

**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

**P.R. - 32**

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| Hermeneutics                   |
| Linguistics                    |
| Epistemology 9<br>Existence 25 |
| Metaphysics -32<br>Trans. 50   |
| Reality –Logic 32,<br>Truth 32 |

Opening passages, John 8:32; Rom 1:20-21; Matt. 22:37-40; 1 Cor. 16:22; 1 John 3:17; 4:20; Luke 12:16-21; 1 Tim. 6:6-11; Num. 6:24-26.

Given what the Bible teaches about the last days of the church age, we should not be surprised at the heresy and rank paganism in contemporary Christianity. What is so surprising is how deep the problem is among those who truly love the Lord and Bible doctrine. The only way to break this curse is dedication to the whole truth—both background philosophical realism as well as the dedication to the whole Truth of Scripture.

The devotional and pragmatic shift (Mill and James) of Christianity has had disastrous results on Christianity in general and for the personal lives of believers, cf., the lose of TGB in relation to all Scripture and the doctrine of the aseity of God.

Outline of Bible 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-25

1. The six views of all *esses*, things that be: rock be-ings, plant be-ings, animal be-ings, human be-ings, angel be-ings, and Supreme BEING (the difference is not one of degrees; not in the adjectives). Technically, there is only one BEING (only One who has the being in and of Himself = aseity) everything else is becoming/changing (actual-potential “beings”). The need to make a distinction between what is permanent, what is non-changing, and everything else which does change.

### Review of 6 views:

#### Non-Christian

- Physicalism. No God, minds, or values.
- Agnosticism. “I don’t know” = broken cognitive functions.
- Deism – unbiblical, cf. the explicit teachings of Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3.

#### 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. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created* (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.
  - a. This verse gives us the most fundamental assertion about God and all that exists. There was a time when there was nothing. BTW, only the Bible teaches creation ex nihilo (CEN). It is no wonder that modern pagans attack biblical creation (cf., Steady State, Oscillating Universe, Spontaneous Generation). This verse is what divides atheism from Christianity.
  - b. The recent debate between Bill Nye the Science Guy and Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis.

2. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.*

c. Robert Jastrow, leading NASA scientist and cosmologist said,

- *“15-17 billion years ago the universe exploded into being.”*

What did it explode out of? Nonbeing? Have you ever thought about how tremendous explosion that nothingness can cause? Without Being there can be no beginning or becoming.

- *“At this moment it seems as though science will never be able to raise the curtain on the mystery of creation. For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.”*

2. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.*
  - d. Carl Sagan, when asked why he stopped his inquiry into truth at creation, the truth that is the most important truth, said *“we do not need to ask the question of what there was before the big bang.”*

How could anyone who calls himself a scientist stop inquiry into truth at the most important moment in all of history? We do have to account for the universe! It screams for a self-existent eternal being, a First Cause.

2. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created* (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.
- e. The minute anyone admits of a beginning of the universe there are only two options:
- ✓ The universe came out of nothing all by itself.
  - ✓ The universe was created by something that is self-existent and eternal.
- f. If there ever was a time when there was nothing, no being, no becoming, no actuality, no potentiality, just non-being, what would there be now? NOTHING!!! The principle of philosophy and science abides: *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

2. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created* (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.

g. When science denies a self-existent Being, the only option it has is spontaneous generation where out of nothing, suddenly (or over time), “poof,” there it all is. However, this is not science. It is magic without the rabbit, hat, or magician. This is just silly.

2. Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God created* (בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים) the heavens and the earth.
  - h. Without God there can be no beginning. Without a First Cause there can be not second causes. Nothing screams louder for God than the beginning of all of creation.
  - i. God's Being is the only being that has power of being in Himself—this is called the aseity of God. This means that even this rock proves the existence of God, unless this rock has the power of being in itself. The Creator God revealed in the Bible is the ground of all being.

3. Acts 17:28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* Paul at Mars Hill, the intellectual center of ancient Greek culture, spoke these words as he was filled with grief at the sight of idolatry and the inscription to an unknown God.
  - a. Our beings and all operations are contingent and derived. Without Him we could not live, or move, or have any being. Furthermore, when you are asked how you are doing, the question is “what is the state of your be-ing?”
  - b. You life, your movement, and your being are all radically contingent upon God. There is no movement apart from God, there is no life apart from God and there is no beings apart from God. All beings and all motions depend upon Him. Without Him all beings would remain in a state of inertia. He is the Unmoved Mover.

4. The significance of understanding Existence.
  - a. New level of appreciation of and worship of God—true enhancement to the devotional life.
  - b. Removal of paganistic deistic, naturalistic, and fideistic viewpoints that get in the way of understanding God, many key passages in the Word of God, the nature of science and reality as such.
  - c. Ability to rationally and logically prove the existence of God. This proof for the existence of God is logical and absolute, different from evidential apologetics which is never 100% proof.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19-21 – Spiritual virtues.

1. Your treasure, whether you possess it or not, is yours because you love it. What Christ calls blessed, many modern Christians mock and think as cursed.
  - a. What the Lord means by “treasure” (θησαυρός) is not merely money, or material good, but whatever you think is best, that which you eagerly strive for more than anything else. Consider Christ’s focus. Consider what a Christian focus should look like.
  - b. Your treasure is what you think you will be the most blessed to have and what you think would bring you the most misery if you did not have it. The reason a lot of believers live in so much stress is because their hearts are more into the world than the Lord and the things of God.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19-21 – Spiritual virtues.

1. Your treasure, whether you possess it or not, is yours because you love it.
  - c. Understanding the distinction between God being our treasure and God as a means of getting our treasures. Note how this plays out in the difficulties of life and when one runs across His mandates, which go against man's pragmatic *treasured* interests. What constitutes success at life as such?
  - d. Note the Lord's connection between your treasure and your heart/will. Your heart has thoughts and intentions as part of your will. So heart refers to your thoughts, purposes, and volitions. The heart deals with far more than affections. It refers to what determines and runs those affections. Your heart is intertwined in your will, desires, and dreams.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19-21 – Spiritual virtues.

1. Your treasure, whether you possess it or not, is yours because you love it.
  - e. Since the heart determines direction, God is providing important counsel regarding where we let our will/heart drive us. We could turn this around and say where your treasure is there will your heart be. Your highest treasure is your God, be it wealth, human approbation, or Jesus Christ.
  - f. When our treasures are heavenly directed, we will often find ourselves thinking of Him, His grace, and plan often. If your treasures are on earth, you will not think of God unless you run into a problem.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

Matthew 6:19-21 – Spiritual virtues.

1. Your treasure, whether you possess it or not, is yours because you love it.
  - g. The heart refers to your love, which is what the will and its values are all about.
  - h. To live a life of simply gathering treasures on earth is not only to destroy one's spiritual life, it also fosters greed and a frantic search for happiness by accumulating more and more only to lose it all in the end.
  - i. We cannot take your material possession and earthly achievement with us after our brief stay on earth. What you can and will take is your character, the spiritual character you have developed by His grace.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

2. The rewards believers receive in heaven are inextricably connected with their character, which is always connected to activity. It is important to make a distinction between salvation and sanctification, salvation and rewards in Heaven

Revelation 3:4 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white; for they are worthy.'

Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

Revelation 22:12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."

## **MATTHEW 6:19-21**

3. By treasuring the things of heaven above the things of earth, the believer is actually able to enjoy all things of the earth as well as secure for himself inexhaustible treasures that last forever. He is able to live in the confidence knowing that since God is his treasures, he shall never lose these treasures. He understands that his greatest wealth is in God, which can never be taken away.

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

4. The believer who treasures the things of heaven more than earth lives a life far different from believer who insanely shackles himself to this fleeting earth and pierces himself with many pains.

Psalm 73:24 With Thy counsel Thou wilt guide me, And afterward receive me to glory.

1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment. 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. 11 But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

## **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 or true blessedness.
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 (δικαιοσύνην) will be satisfied [here and in the next life].**

- Substantive use of the present active ptc for hungering and thirsting.
- This strikes at the root of self-sufficiency. Failure to have hunger and thirst for righteousness means that you are self-satisfied in yourself. Recall what Jesus said to Laodecians.
- This is in stark contrast to spiritual self-complacency, Laodecianism.
- 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 refers to all purity of heart in all issues of life.
- 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 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

**VIRTUE** Intellective love  
Sense love

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

- 
- 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.