. In adultery one has affairs outside of his marriage while he still enjoys a relationship and perks with his wife (companionship, housekeeping, child rearing, and sexual fulfillment). We noted four areas of spiritual adultery:

- a. #1: The world (James 4:4).
- b. #2: Mammon (Luke 16:14; Matt. 6:19-24; 1 Tim. 6:7-10).
- c. #3: Praise of man (Matt. 6:5; contra Gal. 1:10).
- d. #4: Self (Luke 18:9, “focus and trust in self”).

3. There is never enough evidence for God or His goodness for an adulterous heart:

“Matthew 16:3-4 , “Hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky; but can you not discern the signs of the times? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign.”

- Note the self-deceptive attitudes in thinking that if there was more evidence then they would believe.

4. How one's view of God is shaped by what He treasures. What kind of God do people believe in?
- A Force? The Invisible Problem Solver? Blesser? The Man upstairs? Superhuman hero? The Necessary but not all-good God. Could God ever be intimately or personally loved if He was reduced to problem solver or power giver? No!
 - *Esse/IS* (Exod 3:14) is not only metaphysically closer to us than anything else could be, He desires to be united with His creatures *by knowledge and by love* in such intimate manner as typified and described in terms of the intimacy of the one flesh relationship between husband and wife.

5. To understand the significance of charge of adultery (which is all about disordered love and arrogance) requires understanding the nature of the relationship between God and the believer.
 - a. Language of adultery is much different than that of violation of codes or transgressions against a Law Giver or getting in and out of a sphere.
 - b. Language of adultery speaks of violation of intimate relationship with God.
 - c. Language of adultery speaks of a person's moral and spiritual love as expressions of one's true desires, values, and goals in life.

6. The theme that runs throughout the Word of God is that of the Greatest Love Story ever told with God as the Bridegroom pursuing His people as the bride.
 - a. The depths of God's love can only be described as a "great mystery" (τὸ μυστήριον μέγα ἐστίν), Eph. 5:22-32.
 - b. That God would compare His love for His people in terms of the intimacy of marriage is extremely significant.
 - c. Paul understood the cross of Christ as the fulfillment of God's eternal plan to wed Himself to man in an everlasting marital covenant.
 - d. All of salvation history is a divine love story between Creator and creature, between God and His people.
 - e. This story comes to its climax at the cross of Jesus Christ. As we will see, Christ's funeral is described as His wedding day.

7. To understand God as the Bride Groom's relationship with His people and how all of human history is a divine love story, one must understand the Old Testament background.
- Isaiah 54:5 "For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.
 - John 3:28 "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' 29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this joy of mine has been made full.
 - ✓ Jesus is the divine Bridegroom coming in the flesh. As the Bridegroom Messiah, His mission was not just to teach the truth or proclaim the kingdom, but to forgive the sinful bride of God and unite Himself to her in an everlasting covenant of love
 - ✓ But who is the bride?

- Mark 2:18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 19 And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom do not fast, do they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

- Revelation 19:9 And he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."
 - ✓ The Culmination, the last chapter, of the Great Love Story.
 - ✓ The entire Christian life bears the mark of the espousal love of Christ and the church.
 - ✓ Human history ends with a Grand Wedding Supper, Rev. 19, 21.

8. The events around Mount Sinai in the giving of the Law was nothing less than a divine wedding. The covenant was a sacred bond between persons, establishing between them a permanent and sacred relationship.
 - a. Ex. 19:1-18: the proposal of the covenant and appearance of God.
 - b. Ex. 24:4-11: ratification of the covenant. God and the Israelites are now in a flesh and blood relationship, that is, they are family. Note that the covenant climaxes in a heavenly banquet—eating and drinking in the presence of God. The mystery of this spiritual wedding is commented on by the prophets:

c. Hosea 2:14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Bring her into the wilderness, And **speaK kindly to her**. 15 "Then I will give her her vineyards from there, And the valley of Achor as a door of hope. And she will sing there as in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

- Hosea looks back is pointing to Exodus and speaking in terms of a divine love story in terms of a covenant.
- Moreover, Israel is pictured as being wooed to enter into marriage with Him.
- God speaks kindly to her to get her to enter the marriage contract.

- d. Jeremiah 2:1 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, 2 "Go and proclaim in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth, The love of your **betrotals**, Your following after Me in the wilderness, Through a land not sown.
- e. Ezekiel 16:8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and **entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine**," declares the Lord God.

- It was the covenant that established the marriage and wedding day.

9. In the context of the intimate relationship between the Lord and believer one can see how sin is not merely a transgression against a Law Giver, but violation of the intimate love relationship between the believer and his God as demonstrated in worship of golden calf, Ex. 32:1-6.
 - a. While the modern believer most likely has no desire to fall down before a cow in worship, note the real temptation: “rose up to play,” which points to the physical and sense excesses and immorality that were part and parcel of ancient pagan worship in the ANE. Physical immorality often goes hand and hand with spiritual adultery and idolatry.
 - b. Consider the temptation of all of the sensed goods and autonomy in contrast to the worship of invisible Esse and His moral, ethical, and spiritual strictures.
 - c. The worship of the golden calf is but the first in a long history of idolatry. In spiritual adultery the believer no longer loves God in any meaningful way. He does not live to please the Lord or care much what the Lord thinks about his life. This, of course, does not preclude Him for using the Lord in a manner analogous to an unloving cheating husband or wife.

10. 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.

11. Ps. 16:2. Overview of the goods that man seeks for happiness: **from the stupidest to the wisest.** A few words about a Realist doctrinal believer vs. all other doctrinal believers. A few words about the nature of fragmentation and spiritual adultery. Which goods are compatible with evil, bring only partial satisfaction, can have harmful results, and are external?

WISE

#7—God – Consider how human nature is fulfilled in God.

#6—Wisdom/Virtue – Consider the why.

#5—Pleasure – Consider how this is but a consequence of happiness.

#4—Health - Consider the point of health

#3—Power - Consider the point of power.

#2 – Fame - Consider the nature of fame.

#1 - Wealth – Consider what money cannot buy.

FOOLISH

12. The Realist doctrinal believer understands *on a natural level* that we are not here for ourselves, but for the glory of God, and precisely because this is the end set for us by our nature, it is in God alone that we can find our true happiness. Moreover, for the Realist, as with the existence of God, he takes it to be a matter, not of faith, but of *reason itself*. Therein lies the sting of the Realist challenge to modernity. Moreover, he understands his need for God's grace.

13. The problem of arrogance as it is related to knowing and loving God and others, 1 Cor. 8:1-6. Knowledge without love leads to arrogance. True knowledge leads to loving God and others. All other knowledge is not true knowledge.

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.