

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

- T/G/B**
 Eschatology
 Thanatology
 Ecclesiology
 Israelology
 Dispensationalism
 Doxology
 Hodology
 Soteriology
 Hamartiology
 Natural Law
 Anthropology
 Angelology
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The single greatest issue in your life and my life is virtue love for God (Luke 10:27). Not only is virtue love for God the single greatest issue facing us, it is the issue to which all other issues are inextricably connected. Virtue love for God is *the* Solution to everything (Job 42:5; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Pet. 1:6-9; 2 Tim. 4:6-13).

The single greatest issue for any teacher of the Word in regard to his students is to make disciples (Matt. 28:19-20). Making a disciple is to make learners, showing believers how to think and what to think about with the result that they are able to demolish all arguments against God and take captive every thought for Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), cf. Barna studies.

Acquiring a philosophical realist’s framework enables the doctrinal believer to actually stay in fellowship much longer. The truths of Bible doctrine should bring freedom from being enslaved to sinful patterns we had as unbelievers (Eph. 2:1-3).

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-34

1. A few words regarding existence:

- Acts 17:28 For in Him we live, and move, and have our being (καὶ ἐσμέν).
- The big question” Why is there something rather than nothing? Apart from God, a self-existing Being, bestowing existence on contingent creation what would there be but nothing?
- Given that things exist, a necessary, self-existing Being must by rational and ontological necessity exist.
- Given the law of inertia, a self-existing Being with the power of being must by necessity exist.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-34

2. Concurrence refers to the way God is intricately involved in the existence and activities of all that exists. We are noting 4 objections before we building an easily understandable model that comports with the Bible and science.
3. Objection #1: LLO-1 says that creatures can create. However, it is implausible because it is beyond the reach creatures to create *ex nihilo* (out of nothing).
4. Objection #2: LLO-2 says that creatures alone account for effects. However, this charge does not take into account First Cause of all contingent creatures and the nature of concurrence.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-34

5. Objection #3: “The Not-One-Act” Mantra.

- Charges that both God and creature cannot both immediately participate in one act to produce one effect
- In other words it is impossible for numerically the same power to exist in both God and the 2nd cause.
- If God produces the immediate effect then it is not the 2nd cause.
- If the 2nd cause produces the effect, then God is not part of the cause since the powers are so different and the effect is limited according to the creature’s nature.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-34

6. Response to Objection #3: “The Not-One-Act” Mantra.

- The response is that the activity of God and creature is not univocal.
- Rather, they are of different modes or orders. It is not like two people pushing a car. We do not have two separate agents giving the same kind of causes.
- There is no separate creature existence or cause to act with God for the one effect. God and creature are not two separate and hence incomplete causes, there is no division of labor.
- If there is a division then neither agent is the total cause of the effect, which is what concurrentism requires.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-34

- Illustration: Consider a woman writing with a pen. The woman is not the mediate cause of writing, she is the immediate cause of the writing, *and yet so is the pen*, but in different ways or modes. Furthermore, it is not that the woman or the pen are each partial causes of the writing. They both *immediately do all* the writing, yet in different ways.
- God and creature is a complete cause in its own order. No creature can be metaphysically independent of God in either its being or acting. There is deep intimacy which God and creatures share. Divine providence is all the way down!

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-34

- Although both agents (God and creation) are the cause of the action and the effect, in a very real and proper sense it is more correct to say that the primary cause is the one ultimately responsible for the effect produced, God in creation, the lumberjack on the axe to cutting, and the woman directing the pen to write.
- The last objection will deal with the subordination of 2nd causes.

MATTHEW 6:19-24

Supernatural Spiritual Virtue: the Poor in Spirit

Matthew 6

19 Μὴ **θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυρούς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς**, ὅπου σὴς καὶ βρῶσις ἀφανίζει καὶ ὅπου κλέπται διορύσσουσιν καὶ κλέπτουσιν·

20 **θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυρούς ἐν οὐρανῷ**, ὅπου οὔτε σὴς οὔτε βρῶσις ἀφανίζει καὶ ὅπου κλέπται οὐ διορύσσουσιν οὐδὲ κλέπτουσιν·

21 ὅπου γάρ ἐστιν **ὁ θησαυρός σου**, ἐκεῖ ἔσται καὶ **ἡ καρδιά σου**.

- To live for the treasures of Heaven requires spiritual virtue in the mind and will. It is of the nature of true Christian spiritual virtue to transcend the earthly realm.

Colossians 3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

MATTHEW 6:19-24

Supernatural Spiritual Virtue: the Poor in Spirit

The classical world, unlike our world, supported a transcendent view of happiness and life. This is perhaps best seen in the education described in Plato's Republic:

- “Happiness/well-being/happifying” (εὐδαιμονία) was directly related to virtue in the soul. This view is much closer to Christ's than modern views.
- Worldview: “when a person starts on the discovery by the light of reason only, and without any assistance of sense, and perseveres until by pure intelligence he arrives at the perception of the absolute good, he at last finds himself at the end of the intellectual world.”
 - Note how this worldview helped paved the way for the coming of Christ, the Absolute Good.
 - Note the contrast with modern public education regarding happiness and finding self—as the foundation of metaphysics have been replaced with the foundation of naturalism.

5. Not how Christ strikes out against the norms and standards of kosmos diabolicus by listing the supernatural virtues God requires in His people.

#1, Matt. 5:3: Blessed (Μακάριοι) are the **poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

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

#3, Blessed are the **gentle (πραεῖς) for they shall inherit the earth.**

#4, Blessed are those **who hunger and thirst for righteousness (δικαιοσύνην) for they shall be satisfied.**

#5, Blessed are the **merciful for they shall receive mercy**

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

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

#8, Blessed are **those who have been persecuted for righteousness and because of Jesus Christ. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. 12 "Rejoice, and be glad, for your **reward (ὁ μισθός) in heaven** is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

NB: We all long for happiness and there can be no true and deep happiness apart from total security and there is no total security apart from God and His plan.

6. The building and progression of the supernatural virtues.
 - a. First comes “poverty of spirit (#1),” which is a lowly and just estimation of ourselves, our character, our achievements based upon a clear recognition of our own responsibilities, weaknesses, and sins. It is really knowing yourself as you really are apart from the grace of God.
 - b. Recognition of poverty of spirit (#1) leads to “mourning (#2),” which exceeds the agony of physical tears because they have reached the human spirit and conscience and consist of personal inadequacies and sin.
 - c. It is this sense of mourning (#2) leads to virtue of being gentle (#3) that bows in submission to God even in the midst of antagonism from man.
 - d. Those of a gentle (#3) mindset yearn, hunger and thirst for righteousness (#4), for the possession of a fuller and nobler righteousness than they have attained.

6. The progression or building of eight supernatural virtues.
 - e. Those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness (#4)** are **merciful (#5)** because they really understand their need for mercy as well.
 - f. Those who are **merciful (#5)** gain **purity of heart (#6)** because of being lead through the aforementioned virtues (poverty of spirit, mourning, gentle, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and all that is involved in being able to empathize in mercy) are able to gain capacity to have a certain measure of vision of God, for “they shall see God.”
 - g. It is the **pure of heart (#6)**, having gone from poverty of spirit to seeing God (epignosis), who becomes a real **peacemaker (#7)**. He understands the nature of man’s hostility toward God and the doctrine of reconciliation. He is able to bring the great message of grace. As a peacemaker, he has peace with God and has overcome kosmos diabolicus.

6. The progression or building of eight supernatural virtues.
 - h. The very activity of the **peacemakers (#7)**, who are called “the sons of God,” receive **persecution (#8)** as these proclaimers of reconciliation meet hostility from the kosmos.
 - i. Note the following truths in Matthew 5:11-16.
 - There will always be inevitable antagonism between the spiritual Christian and the world. Darkness hates the light. The believer is to be a standing rebuke to the world.
 - Note the difference between the true nature of Christianity as a powerful influence in society and modern Christianity, which teaches that Christianity is only about a private devotional life and has nothing to do with government, science, or objective truth.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

Matt. 5:3: Blessed (Μακάριοι) are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3 Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

1. Each beatitude is linked with a blessing, and every virtue that is required contributes to our highest good.
2. Note the contrast of the Beatitudes with the rigid “though shalt” in the Law given on Mount Sinai. These “laws” of the kingdom are proclaimed by the coming King and are all inextricably connected to God’s grace.
3. No one is saved who has not begun with poverty of spirit, recognizing their dire need for God’s unmerited grace.

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4. All that the world commends, Christ condemns, and all that the world shrinks from and dreads, Christ asks us to be willing to make our own with the assurance that in these virtues we shall find true, deep, and transcendent happiness/blessedness.
5. “Poverty of Spirit” is rejected by all those who are prideful and who judge good and evil by things external and visible. As far as material poverty (Luke), it is the greatest blessing if it drives men to God; it is not blessing, as is often the case, if it drives men from Him.

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6. The reward: “theirs is the kingdom of heavens.” Poverty of spirit is not trapped in the horizontal, flat, earthly life. To the contrary, they use the earthly life as an instrument for something far better. Because of absence of pride, they are actually able to live in the reality that heaven is far better.

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7. What does man have to be proud of? What does anyone have that he has not received from God? How long is it going to last? It is really such a big thing after all?
8. We have all come out of nothing, and are nothing without God who is everything. If God were to withhold our *esse* for one moment, we would collapse into nothingness. And yet here we are, thinking high and mighty of ourselves because we possess this or that or have this ability that is greater than others—all the while we are but great emptiness, a nothingness, apart from God giving us being to pour in His grace.

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9. Consider what we do with what He does give us freely: our wills!
 - The one attribute God has given to us, our wills, we use against Him.
 - In our blessings we tend to get complacent about God, “I am rich and need nothing.”

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10. Poverty of spirit only comes from true and deep look at self, a self-knowledge that sees awfulness of sin, wickedness, and pride about one's abilities and accomplishments. Only that person will be motivated to accept the gift from the Lamb of God. There must be a need before an appetite for grace. Only the self-righteous see no need for grace.

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11. Blessedness is different than happiness, joy, or gladness. Blessedness has an objective and subject element. A permanent state of being with a corresponding subjective element. It is far deeper and lasting than happiness.
12. This reward deals with the present. It does not say “shall be,” but “is the Kingdom.” This is an all-comprehensive promise, the encyclopedia of all blessings belonging to the child of God.

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13. Poverty of spirit is blessed because it has the peace that is not available to those who live in pride (e.g., frantically comparing self with others, frantically wishing for more, and frantically seeking others to see and appreciate talent)—vanity is tough work. Those with poverty of spirit are able to live wisely, cheerfully, contentedly, and restfully in all circumstances.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

14. Poverty of spirit is blessed because it stops fighting God and opens itself up to the grace of God.

Luke 3:5 'Every ravine shall be filled up, And every mountain and hill shall be brought low; And the crooked shall become straight, And the rough roads smooth;

James 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

Matt. 5:3: Blessed (Μακάριοι) are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

15. Illustrations of poverty of spirit in some of the greatest men in history.

Abraham:

- Genesis 18:27 And Abraham answered and said, "Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am but dust and ashes.

Jacob:

- Genesis 32:10 I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness (יְהוָה) and of all the faithfulness which Thou hast shown to Thy servant;

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Moses:

- Exodus 3:11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?"
- Exodus 4:11 And the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? 12 "Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say."

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David- in bad times and good times:

- Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise;
- 1 Chronicles 29:14 "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee.

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Job:

- Job 42:5 "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee;

Isaiah:

- Isaiah 6:5 Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

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John the Baptist:

- John 1:27 "It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."
- John 3:30 "He must increase, but I must decrease."
- Luke 7:28 "I [Jesus] say to you, among those born of women, there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

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The tax collector:

- Luke 18:13 "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' 14 "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

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The Canaanite woman:

Matthew 15:26 And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 27 But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; be it done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

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Peter:

- Luke 5:8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

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15. Illustrations of poverty of spirit in some of the greatest men in history.

Paul:

- Romans 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.
- 2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves;

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

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Paul:

- 1 Timothy 1:15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. 16 And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

Matt. 5:3: Blessed (Μακάριοι) are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

16. When Jesus says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” He refers to those who have come to that realization of bankruptcy of soul and have found their esteem in God. Objectively speaking everyone is poor of spirit—some recognize it and some do not, the latter are the self-righteous types.

Beatitude #1- Poverty of Spirit

17. Poor in spirit essentially refers to being humble of spirit. Humility of spirit is a prerequisite to denying self and picking up your cross *daily* (Luke 9:23-26). It is also a prerequisite to not letting human temptations to greatness get between you and the true Treasure of God Himself.

Luke 9:23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 "For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. 25 "For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? 26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Beatitude #1-Poverty of Spirit

18. The alternative to poverty of spirit is human pride.

- a. Pride is the first and greatest sin because it is the violation of the first and greatest commandment. It turns it on its head with *loving self with all of the heart, soul, mind, and strength* rather than God. Pride is having self as god. Although pride is not adverse to using God (cf., Pharisees) to achieve hubristic desires.
- b. Pride is our civilization's fundamental sin and goal. It is also the lifeblood of pop psychologists. It is all about "My will be done," "I did it my way," "accept yourself" (which is only good for animals and plants). It is also the curse of much of modern "Christianity."

Beatitude #1-Poverty of Spirit

- c. Pride is not only against God, it is against others, from neighbors to fellow believers. For there can be only Number One. Pride is too competitive to be a blessing to others.
- d. God punishes pride by giving the person over to evil ways of thinking, Romans 1:20-32. Unlike the correction of other sins, which are often dealt with specifically, with pride God actually hands people over to their debased self-directed wills and base lusts.

Beatitude #1-Poverty of Spirit

- e. Pride blocks grace, James 4:6-17. If you cannot see God as your Treasure or live for the Lord, perhaps it is due to pride in your life
- f. Pride has more to do with the will than with the mind. The same is true of humility. Just as humility is not thinking less of yourself, but less *about* yourself, pride is not really thinking too highly of self, just too much of yourself. It is a lust of will that runs very deep.
- g. Only true humility, that poverty of spirit, will change the will from “my will be done,” to “Thy will be done” regardless of the circumstances of life. It is something that must be learned through suffering, Heb. 2:10; 5:8; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Philip. 4:10-13.

Beatitude #1-Poverty of Spirit

19. The deepest reason God hates pride is that it keeps man from knowing God, his supreme joy. Pride keeps man from living in the presence of God, which is the only sphere for the development of true humility.
 20. The God who loves us with an everlasting love is infinitely determined to break our pride and bring us into humility.
 21. Humility, that poverty of spirit, is the greatest virtue in the sense that it is the first and foundational virtue. Without genuine humility there is no spiritual flourishing.
11. For more on pride, see FBC website: <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-1.pdf>;
<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-2.pdf>; <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-3.pdf>;
<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-4.pdf>; <http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-5.pdf>;
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<http://www.fbcweb.org/Doctrines/Pride-12.pdf>

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 with David from the point of conception to divine discipline in his adult life.
- 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
- 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.

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.

Spiritual virtue: supernatural love illustrated

Moral love

#9: hating evil (moral love) (Ἀποστουγῶντες 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.