

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: Language-9
3: Epistemology 32 - Existence 50 - History 50
2:Metaphysics 32 - Trans. 50
1: Reality - Logic 32, - Truth 32

Opening : John 14:1-6; Rev. 5:11-14; 19:7-8; 21:3; 22:3-5.

Outline of Bible class.

- 1. Spiritual foundations & Realism (10 min-1 slide).** 1 John 1:7, 9: conduit or concurrent model?
- 2. Philosophy of language-9 & Realism (10 min-1 slide):** theories of language.
- 3. Heaven-5: (1 hour)** more development on the nature of Heaven. It is important to gauge truth based on the four principles: identity, contradiction, EC, sufficient reason (pro or con).

Spiritual foundations/fellowship: Concurrentism (1 John 1:7) vs. Conduit (1 John 1:9)?

1. It is important to remember that God does not give us theology. He gives us revelation, which we must put together. We must examine all things, keep the good and avoid error! Realism enables us to do this in every level of biblical studies.
2. *1 John 1:7 but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*
3. *1 John 1:9, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
4. Both systems claim fellowship, but which verse has direct support, 7 or 9? More personal?
5. On what basis can one conclude that 1:9 results in “fellowshipping” given the nature of human fellowship? Moreover, a distinction needs to be made between f-ship and relationship
6. If the standard view of 1 John 1:9 is correct, most of us have been out of fellowship with God for most of our Christian lives since it demands 100% of confession of known sins . However, David simply cited “I have sinned,” and was completely forgiven instantly. There is both good news and bad news with regard to the biblical concurrent model.
7. On what basis does fellowship with God operate like a circle or zone rather than a person? How do people fellowship with one another? Does forgiveness translate to active fellowship? Note the terms used for fellowship in the Old Testament: walking with God (Enoch), walking before God (Abraham), and after God (Israelites).
8. Our attitude of repentance is far more important than citing our transgression. This can be illustrated with Demas and many of the churches of Revelation 2-3

Philosophy of Language-9 (Theories of meaning)

Outline

Introduction

What is philosophy of language?

✓ Theories of meaning

Plato (428-348 BC)

Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.

1. What is philosophy of language (POL)?
 - a. POL examines the nature of language. **Key: language is not the key to understanding!**
 - b. POL examines the nature of meaning. **No objective meaning = no objective truth!**
2. Why is POL important for the Bible-believer? Our POL permeates virtually everything we know and think about life, God, and spirituality in conservative Christianity. We have noted the distortion in the grammars on the aorist that are spread by greats, like Ryrie and Walvoord, to hundreds of thousands of Christians. There are also pernicious influences in hermeneutics with regard to removal of metaphysics (Wittgenstein to Osborne) and acceptance of sociological view of knowledge (Skinner and Quine). The whole modern project fails due to the modern Cartesian scientific-philosophical methodology.
3. A distinction needs to be made between linguistics and philosophy of language. Consider the statement, "Matthew was written **BY** Matthew and it was written **BY** 96 A.D."
 - a. Linguistics is empirical and deals with words, grammar, syntax, morphology, etc.
 - b. Philosophy of language is philosophical and focuses on meaning and reality.
 - c. Linguistics is important, but how do you know the meaning of the above?
4. Overview and challenge of two competing theories in biblical translation
 - a. Formal equivalency: word for word from source text, cf. John 1:1; Philip 2:6.
 - b. Dynamic equivalent: to find dynamic equivalents in present, cf. the Cross.
5. Theories of meaning in philosophy of language.
 - a. Linguistic relativity (Plato, Heidegger) which is the notion that languages reflect the way different cultures differently perceive reality. This difference is in kind not in degree. In other words, it is not just different opinions about things.
 - b. Behaviorism (Skinner, Quine). "all human knowledge and belief, and all the 'patterns' of thought and action characteristic of man, can be explained as 'habits' built up by a process of 'conditioning'-like with a rat (Chomsky pretty much destroyed this notion).
 - c. Realism (Aristotle, Aquinas, Adler). Thing in the world is abstracted into the mind. A horse is a horse no matter what you call it—no matter the culture, language, or environmental influences. Realism understands meaning is a philosophical domain.₂

HEAVEN-5

1. Our studies on love have brought us to a study of Heaven. We have been noting the activity and status of those in the present/intermediate heaven, e.g., Samuel, Lazarus and Rich man, Moses & Elijah, martyrs in the tribulation (cf., Luke 15:7; Rev. 6:9-11; Rev. 7:9; 18:20; 19:1-5.



Present/Intermediate Heaven

Church Age

Rapture

Tribulation
7 years

Millennium
1,000 years
Rev. 20



**Ultimate
Heaven,
Our True
Home:
New Heavens
&
New Earth
Rev 21-22**

2. Important guidelines in this study of Heaven.
 - a. Test everything by Scripture and hold to the good, 1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11. This study will require major paradigm shifts.
 - b. Moreover, this “testing” must be on the basis of Realism not the mind (rationalism or what we can imagine or what we like or dislike). The standard is reality as such, not what we can imagine. For example, as an adult I eat certain foods and engage in certain activities, like studying every waking hour, that I could not have dreamed of when I was a child or even young adult.
 - c. The guiding principle of Realism is sufficient reason—either pro or con. Nothing I will teach about Heaven is baseless. Moreover, since I operate in a world of philosophical realism, I am able to avoid naturalistic reductionism, which plays no small part in modern deficient views of Heaven.

d. We must avoid two extremes.

- (1) Christoplatonism/etherialism: nothing physical, human, or earthly matters in Heaven. God is all we need or will ever have throughout eternity.
- (2) Anthropocentrism/humanism: source of true happiness and fulfillment is in the new “things” of the New Heavens and Earth. In this view the focus is on the biblical descriptions of Heaven in terms of gardens, cities, kingdoms, buildings, banquets, eating, drinking, bodies, and a life without any of the curses/problems of today. This view has a deficient view of the role of Christ and the glory of God in Heaven. Heaven without Christ would be like a bride going on a honeymoon without her groom.

3. The centrality of the Beatific Vision: Revelation 22:4, “They will see His face.”
 - a. The “Beatific Vision” is a term that comes from three Latin terms that together mean “a blessed/happy-making sight.” The sight was of God. To see God’s face, as per Rev. 22:4, is the loftiest of all aspirations.
 - b. However, for any sinful man to see God’s face will require a radical transformation. The Bible is explicit in both the OT and the NT that no man can see God and live, Ex. 33:18-23; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 12:14. In the eternal state all barriers between us and God will be removed forever.

3. The centrality of the Beatific Vision

- c. Every other heavenly pleasure will derive from and be secondary to the beatific vision. Seeing God and being with God is the Blessing and the fountain of all other blessings. Again, God's greatest gift to us is, and always will be, Himself. All of the wonderful blessings on the New Earth, though absolutely amazing, will not compare to the joy, pleasure, and knowledge we will gain in the beatific vision.

- d. This means that all other joys cannot be separated from God. We will not only see God face-to-face in Christ, we will see God in all of the beauty of the New Earth. We will not only see Him in the beauty of all of creation, we will live in total appreciation of His wonderful blessings that engulf our lives.

3. The centrality of the Beatific Vision

- e. We will literally see God in everything, from the beauty of creation to the physical pleasures on the New and enjoy an amazing knowledge of Him and His love, Psa. 36:8-9; Jer. 31:34.
- f. Moreover, we will never be tempted to put things before Christ. All of our joy and pleasure will be centered on Him—not only in face-to-face relationship with Him, but we will behold His glory in all of creation from the flowers to all of His creatures on earth.
- g. It is in the beatific vision that all of those prayers of believers who really sought God are finally fulfilled, Job 19:25-27; Psa 27:4; 36:8-9; Rev. 21:3; 22:4.

4. There is amazingly little attention given to Heaven by seminary professors, theologians, and pastors. Yet, it is the place we go when we die and the place we will live forever with Christ and his people—the New Earth, in the new universe.
 - a. Documentation: John Calvin wrote excellent work on theology of God and Christ. But he never wrote a commentary on Revelation; Shedd’s 3 volume *Dogmatic Theology* contains 87 pages on eternal punishment, but only 2 on heaven; Martyn Lloyd Jones wrote a great work *Great Doctrines of the Bible*, with 900 pages of theology with only 2 pages on eternal state and New Earth. Moreover, there are no separate courses on Heaven in seminaries. When pastors do not teach about Heaven, then the people might naturally assume that the Bible does not have much to say about it.

- b. The results of lack of teaching on Heaven include vague, ethereal notions found in eastern religions rather than the concrete, physical depictions by Christ and found throughout the Bible. Moreover, how can believer set his heart on Heaven when he has an impoverished view Heaven? Why do we talk so little about it? And then only as a vague hope?

- c. This is in contrast to the New Testament and evidence of first Christians in the catacombs. Heaven went from being a central, life-sustaining conviction in orthodox Christianity to the modern view, which has been reduced to a nice auxiliary sentiment as we seek God to solve our problems in *this life*.

- d. We should consider Satan's work as a cause for God's children having such vague, negative, and uninspired views of Heaven. It certainly keeps us from focusing on Heaven. Moreover, he does not have to convince us that it does not exist, all he has to do is convince us that it is a place of boring unearthly existence. If we believe that lie, he can rob us of our joy and anticipation and we will set our minds on this life and not the next. What better way to rob us of our joy.

- e. Naturalism is another factor that works as a spell among many Christians, who have trouble even imagining Heaven due to their metaphysical naturalism. What is ironic is that the biblical descriptions are very physical. I challenge you: if you have trouble with these descriptions, think of an alternative: it will be even more unimaginable.

5. Christians are commanded to seek the “things” above where Christ is, Col. 3:1-5.
 - a. This is a command to have a Heaven-centered life.
 - b. To long for Christ is to long for Heaven, for that is where He is.
 - c. We cannot set our eyes on Christ without setting our eyes on Heaven.
 - d. We cannot set our eyes on Heaven without setting our eyes on Christ.
 - e. The command is to set our minds not only on Christ, but the things above
 - f. Seek denotes serious search. The term is used throughout the Gospels for a diligent, active, single-minded investigation. The present tense illustrates the ongoing process.
 - g. The command indicates that this is not natural for us in our fallen state.
 - h. The following prohibitions point to what fallen man “naturally: defaults to.
 - i. History is filled with marvelous examples of Christians, who due to their heavenly focus, became great men and women of God, and made historical impacts. Those who put all the focus here end up losing both now and there/forever. Those who put focus on Heaven end up getting both: rich life now and eternal glory.

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- a. It is unfortunate that most books on heaven do not make the distinction between intermediate and permanent heaven. While, people do not eat and drink in the present heaven, but they will on the new heaven and earth.
- b. When a Christian dies he goes to the present heaven. He moves into the intermediate state, the transitional period between life on Earth and the future resurrection to life on the New Earth.
- c. Though the present heaven is far better than life on earth (Philip 1:23), it is not permanent and not the place for which we were designed. It is not correct to say someone went to Heaven to be there forever. It really is not our Home either.

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- d. The present heaven is an angelic realm, distinctly separated from Earth. However, it does have more physical qualities than commonly assumed.
- e. By contrast the future heaven will be in the human realm, on Earth. It is in the future Heaven that the dwelling place of God will be the dwelling place of humanity in a resurrected universe (Rev 21:1-3). He will come live intimately with man on earth as the Kingdom of God comes to earth.
- f. So, the present heaven and earth are separated, but one day they will not be separated.

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- g. When a believer dies, he goes to the present heaven where he will give an account of his life, Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:10-11; 1 Cor. 3:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26-28; 3:21. The issue is rewards, no salvation. The rewards are conditioned on faithfulness.

- h. Present heaven is a physical place. Man by nature is both spiritual and physical (interim body), he is hylomorphic, and therefore needs a place with physical properties that occupy space. There is simply no need to spiritualize the present heaven given the physical descriptions.

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- i. The present heaven exists in a universe next door, and on occasion the door is opened for those living on earth to see into it. Stephen did not receive an inner vision. Jesus was not floating in the air—He was standing on something in His physical resurrected body.

Acts 7:55 But being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; 56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- j. Other physical objects in the present/temporary heaven include smoke, scrolls, elders, martyrs who wear clothes, palm branches, musical instruments, Rev. 15:8; Rev. 7:9; Rev. 8:6.
- k. We are told that there is a sanctuary in the present heaven that Christ went through (Heb. 8:5; 9:11, 24).

Hebrews 9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation;

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- l. The New Jerusalem that will be brought down to the New Earth is currently in the intermediate or present Heaven (Heb. 12:22). Since it will be physically when it comes to Earth, why not currently physical in the Present Heaven?
- m. The temporary heaven in the universe next door is called a paradise, which points back to the Garden of Eden and viewed as a place of beauty and pleasure and happiness, and which will be on the New Earth, Rev. 2:7; 22:2. The tree of life that was in the Garden is in the present heaven and will be on the New Earth in the eternal state.

6. More on the Present/Temporary Heaven.

- n. The physical descriptions of the Present Heaven is consistent with the physical interim bodies that allow man, a hylomorphic being, to function in the interim state (2 Cor. 5:2-4; Rev. 6:9-11). We know that there are at least three bodies there: Moses and Elijah, and Jesus. Moreover, Enoch and Elijah did not leave bodies behind. What would be the sufficient reason for restricting the physical activities of the martyrs of Rev. 6:9-11 to them alone.
- o. Christ is currently in the present Heaven observing what is happening on earth (Acts 9; Rev. 2-3), as do angels. What would be a sufficient reason for thinking that His bride is not interested in His interests and activities on earth?