

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 49

2:Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50

1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

P.R. - 32

Opening: Luke 10:21-28.The greatest issue in the life of every believer is 2nd person dyadic relationship with God *by knowledge and by love*. Without knowledge, a love/zeal for God is of no benefit (Rom. 10:1-4). Without love knowledge makes one arrogant (1 Cor. 8:1). Knowledge is clearly not enough: lack of love for God is behind all of the vices, Rom. 1:20-32. Life with God *by knowledge and by love* is the grand love theme from Genesis through Revelation. The aim of the PT is to present believers to Christ as pure virgins, 2 Cor. 11:2-3. God is so much larger than our little skirts.

The importance of all 3 parts of Bible class:

1. 15 minutes on spiritual foundations
2. 15 minutes on philosophical foundations.
3. 50 min on doctrinal development of love.

Comparing the popular conduit model with the concurrent model regarding confession of sin and the spiritual life, 1 Thess. 5:19, 21-22;

1. Illustration of the popular conduit model for spirituality where the focus is on X, Y, Z in which the believer can be an effective conduit for divine good.
2. Illustration of the concurrent model for spirituality where the focus is on relationship before God, like pleasing and honoring Him, rather than being in a status or sphere of functionality or not.

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.

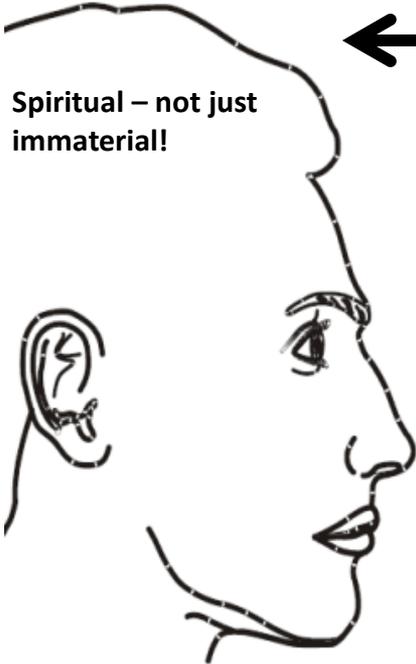
- Utilitarian understanding of God.
- All baby believers have a great deal of pagan views of God due to pagan horizon of meaning. All baby believers are tossed here and there by kosmos diabolicus, Eph. 4:14.
- For baby believers it is primarily about pragmatism. In other words, if it works or feels good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

Stage 1

Philosophical Foundations for a Realist Christian Worldview (Epistemology: History-49--Summary)

1. Realist epistemology: 1st principles of being sufficient reason

One unit: 1) knower,
2) known, and 3)
knowledge.



1. The Realist avoids all of the problems that plague all other theories of knowledge because he does not separate knowledge from the knower and the known. Look at your Bible, now remove the Bible, and then you, now tell me about the knowledge. You cannot. Knowledge is not a thing. It forms part of the unit between the knower and the known.
2. The greatest benefit of a Realist epistemology for the Christian is in its orientation to reality. It enables the Christian to focus on Reality first and foremost rather than illustrations, diagrams, and other mental constructs which may or may not reflect what is Real. The realist is always focused on beings in the external world.
3. It is rather frightening how prone the mind is to accepting Cartesian concepts because they are clear and distinct, yet not even real. The Realist's focus has to do with its first principle of being: contradiction, identity, and sufficient reason.

4. We have noted first principles of Realism: contradiction, identity, and sufficient reason. Let's take a look at sufficient reason a bit more.

5. Consider how sufficient reason establishes the spirituality of the intellect. Naturalists have a real difficulty with the spiritual nature of the intellect, yet they have no sufficient explanation for its spiritual operations. No matter how much evidence, they will simply say "someday we will know." That is like saying, someday $2+2 = 5$. They are guilty of naturalism of the gaps. No matter the evidence, their naturalism will not allow them to accept the spirituality of the intellect. Instead of operating on first principle of sufficient reason, they operate on the first principle of naturalism. They assume naturalism without sufficient reason.

6. Only Realism provides the explanatory scope all other systems do not have, from forms and universals to the spiritual nature of the intellect. It is a great theory of truth. All other system lack dignity, meaning purpose or even you. Only Realism holds to a correspondence view truth.
7. In Realism, one sees no sufficient reason for power spheres or circles. There is no sufficient reason given that God gives all things existence along with their properties. There is no deism or neo-deism in Realism that needs power spheres. God is in all things all of the time.
8. Before I move into some analysis of my former training, I want to make it clear that I mean no disrespect to the wonderful men who have taught me Bible doctrine. Moreover, in spite of problem areas, we still have a fantastic foundation from which to advance. For example, just because ideas on the the human soul and the OSN were incorrect, does not mean that we do not have a foundation in understanding that man's soul is immortal and we know the various categories of sin (MAS, SOT, OS) from the fallen nature. Life is a journey . . .

9. Sufficient reason and my experience at Tulsa Seminary of Biblical Languages and its bearing on epistemology. Dr. Carnagey told me that he considered adding a class at seminary which consist of evaluating the various doctrines. This would be akin to epistemology—how do we know? This would have to include the laws of logic and sufficient reason. What would be sufficient reasons for pastors and believers not having evaluated all of the doctrines before teaching them or living by them? May I suggest a few:
- a. A great many of the doctrines were orthodox (Hypostatic Union).
 - b. The doctrines “made sense” (Thomas Reid influence)
 - c. We could easily compare the passages (Baconian influence)
 - d. The Reidian-Baconian influences from Dallas Seminary from Dwight Pentecost on the nature of God and the spiritual life and in hermeneutics where there is lack of understanding of how language works with reality.
 - e. It takes an enormous amount of time to develop a metaphysical mindset. This is acknowledged by all metaphysicians.
 - f. Believers at Patrian were not ready for these metaphysical realities—due to various reasons, none of them good.
 - g. Cartesian spatial concepts are attractive because they are clear and distinct. It made spirituality easy to understand and control (Bacon)

Love 26

Transcendent Love only comes from God and no amount of mechanics (conductivity) or formulas is going to be able *to produce* this.

1. 1 Cor. 13:1-3: There are no mechanics, including the sheer act of application of Bible doctrine, that can make a person love God more than he loves his own spiritual gifts, knowledge, and acts of personal sacrifice. Love for God is not gained or developed by formulas. It only takes place in 2nd person transcendent *relationship*. We all know all too well that we are not what we ought to be, even if we know that someday we will be.

2. 1 Cor. 13:4-7: There are no mechanics, including applying favorite Bible promises in the Word of God, that can make a person love God to the extent that he is transcendently patient, kind, humble, unselfish, and forgiving; and to so love God that he rejoices in all of God's truth, and bear all difficulties for the love of God, and in love believed God in all things, and out of love for God set his hope in God, and endures all things because his love for God. Nothing short of a 2nd person transcendent relationship can bring about such a transcendent change. We all know all too well that we are not what or where we ought to be.

3. The only way to gain transcendence in life is by transcendent love for God in 2nd person relationship. This is the only place where one can love God with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength—to have a relationship with God by knowledge and by love.

4. The Christian spiritual life is primarily a life of loving God, not a system of solving problems through God. Moreover, the solution is not trying harder and harder and harder to do more Xs, Ys, and Zs. Problems in life only deal with the exterior of our lives.

5. The question is how many formulas and for how many years will Christians realize the folly of spirituality by mechanics, even biblical mechanics (i.e., used to control, use, or manipulate God into doing X, Y, Z to make their circumstances more pleasant)? How many decades of constantly confessing sins to realize, that such a life is not life of freedom?

6. How many decades will it take to reach the transcendent virtues in 1 Cor. 13? Maybe we should just redefine them and call it a day. Many will readily admit that they do not rejoice and endure in things any more than they did after many decades than when they began this race (Heb. 12:2).

7. The only path and solution to true spirituality is in a 2nd person integrated loving dyadic relationship with God (cf., Heb. 11; Job 42:1-6). This love relationship with God is likened to one of best friends (James 2:23) and even the intimacy of marriage (Eph. 5:25-26). In a best friend relationship each person sees the world through the eyes of the beloved—they share minds and affections. In the marriage relationship there is a complete sharing of lives. A marriage that is governed by principles and responsibilities is not a thriving loving and intimate relationship between two souls.

8. God desires a loving dyadic relationship with every human being. However, not even God can be *personally* close to a person who is internally divided regarding the Good. Moreover, God cannot make someone accept His offer. He really does want everyone's best all of the time.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Acts 17:25 neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; 26 and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

9. Not only does God desire a love relationship with every member of the human race, every member of the human race longs for eternal life, love, and beauty, forgiveness, value, and perfection that transcends this world. In short, every human being desires only what can be found in God and what He freely offers in Himself—a 2nd person dyadic loving relationship. The problem is that man looks for some form of transcendence in all the wrong places: drinking, recreation, fame, sex, and many other forms of escapism and attempt to find something that transcends this world, cf. Ecclesiastes 1-3.

10. Consider the loving relationship between Christ and the Church:

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Revelation 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

Psalms 139:16 Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Thy book they were all written, The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

11. Recall the Divine Bridegroom and the Greatest Love Story of all time.
 - a. God and Israel: marriage, harlotry, promise of future forgiveness (Exodus 24, 32; Jer. 2:1-2; Hos. 2:14-15). The twofold nature of spiritual harlotry (Exod. 32).
 - (1) Quickly forgetting the Lord.
 - (2) Materialism. This takes many forms, but the one thing in common is a life governed by the sense appetites. The basic orientation in materialism is this world, Matt. 6:24, rather than eternal destiny with God (Col. 3:1-5).
 - b. The incarnate Bridegroom. The incarnation of the Divine Bridegroom (John 3:28-29, 2:1-12) as He pursues His bride.
 - c. The Cross: the bridal chamber of the Bridegroom (Mark 3:28).

- d. The eternal Divine love story of our lives (Acts 17:26-27; Luke 14:16-35; Eph. 1:3-4; Col. 3:1-5; Heb. 12:1-2; Rev. 13:8, 19:7-9, 21:3-7, 22:3-4). We are all part of a transcendent divine love story. God has a plan for each of us, just as He did with Abel, David, Peter, and Paul.

- e. Only by understanding this divine love story can you solve the riddle of your own existence as well as all of the issues of life. Why are you alive? Really! Why? What is the reason that transcends it all, beyond the details, the marriage, the duties, as well as the fun and games—the why of it all? Beyond the solving of problems! Why? Why? Why?

- f. God is always working to bring us into His Beautiful Transcendent Narrative. But it is hard for many to let go of their own script. However, His script is far more glorious and blessed than our small stories. The issue is not to grin and bear the “glorious” Plan of God.

12. Let's do a historical thought experiment to see if we understand the transcendent narrative: Let me take you back to the Middle Ages:
- a. In the Middle Ages from the time you woke up until you went to bed your world was permeated with Christian images. The weeks and months were marked off by church bells marking the "year of our Lord." The music, literature, and sculpture all gave a transcendent vision reminding you of the story of God's Great Love.
 - b. Personal correspondence was often marked "by Christ's love." Christ's story, His great love and incarnation, was everywhere, it permeated society.
 - c. Your role models would be the great Christian thinkers and spiritual heroes in a way similar to the heroes of Hebrews 11. There were no football heroes or Hollywood stars.
 - d. All of your personal experiences would be shaped by and interpreted by the Christian story of the God of love becoming a man and demonstrating His love by dying on a Cross. All of life with its pains and heartaches would make sense because of that story. All suffering would be in the context of the Great Love Story of God and man.

13. Welcome to our fragmented Storyless world. Modern man has lost the meaning of life. He is driven, but for what? He is defined, but by what?
 - a. We now live in the city of man. The Enlightenment dismisses out of hand that there is some grand story with a transcendent Author. The emphasis is now on pragmatism and progress of the modern age of Reason.
 - b. God and the Universal Story has now been replaced by small stories. Classical and spiritual role models have been replaced by modern movie stars and football players. Our best expressions are “have a nice day.” The only attempt at some cohesiveness is by the news media, but even there there is no context. It is all just random—nothing hangs together, just a bunch of facts, just the random days of our lives—just a sequence of images without rhyme or reason.

- c. In the absence of the Large Story, man creates his own stories, from dramas, to sports, politics and TV heroes. However, it always lacks transcendence and leaves him empty.
- Consider the role models people pick: the victim, “Why does everything go wrong with me story?” This is immensely popular because it relieves one from responsibility. Victims demand to be understood, nothing is demanded from the victim. Other choose fantasies of illicit romance, some pick sports heroes. Some find meaning in marriage, children, family. All are searching . . .
 - Christians are not exempt from writing their own scripts. Some pick a script comprised of favorite passages that will obligate God to grant exemption from pain and sorrow and plenty of blessings. If it does not work, he must just try harder. Or one try out different churches, for there is always a pastor to show one how to cut a deal with God and make Him work for you.
 - In all of these stories we script ourselves and blind ourselves to the Grand Love Story of God.
 - Beyond all of these short stories there is the deep realization of tragedy for none of the above lasts. So, there is a despair about the end of life.

14. However, the believer that orients to the Grand Story of God's Love Story is able to orient to all of life. He understands why he is here. He understands God's love. He understands that God will protect Him. Only this believer can truly live a transcendent life, for He loves God with a transcendent love (cf., Heb. 11).

15. The challenge to be pure virgin brides of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2-3). The language here speaks of intimate relationship and devotion to the Lord. This love is characterized by exclusive devotion to Christ. Such a bride is only too happy to please and live for her lord. This is an all pervasive life of love for the Lord. She lives in anticipation of the Great Wedding Banquet and eternity with the Lord.

16. The return of the Bridegroom.

- a. The ten virgins, Matt. 25:1-13.
- b. Accountability, Matt. 25:14-30.
- c. Judgment, Matt. 25:31-46.

17. Love vs. betrayal, Matt. 26:1-16.

18. The adulterous generation of Christ's age (Matt. 16:3-4). Four common 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).