

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B

Eschatology
 Thanatology
 Ecclesiology
 Israelology
 Dispensationalism
 Doxology
 Hodology
 Soteriology
 Hamartiology
 Natural Law
 Anthropology
 Angelology
 Pneumatology
 Christology
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2/21/2014

Opening passages, John 8:32; Matt. 22:37-40; Rom 1:20-21; 24-25; 1 Jn 5:21; 1 Cor. 10:14; Luke 14:15-21; 2 Pet. 3:18; Num. 6:24-26.

The greatest challenge facing every believer is his own fallen nature's proclivity to suppress truth.

Given the ubiquitous nature of suppression of truth and the anti-intellectualism and devotional nature of modern Christianity, it is actually surprising that FBC is as large as it is—that there are still believers really interested in whole truth, total truth

There are innumerable ways to suppress truth about the nature of God. The most popular is for churches to focus on personal application for the spiritual life. Consider just how that method leads to suppression of truth regarding the nature of God and reality as people come to hear an encouraging message instead of learning Truth as such about God. It is one thing to worship God for what He has done, it is altogether different for who He is, Esse/BE! Outline of this class . . .

Stage 3

Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God.
- Virtuous love for God: Intellective, volitional, emotional love of God. Enduring fellowship.
- Life of “above all you could ever ask or imagine”

Holy Spirit



Bible Doctrine

Stage 2

Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

- Nominal understanding of God.
- Through BD this believer has gained a great deal of perinoetic truth about God & the spiritual life.
- However, he continues to have some pagan views about God's *nature* due to lack of metaphysics.
- He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.

Holy Spirit



Bible Doctrine

Stage 1

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.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-24

1. Understanding the six views of creation is not mere data that we just can tack on to reality. It is a whole world view that has enormous ramifications. To be physicalistic in your ontology will cause you to be physicalistic in the spiritual life. One of the major reasons people of God live in so much fear and lack of courage than all previous generations is due in large part to strong physicalistic orientations.

Review of 6 views:

Non-Christian

- Physicalism. No God to be involved in anything. Also no minds.
- Agnosticism. “I don’t know” = atheistic apathetic suppression of truth.
- Deism – no divine interest or activity in creation.

Monotheistic options:

- Conservationism = God’s activity in creation in only giving existence.
- Concurrentism = God’s activity in the existence & properties of creation.
- Occasionalism = God’s activity is total; He does not transfer any power.

2. The fact that most deists admit that if God ceased to exist everything else would cease to exist clearly demonstrates the nature of God's interconnection with all that exists and demonstrates the falsity of the deistic notion of independent scientific laws.

3. Recall the nature of God: 'Ehyeh: I AM WHO I AM, YAHWEH IS WHO I AM. Not only is He Existence/BE, He reveals that He is personal. In Exodus 3:14, He reveals Himself as Existence, but one who can see, hear, relate, speak, and related to His creatures (He does not need emotions; we do).

4. Why is there something rather than nothing? Why does anything exist? The answer to that question is simple and should not cause any controversy, “In the beginning . . . God”! The beginning of everything and before that all that existed in reality was God, the First Cause, without any beginning.
5. Before creation there was only Yahweh/Esse/BE, the eternal present.

6. God has being of and in Himself. He alone has eternal being. Any being that we have is transitory, dependent, contingent, derived, a subset of pure being –"In Him we live, and move and *have our being* ." Without Him we could not live, nor could anything else be.
7. God is the eternal being from whom all existence comes and all things are dependent.
8. If anything exists, then something somewhere somehow must have the power of BEING in Himself. Without that nothing can exist. If there was ever a time when there was nothing, a vast emptiness, what could there possibly be now? NOTHING!

9. If anything exists, there are only 3 explanations for its existence rather than non-being. There is no way around this.
 - a. That which exists is eternal.
 - b. That which exists is self-created—which is a logical absurdity and impossibility. Why? because it would have to be before it was.
 - c. That which exists is created by something that is eternal. God's aseity is what makes God different from me and you and the stars and any creaturely thing: God and God alone has aseity. God and God alone exists by His own power. Nobody made Him, nobody caused Him. His existence is in and of Himself which differs from every creature. Nothing else we see is self-existent. He is self-existent – He owes His being to nothing outside of Himself.

10. God's being, unlike any other thing, is Necessary Being. He is the Transcendent One. There are two aspects of a necessary being:
 - a. A necessary being is a being who cannot not be. It is by the sheer necessity of an eternal being, a self-existent being, that that sort of being is not hypothetical or dependent upon some other concept; it is necessary; its being cannot not be. God can't not be. He is I AM, eternally and forever.
 - b. A necessary being is not only necessary ontologically, but it is also logically necessary: if anything exists in the universe then something somewhere, somehow, must have aseity—must have the power of being within Himself that is not derived from something outside of Himself. Call it what you wish, but by any name it is the Transcendent God, 'Ehyeh.

MATTHEW 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19-21 – Spiritual virtues.

1. Precisely because there are two kinds of treasures (θησαυρούς), earthly and heavenly, every believer is in a conflict.
2. This conflict plays out in spiritual character/virtue. Every believer has a certain state of character distinct from any temporal or spiritual status. In other words, whether you are in fellowship with God or out of fellowship, you and I possess a certain character with respect to our God, the spiritual life, and our worldviews.

3. Overview of the three categories of spiritual virtue (**ἀρετή**):

#1: Good/Excellent spiritual character/virtue (Heb 11; Acts 7:59-60; Philip 3:8-4:13; Rev. 3:7-8).

- These believers see their greatest value and treasures in God. Their love for God translates into seeking Him and living for Him above all else. If this person lost all earthly treasures, it would not devastate him.
- This person does not live for money or human approbation.
- Because God is his #1 treasure, he loves the Word of God and always excited to learn more of the Word and reality. This believer does not fear death.
- Although this believer may get distracted from time to time, personal love for God and the things of God dominate his life.

#2: Bad/poor spiritual character/virtue, Matt. 16:23; Gal. 2:11-14.

- This believer spends more time in carnality than in fellowship with God. This believer is deficient with regard to capacity for the spiritual things of God. It is all about pragmatism.
- This believer often sees God as means rather than an End.
- This does not mean he does not have some love for the Lord and occasionally have good thoughts about God. It just means that this believer's *heart* clings to materialism. His thoughts of the world and details of life more often exclude God than include God.
- In this stage there is still hope of recovery and movement into personal love for God for who and what He is, 'Ehyeh.

#3: Deplorable/wretched (ταλαίπωρος) spiritual character/virtue (1 Tim. 6:9-11; 2 Tim. 4:10; Rev. 3:14-17).

- This believer's character or spiritual orientation has so deteriorated that there is not much hope of ever turning this believer around. Even with a major catastrophe, God would only be sought because of what He offers him.
- This person often scoffs at the things of God and openly expresses many attitudes of atheistic philosophers (like Hume and Kant). The main reason this person follows God is due to fear (as per Pascal's Wager). This believer is skeptical and mammon is his first love.
- This believer only gets more *skeptical* and *hardened* over time as frustrations with its love affair with the world increase.
- Hardly any believer recovers from this state as faith and love deteriorated over time. Most die the sin-unto-death

MATTHEW 6:19-21

4. Note the two kinds of treasures:

- a. Real treasures on earth. What are some of these treasures? Note the context in 6:17-18. The flesh tends to make man think that the visible and material things are the best. Our materialistic culture reinforces this tendency (cf. growth of luxury, increase of wealth) while it undercuts God, the unseen, and even the meaning of life.
- b. Real treasures in heaven: God's approbation and all of the spiritual blessings which come to the spiritual believer, spiritual character, faith-hope-love, forgiveness, meaning and purpose of life.

MATTHEW 6:19-21

5. It is important for every believer to be aware of the battle he is in between these two treasures in order to see that truth is better than money, and a heart set on God is far richer than a heart set on all external possessions.
6. The believer who decides to follow Christ's mandates concerning God will lead a much different life than the believer who lives for mammon.
7. The believer who decides to put God first will live His life with an eye to the eternal, not temporal. He will use the temporal as a means to an end. The believer who decides to follow Christ will be endowed with supernatural virtue to be Godlike, love God, and to please Him.

MATTHEW 6:19-21

8. The rewards believers receive in heaven are inextricably connected with their character, which is always inextricably connected to production (Rev. 3:4; 14:13; 22:12). It is important to make a distinction between salvation and sanctification, salvation and rewards in Heaven.
8. The temporal material treasures of earth, Matt. 6:19. Since time corrupts all material things on this earth, it is impossible to ever gain permanent possession of any material treasure of earth.
9. The eternal treasures of heaven, Matt. 6:20. While there are physical treasures in heaven, the emphasis is on the true treasure of Heaven, namely God. God and His gifts of grace are the only things that are never corrode or fade. One never grows weary of God, never find Him unfaithful, never exhaust His love, grace, and truth, never tire of His plan, never find Him boring. Furthermore, our treasures in heaven have nothing to fear from men or any circumstance of life.

MATTHEW 6:19-34

10. Consider the madness of man focusing his heart primarily on the earth. It really is a form of insanity for the heart to be fastened to this earth as the greatest thing. What profits a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? What profits a believer if he puts everything in the material realm and so loses his faith, 1 Tim 6.

11. Our treasures are ours, whether we possess them or not, because we love them. What we love reveals more about our character than anything else. Review of our 1st and 2nd order wills and how God is always bringing them together. . .

Jesus Concept of Happiness, Treasures, and Rewards (Matt. 5:3-12)

1. The different attitudes to happiness/blessedness between ancient culture (Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Jesus) and modern culture (Freud to present) are due to materialism and subjectivism. If happiness is a subjective state that depends on the body/senses, then it cannot be lasting.
2. The importance of understanding the subjective and objective elements of happiness and treasures to orient to the objective over the subjective elements and thus be able to maintain the objective state of happiness while enjoying the subjective states.
3. What does our subjective, materialistic world value? What would be on a list of things that would make people happy?

4. Christ's list. The 8 things that Christ said brings the most blessedness.

#1, Matt. 5:3: Blessed (Μακάριοι) are the poor in spirit.

- This is in contrast to attitude that blessings are in riches (Lk 6:20) and honor, i.e., “pride.”
- In poverty of spirit, man bows before God in humility and opens himself up to receive the grace of God.
- The poor of spirit are not weak; they are exactly the opposite. One has to be very strong to be detached from the world's values.
- Those who are poor in spirit are those who are not enslaved by the world's goods.
- The greatest demonstration of the power of those who are poor in spirit is in accepting the will God in all circumstances, thanking God for all things because of understanding of one's own poverty before God.
- Christ's poverty achieved our true riches, 2 Cor. 8:9.
- Lack of poverty of spirit = arrogance, James 4:6.
- This is the source and root of all of the other spiritual virtues that follow.

#2, Blessed are those who mourn (πενθοῦντες) for they shall be comforted.

- This is a result of the former, i.e. understanding one's true poverty before God and His Greatness, Isa. 6; Luke 5:8.
- This is the only mourning that is ever blessed and it is compatible with the highest joy, from the inner to outward.
- Christ did not come to remove all suffering; He came to transform its meaning.
- Consider the blessed state of a person who is mourning in recognition of their evil in contrast to a former state of "pleasure" in evil.
- This comfort begins now only to be completed in the future with Him.

#3, Blessed are the gentle (πραεῖς).

- This attitude begins with God and then moves to others.
- Those who are in poor in spirit and recognize their own unworthiness before God accept His will with humility.
- They are blessed because they do not seek human honor.
- They are OK with not being known, with being anonymous.
- Consider the meekness of Christ in contrast to the Pharisees as well as the Herods and Pilates and Machiavelli's of the world.
- These believers are very strong, they are not wimps or dishrags or hippies.
- The meek are those who do not harm. Do not seek to trample over others for self aggrandizement.
- The meek recognize that the best things in life are found in the spiritual things and not the physical things—in wisdom, and truth, and God rather than in human power or fame or money.
- The spiritually meek are always happy.

#4, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) will be satisfied [here and in the next life].

- Substantive use of the present active ptc for hungering and thirsting.
- Nothing more conspicuously distinguishing contemporary Christianity than previous generations of Christians than this.
- This is in stark contrast to spiritual self-complacency, Laodecianism.
- Failure to have hunger and thirst for righteousness means that you are self-satisfied in yourself. Recall what Jesus said to Laodecians.
- Failure to have hunger and thirst is failure to desire a sanctity that we must have lest we cultivate indifference in our lives.
- This is found in every winner believer in the OT and the NT. They all had a passion for holiness, a hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- This is often dismissed as fanatics, but this is what the Lord commands: to love God infinitely, to put Him above all things.
- Those who do not have a passion for great things only increase their passions for smaller things— a form of demonic power, an insanity to focus and worry about small things while ignoring eternal life.
- It is the seeking and hungering that makes all of the difference: Seek and you shall find!

#5, Blessed are the merciful (ἐλεήμονες).

- Mercy brings peace. God started the mercy with us.
- Would it be safe for you to pray the Lord's Model Prayer? Would you feel comfortable praying for God to forgive you as you are forgiving others?

#6, Blessed are the pure in heart (καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ) for they shall see God.

- This purity, while it has sexual purity in mind, includes much more.
- Sex is our society's new god. Almost everything is sacrificed (self, love, faithfulness, marriage, family) and destroyed for this god of pleasure.
- Purity of heart is blessed because anything that is natural is blessed when it is in its purest condition.
- Adam and Eve enjoyed sex far more before the Fall than after.
- Sex is blessed when pure, in the context of love and intimacy rather than reduced to animalistic lust. When reduced to physical pleasure then love is more about the pleasure than it is about loving the person—let alone respect for his or her soul and its good.
- Impure desires are not just confined to sex. They are involved in millions of things human beings are involved with false motives.
- This blessing is experienced in this life and perfected in the next.
- Consider how many believers, because they do not have a pure desire for Truth as such, have become blind to the greatness of God and reality.

#7, Blessed are the peacemakers (εἰρηνοποιοί) for they shall be called the sons of God.

- The peacemakers are not pacifists.
- Happiness and blessedness is not found in pacifism; rather it is found in peace.
- These believers make peace with God, self, and neighbors.
- We can never be at peace with ourselves unless and until we are at peace with God first and foremost.
- There can be no peacemaking apart from victory in spiritual warfare.
- This is not making peace with the world, the flesh, and the devil.
- The only way to have this peace is by winning the war against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

#8, Blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness and because of Jesus Christ.

- This blessing is not just in pain and suffering but real persecution—a suffering that is imposed by rejection and hatred.
- Doesn't everyone want to be loved and accepted?
- We are to love our enemies. However, they are still our enemies. In other words, we do not love them by denying that certain people are enemies of Christ and Christianity.
- Persecution is not blessed in itself. It becomes blessed if it is because of righteousness sake, for the sake of God.
- This is being persecuted for being what God wants you to be, to be godlike. Such persecution is testimony that you are a child of God, thus blessed. It is a sign that you are a member of His kingdom.
- This righteousness is real and it is from the LJC and Bible doctrine.

Philippians 4:4-13 – More on Spiritual Value of and Virtue for faith/hope/love

- ❖ Philip. 4:4-13. Note the emphases on natural and spiritual virtue.
- ❖ Philip 4:4, “rejoice in the Lord, again I say rejoice.” It is a spiritual virtue to be able to rejoice in the Lord always. The Lord is the one area of our lives that cannot be affected by the circumstances of life.
- ❖ 4:5, “Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near”
“Forbearance” refers to contentment in life and generosity with others. It is evidenced of having a gracious attitude toward others, especially their faults and failures, even in light of any injustices. This requires total trust in God’s Providence. The Lord being near is spatial; this is living in the presence of God.

- ❖ Philip 4:6. “Be anxious for nothing.” Is this not what Jesus taught in Matthew 6? The importance of prayer as a means of developing an open and intimate relationship with God in 2nd person.

1 Thess. 5:17, “*pray without ceasing.*”

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the [power of] Holy Spirit;

- ❖ Anxiety indicates lack of trust in God’s wisdom, sovereignty, and power. Note the extend of God’s concurrence: “in everything.” God is in absolute control.
- ❖ You turn the corner when you stop asking God “Why?” to realizing God is asking you “why” = “why are you here? What is the purpose of your life?”

- ❖ Philip 4:7. Supernatural virtue cannot be attained unless God imparts it into the believer. This peace cannot be gained by mental or psychological mechanics. This is transcendent.
- ❖ Philip 4:8-13. Discussion of the nature and development of spiritual virtue.

David's faith/hope/love in God's loving concurrence.

- Psalm 23. Note God's loving concurrence in all of David's life. Note the hope it brings in the valley of the shadow of death. It is not what is the solution to the problems of life, but Who!
- Psalm 32. God's loving concurrence in divine discipline.
- Psalm 51. God's loving concurrence in divine discipline.
- Psalm 139. God's intimate loving concurrence with David from the moment of conception.

Habakkuk's faith/hope/love in God's loving concurrence, Habakkuk 1:2-6; 12-13; 2:1-3; 3:16-19.

- ✓ Note the change of attitude on the part of Habakkuk once He understood the concurrence of God.
- ✓ It was trust in the providence/concurrence of God that caused him to rejoice, even in the face of personal “tragedy.”

The Apostle Paul's faith/hope/love in God's loving concurrence.

- Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together (πάντα συνεργεῖ) for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.
 - ✓ Irresistible logic, teaches that nothing ultimately bad can happen to you, if you love God.
 - ✓ In fact everything that happens to you is for good, if you love God.
 - ✓ God is the primary cause of everything that happens and has the power in His providence to make every single thing that happens to us for our good.
 - ✓ Do you believe this? Do you believe the Bible?
 - ✓ Concurrence really is the antidote to all fear.
 - ✓ Chance really is incompatible with the nature of God.
 - ✓ We believe our own belief in the God of the Bible and Jesus Christ when we believe that anything can happen by chance.
 - ✓ Characteristics of love who truly love God in contrast to the mass of carnal Christians with their cycles of carnality and reversionism.

Supernatural virtues

MIND



WILL

Romans 12: Spiritual Virtues

1. Verses 1-2: Supernatural dedication to God.
2. Verses 3-8: Supernatural humility.
3. Verses 9-21: Supernatural love.

VIRTUE Intellective love
Sense love



Mental states,
Affections
&
Passions

“Emotions” is a
Cartesian and
Darwinian
concept.

Romans 12:1-2

- **Virtues 1-4: The Supernatural Virtues associated with dedication to God.**
- 1) **Present** (παραστήσαι) your bodies to God.
 - 2) **Stop being conformed** (μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε) to this age.
 - 3) **Be transformed** (μεταμορφοῦσθε) by the renewing of the mind.
 - 4) **Discern** (δοκιμάζειν) the good, enjoyable, and perfect will of God.

Romans 12

➤ **Virtues 5-7: Supernatural virtue of humility. This follows dedication to God.**

5) Don't think too highly of yourself.

6) Have sober judgment about yourself (in relation to others).

7) Serve others with your spiritual gift.

Pride as a vice should never be confused with what is known as “taking pride” in accomplishments. There is a valid and healthy esteem that one can “take pride in” with regard to accomplishments, friends, family, and even country.

Galatians 6:4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

➤ Virtues 8-37: Spiritual love (follow humility)

8) Supernatural love: Romans 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

- 9) Abhorring evil,
- 10) Clinging to good,
- 11) Devoted to one another
- 12) Preferring one another,
- 13) Not lagging in diligence,
- 14) Fervent in Spirit,
- 15) Serving the Lord,
- 16) Rejoicing in hope
- 17) Persevering in tribulation
- 18) Devoted to prayer

**THESE VIRTUES ALL DEAL WITH SPIRITUAL LOVE –
THE GREATEST CHRISTIAN VIRTUE.**

**ILLUSTRATIONS OF HOW LOVE CHANGES THE
DIRECTION OF A PERSON'S THOUGHTS AND ACTS.**

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- 19) Contributing to the needs of the saints
 - 20) Practicing hospitality
 - 21) Bless our persecutors
 - 22) Don't curse our persecutors
 - 23) Rejoice with those who rejoice
 - 24) Weeping with those who weep
 - 25) Being like-minded
 - 26) Not being haughty,
 - 27) Associating with lowly,
 - 28) Not being wise in self-estimation
 - 29) Not repaying evil for evil
 - 30) Respecting what is right before all men
 - 31) As far as possible, being at peace with all men
 - 32) Never taking revenge
 - 33) Trusting God to right the wrong
 - 34) Feeding others (providing goods to enemies)
 - 35) Giving drink to others (returning good to enemies)
 - 36) Not being overcome by evil
 - 37) Overcoming all evil.

Spiritual virtue: supernatural love illustrated

Moral love

#9: hating evil (moral love) (Ἀποστύγοῦντες τὸ πονηρόν), 9. True Christian love hates evil. Unless there is hatred for evil, there is no true love of what is good. One cannot love God and love evil simultaneously. People love what they think is their good.

Love for true good

#10: clinging to the good [goodness of love] (κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ), 9.
True Christian love loves true good. Our love will necessarily show itself in our determination to hold fast to the good. What is your good?

Special love for the royal family of God

#11: devotion to fellow believers in brotherly love [special love]
(φιλόστοργοιτῆ **φιλαδελφία** 10. Christian love naturally manifests its in love for fellow believers (1 John 3:14; Gal. 6:10).

Preferential love and honor for fellow believers

#12: in honor preferring fellow believers (προηγούμενοι τῇ τιμῇ), 10 [preference in love]. True Christian love honors fellow believers. This is an expression of love in humility—“leading the way” in honor fellow believers.

Faithfulness of love

#13: not indolent, not lagging behind in diligence (τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί), 11 [faithfulness in love]. True Christian love is not lazy or indolent about the things of God. Sloth is perhaps the most deadly sin today.

Earnestness of love

#14: being fervent in spirit (τῷ πνεύματι **ζέοντες**), 11 [earnestness of love]. True Christian love is always fervent. Christ predicted that the love of many would grow cold in the last times, Matt. 24:12. Our lives are to ones of fervency regarding God and the things of God.

Principles on spiritual indolence/sloth

1. God's grave warnings regarding spiritual sloth.
 - Don't drift, Heb. 2:1-4
 - Don't wander, Heb. 3:12-13
 - Don't be dull or apathetic about God's Word, Heb. 5:11-6:8
 - Don't shrink back, Heb. 10:26-31.
 - Listen! 12:25-29.

Principles on spiritual indolence/sloth

2. Spiritual sloth is the most prevalent sin in our age. It is the sin that so clearly distinguishes modern Western society from all previous societies too.

Principles on spiritual indolence/sloth

3. Characteristics of *spiritual* sloth.

- Spiritual sloth refuses to exert the will toward the Good.
- It is a sin against love of God. It robs a person for their appetite, interest, and enjoyment in God. The person stops pursuing God. There is a general indifference and dismissive attitude to God.
- Spiritual sloth should not be confused with general laziness. Generally, people who are spiritually slothful are frantically busy with their Martha-like world—cf., the frantic activism in our government.
- It is the most prevalent sin in modern society. We live in the first generation that does not know *who it is or why it is*.

Principles on spiritual indolence/sloth

3. Characteristics of *spiritual* sloth.

- It is a sin of omission, not commission. There is little to no active seeking of God or His will in prayer or in the Word. It is *lack* of seeking God and hungering for righteousness.
- A cold sin, a sin of indifference that is described as making Christ want to vomit. Lack of devotion and love for God.
- Boredom with life and God. They have all kinds of entertainment gadgets but their souls are empty of the beauty of life and God.
- Stops man from seeking God, thus finding Him.
- Causes the light to be darkness and the salt to lose its saltiness. It tends to be amoral instead of immoral.

Principles on spiritual indolence/sloth

3. Characteristics of *spiritual* sloth.

- No desire for spiritual and heavenly tasks or rewards. The idea that they could lose *eternal* rewards means nothing to them.
- The only antidote is hungering for God and His righteousness, Matt. 6.

Genuineness of love illustrated in Romans 12

#15: serving the Lord (τῷ κυρίῳ **δουλεύοντες**), 11. True Christian love serves the Lord, the CCL. The genuineness of love. How can anyone say they really love the Lord if they are not serving Him? What kind of love is that? John 14:151; Colossians.

The joy of love

#16: rejoicing in hope (τῇ ἐλπίδι **χαίροντες**), 12. True Christian love is filled with the joy of hope: the power of love for God in the presence of suffering and tribulation. What kind of love does not rejoice in the Lord and His hope? Joy and delight always follow love.

The endurance of love

#17: persevering in tribulation (τῇ θλίψει ὑπομένοντες), 12. True Christian love will not give up during the trials of life. The endurance of love: only with true love for God and the things of God is this possible.

Consider Abraham's perseverance in testing.

The devotion of love

#18: devoted to prayer (τῇ προσευχῇ **προσκατεροῦντες**), 12. True Christian love spends time with God in prayer.

The unselfishness of love

#19: contributing to the needs of the saints (ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων **κοινωνοῦντες**), 13. True Christian love is unselfish. See James 1:26-27.

The large-heartedness of love

#20: practicing hospitality (τὴν φιλοξενίαν **διώκοντες**), 13. True Christian love is large-hearted.

Virtue: Love that blesses persecutors.

#21: bless them which persecute you (εὐλογεῖτε). True Christian love loves enemies. This is straight from the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:10-11.

#22: do not curse (μὴ καταρᾶσθε). True Christian love does not curse enemies. Loving our enemies instead of running them down.

Virtue: love that empathizes

#23: rejoice with those who rejoice (χαίρειν μετὰ χαιρόντων). True Christian love is happy for others; it is not envious. Love is always glad when others are blessed. Love is never envious.

#24: weep with those who weep (κλαίειν μετὰ κλαιόντων). True Christian love is compassionate.

Spiritual Virtue: a love that seeks common ground

#25: be of the same mind toward one another (τὸ αὐτὸ εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονοῦντες). True Christian love seeks to find points of agreement.

Spiritual virtue: spurning pride and arrogance.

#26: do not be haughty (μὴ τὰ ὑψηλὰ φρονοῦντες). True Christian love is not interested in pre-eminence.

#27-associate with the lowly (ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι). True Christian love cares for those of lower states, those others do not care about.

Spiritual virtue: love that avoids conceit

#28: "Do not be wise in your own estimation" (μὴ γίνεσθε φρόνιμοι παρ' ἑαυτοῖς.) which is connected to following clauses in verse 17-19. True Christian love avoids occupation with self-importance.

Spiritual virtue: love that refuses to take revenge

#29: never pay back evil (μηδενὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἀποδιδόντες). True Christian love does not desire revenge.

Spiritual virtue: love that respects the true, good, and beautiful

#30: respect what is right/beautiful in the sight of all men (προνοούμενοι καλὰ ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων). True Christian love loves the true, good, and beautiful.

Spiritual virtue: a love that seeks peace

#31: living at peace with all men (μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες). True Christian love always seeks peace.

#32: never take revenge (μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες). True Christian love is not vengeful.