

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

The single greatest issue in life is virtue love for God (Matt. 22:37-40).

Love for God is characterized by a desire to move closer to Him (as per Mary Magdalene in Luke 7-8, 10, and John 19-20), to live for Him (2 Cor. 5:14-15; Col. 3:23; Eph. 6:7) to please Him (2 Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:10), to talk with Him often (1 Thess. 5:17), and by a joy that transcends all of the difficulties of life (1 Pet. 7-8). Love for and trust in God is always personal; it goes beyond the propositions, principles, and doctrines. It is important for the believer to think of fellowship in terms of loving and moving closer to God rather than merely propositional concepts.

A few words about the need to move out of nominalism and into philosophical realism to understand the nature of love.

Consider the Helen Keller example, What would be the best way to find out the nature of water? By the hand-signs (or word studies) or studying water as such? The same hold true of love. Trying to discover the meaning of love by the uses of the Greek different words for love is awful place to build a foundation of love. Did the OT saints understood the different types love? In reality there are hundreds of kinds of loves that man understands.

Hermeneutics

Linguistics

Epistemology 9
 Existence 42

Metaphysics -32
 Trans. 50

Reality -Logic 32,
 Truth 32

5/3/2014

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-42

Building the Model for Concurrentism

1. The need for Esse metaphysics (concurrentism) for a biblical worldview—to understand the Bible, God, the spiritual life, man, and reality as such.
 - Job 38:41 "Who prepares for the raven its nourishment, When its young cry to God, And wander about without food?"
 - Matthew 6:30 "But if God so gives being (ὄντα) to the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?"
 - Only concurrentism comports with the orthodox doctrine of God's immanence and transcendence. God's immanence means that God is within all things as their sustaining causes. God's transcendence means that He is beyond all limited beings. Yes, God is in all things, but it is more accurate to say that all in the universe is in God, cf., Acts 17:26-27.
 - God's transcendence avoids pantheism and His immanence avoids deism.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-42

Building the Model for Concurrentism

2. Concurrence means that God is the efficient cause of all that exists.
3. In concurrence both agents, God as the Primary Agent and a creature as secondary agent, produce one effect. However, they operate on different levels or modes of causality.
4. The Primary Agent infuses its effect more powerfully than does a secondary cause because the Primary Agent is required for each instance of natural causality. In other words, the higher cause is more immediate to the effect than the power of the lower cause since the power of the lower cause is not coupled with its effect except by the power of the higher cause.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-42

Building the Model for Concurrentism

5. Concurrence does not involve premotion.

- There are not two powers like a carpenter (1A) using a hammer (2a). Even though there is one effect obtained between the carpenter and the hammer, it is not that God applies a power and intention to the hammer for the one effect.
- We understand that hammers do not of themselves drive nails. The hammer is the secondary agent, which is raised by the power of the principal agent to produce an effect of a higher order than itself—the effect of which is actually more proportionate to the power of the principal agent and not the hammer.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-42

Building the Model for Concurrentism

5. Concurrence does not involve preemption.

- In the doctrine of preemption, there is no free will. For example, if I were to strike the head of a snake with my heel, I would be responsible for the action (indeed, the whole action) employed in bringing about the effect by exerting a certain amount of force with my foot in the direction of the snake. Whereas my shoe, being the instrument of my (leg's) activity, would be the secondary "agent" that is immediately connected with the effect—so it can be said that the shoe is what immediately strikes the head of the snake. Yet with respect to me, as instrument, it seems that my shoe has no choice in the matter about how its nature is to be applied. If preemption is true, then there is no free will; God's influence would simply overwhelm all objects.
- However, man does have free will in concurrence. The sad news is that we all too often use our free wills to do evil and thus become more evil. The only solution is to move the will to God and His Goodness and away from Evil.

Spiritual Virtue: Christ's 8 Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12)

1. **μακάριοι** are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. **μακάριοι** are those **who mourn**, for they shall be comforted.
3. **μακάριοι** are the **gentle**, for they shall inherit the earth.
4. **μακάριοι** are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.
5. **μακάριοι** are the **merciful**, for they shall receive mercy.
6. **μακάριοι** are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.
7. **μακάριοι** are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.
8. **μακάριοι** are those **who have been persecuted** for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 **μακάριοι** 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 in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Compare these 8 **μακάριοι** with Christ's 8 "**Οὐαὶ**" to the prideful religious types in Matt. 23.

More on Blessedness in the 8 Spiritual Virtues

Blessed are those who: **1) are poor in spirit;** 2) who mourn; 3) are gentle; 4) hunger and thirst for righteousness; 5) are merciful; 6) are pure in heart; 7) are peacemakers, 8) are persecuted.

1. “Poor in Spirit.” The bottom line here is that God must empty us of ourselves before He can fill us with the gifts of Himself and His matchless grace. Pride must be broken before anyone can live, thrive, and grow in the plan of God.
2. The need for poverty of spirit. Often, *while* what we call our own life remains agreeable to us, we will not surrender it to Him. But He made it so that that is the only way to our happiness. Therefore, God in His providence comes in in what seems cruel at times to make us less comfortable in order to make us truly blessed.
3. The alternative of poverty of spirit is prideful spirit. Pride truly is as awful as it is insidious. And we all have it. It is the one evil that keeps any believer from growing in God’s grace. It prevents the acquisition and growth in any virtue, spiritual or natural.

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1. The beatitude of mourning is the direct refutation of any attempt to *equate* blessedness with happiness, as noted in the misleading translation, “Happy are those who mourn.” Mourning is essentially an expression of *unhappiness*, and Jesus did not utter such contradictions as “Happy are those who are unhappy.”

2. Thought experiment on blessedness to aid in understanding the reality (a=virtuous poor man; b=virtueless rich man)
 - ❖ Asking Socrates if that man a or man b is blessed. . .
 - ❖ Asking Jesus if man a or b is blessed. . .
 - ❖ Asking modern man if man a or man b is blessed . . .
 - ❖ Asking the modern church if man a or man b is blessed. . .
 - ❖ Asking me about blessedness...
 - ❖ What if you were asked? Consider the nature of those who truly are blessed. Note the goodness (natural or supernatural) of soul in every case.

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3. Grief and sorrow are certainties. They are universal. All grief and sorrow causes mourning, regardless if the mourning be tearful or tearless.
4. The Bible has a totally different view on mourning and grief than the world. A few passages on mourning and grief.

Isaiah 53:3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

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Psalm 119:28 My soul weeps because of grief; Strengthen me according to Thy word

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

1 Thessalonians 4:18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

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1 Peter 1:6-9. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been **distressed** by various trials, 7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice **with joy inexpressible and full of glory**, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

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2 Corinthians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; **4 who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.** 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

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Matt. 26:36, Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, **and began to be grieved and distressed.** 38 Then He said to them, "**My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death;** remain here and keep watch with Me." 39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

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2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light **affliction** is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

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5. Christ changes the meaning of all grieving and suffering for all believers in regard to this life and the next.

Philippians 1:29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

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.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope.

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6. The blessed mourners in this context are those who have come to understand their own wicked complacency, i.e., their satisfaction in themselves, in their sins and evil, and in the world instead of in God and the plan of God (cf. Paul who came to the realization that he was the worst sinner who ever lived; the need for mourning for the reversionistic believers of Laodecian; and the wretched state monetary reversionists of James).

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7. All people mourn, so all *can* be blessed in their mourning. But not all *are* blessed by mourning. Not all will receive divine comfort.
8. Every suffering can be blessed because it hollows out a place in us for God and His comfort, 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Philip. 4:12-13.
9. It is the world that is the source of mourning. Despite our efforts to turn it into a Paradise, it is a vale of tears because of its changes and losses and because of its hostility to God.

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10. Divine providence is not just “that God has a great plan for your life.” Part of His plan is straightening us out. As Lewis put it, ‘God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pains. Pain is His megaphone to arouse a deaf world.’ God knows we need Him but often treat Him like a parachute.

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11. Pain shatters the illusion that all is well with us. It also shatters the illusion that what we have is our own and enough for us. God wants to give us more of Himself, but He cannot as long as we are complacent and our hands are full of other things.

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12. Mourning is always a result of grief and grief is always a result of some loss or privation. Grief arises because something or someone of value has been lost and the griever is faced with the emptiness. What are some of the things people lose? Anytime a part of life is taken away, there is grief.
13. Normal grief usually involves intense sorrow, pain, anger, depression, restlessness, irritability. Everyone handles it differently, depending on personality type and relationship with God and application of doctrine.

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14. Abnormal grief becomes pathological grief. This is grief that is intensified, delayed, prolonged, lives in denial. The grieving is more intense and longer in duration than the norm. There are deep feelings of dejection, lack of interest in life, diminished capacity to love, withdrawal, greatly lowered spiritual self-esteem, prolonged sense of giving up, self-condemnation, excessive drinking, hopelessness, intense guilt, etc.
15. The grief that is the worst and most dangerous is loss of faith. In this state a person loses all spiritual vitality followed by doubt, skepticism and then loss of meaning in life. This is why it is so important to have a healthy, robust spiritual life, which means making sure you put first things first before the God of all time and all circumstances.

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The gentle or meek.

1. Meekness is characterized by grace orientation even in the midst of hatred, injustice, and antagonism. This is the opposite of anger and self-assertion and retaliation. It is not weakness, cf. Moses and Christ.
 - ✓ Rom 12:17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.
 - ✓ 1 Pet 3:9 not returning evil for evil, or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

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- ✓ Isa 50:6 I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting.
- ✓ Matthew 11:28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am **gentle** and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. 30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

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Hungering and thirsting for righteousness

1. Hunger and thirst speak of passionate desires. All supergrace believers had this attitude. This is in contrast to hungering and thirsting for the carnal, greedy, and illicit things of this world, which always leave one unsatisfied—and even disgusted when one is full of it.
 - ✓ Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

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Mercy

1. Mercy is more than meekness. This is love and care for the needy, especially the needy who are unworthy. To be merciful is a blessing in itself for a life of selfishness and judgmentalism is hellish.
 - ✓ James 2:13 For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.
 - ✓ Mat 6:15 "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

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1. Purity of heart is a result of the foregoing virtues. Such purity is progressive, and as it increases so does the vision of God. The heart that sets its eyes on impurity is too carnal and distracted to see the beauty of doctrine, the spiritual life and God.
 - ✓ Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.
 - ✓ 1Jo 3:3 And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.
 - ✓ Tit 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

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Peacemakers

1. Peacemakers are those who have gone through the experiences of the foregoing six virtues. The Christian peacemaker seeks to bring peace between men and God, as per reconciliation. He seeks to share the peace and grace he possesses with God to others.
 - ✓ 2 Corinthians 5:18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

More on Blessedness in the 8 Spiritual Virtues

Blessed are the: 1) poor in spirit; 2) mourn; 3) gentle; 4) hunger and thirst for righteousness; 5) merciful; 6) pure in heart; 7) peacemakers, 8) **the persecuted.**

The persecuted, blessed?

1. What a paradox! Sounds like a contradiction! It is quite obvious that Jesus is not summoning men and women to a nice easy life. He is not offering men worldly honor; rather He is making it clear that they can expect scorn and suffering. Of course, He would be the first to feel the pain of scorn and twisted crown of thorns.
 - ✓ 2 Timothy 3:12 And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
 - ✓ John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, A slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.