

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

Existence 44

Metaphysics -32

Trans. 50

Reality –Logic 32,

Truth 32

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The reason we were created, the supreme good of our being, is to love God completely (Matt. 22:37-40). God appeals to the whole man: intellect, will, his whole psychological being, as indicated in the literature of the Bible. It is all about **whole truth**. Personal love for God is why we were laid hold of by Jesus Christ (Philip. 3:12). God is intimately and concurrently involved in all that we are and do. All that He brings into our lives is for the express purpose of drawing us closer to Him and preparing us to be with Him *forever*. All of the tests, tribulations as well as blessings are designed to open our eyes to Him, His love and His grace in total truth—not just *a* right view about Him.

Until a person defines himself in light of God, he misses the whole point of life. Only when the believer defines himself in light of God and Bible doctrine, by putting first things first, that he is able to enjoy all of the second things of life—and get the point of his very existence.

Love for 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 in propositional concepts *about* God (cf., Job 42:5-6; Rev. 2:1-7).

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-44

Concurrentism

1. Divine Concurrence.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things continue in being (συνέστηκεν).

- ❖ Note the mode. God is not working on things, over things, or pushing things around. He is deep in all things giving all beings existence. To give existence to anything necessitates the action of being, properties, and activities. God is the Efficient Cause of all things.
- ❖ The perfect tense of the verb (συνέστηκεν) points to initial and ongoing activity. Divine concurrence is all about action. Action is all about causality. Not only can God do everything, He actually does everything.
- ❖ Creation *ex nihilo* necessitates a Transcendent Creator and Sustainer. The created world points to a God who IS and who acts continuously.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-44

Concurrentism

2. Out of the six options of viewing the created world, only one is plausible; only one is real, given what we know about science and reality as such. We need to keep it real! This requires hard thinking about reality.
 - a. Physicalism – why is this implausible?
 - b. Agnosticism—what is this implausible?
 - c. Deism—why is this implausible?
 - d. Conservationism—why is this implausible?
 - e. Concurrence—what are some of the conceptual challenges?
 - One act from two agents.
 - Transcendent and natural causes and modes.
 - f. Occasionalism—why is this implausible?

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-44

Concurrentism

3. There are only 3 choices for theists (or for anyone who recognizes the need for an *ex nihilo* transcendent agent):
 - a) God is the only cause (occasionalism);
 - b) God has little to no role to play as to cause of effects after initial creation (deism), and
 - c) concurrentism, which teaches that in some way God and created things collaborate to produce nature effects. In concurrentism one does not have to choose between God as cause and finite substances as causes; he can have both. The task now is to more fully explain how the same effect can be described to God and natural causes.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-44

Concurrentism

4. More on causality: God is the universal first cause of everything in such a way as to be also the total cause of everything, and so nothing can or does happen without His will.
 - a. God's will is sufficient for everything that happens.
 - b. God will is necessary for everything that happens.
 - c. A cause is a real cause if it is either necessary or sufficient for its effect.
 - d. Hence, if a secondary substance were necessary for its effect, God's will would not be sufficient.
 - e. Hence, if a secondary substance were sufficient for its effect, God's will would not be necessary.
 - f. Hence, no secondary substance can be a real cause.
 - g. If no secondary substance can be the real cause, the threat of occasionalism looms.
 - h. In concurrentism, God is the first efficient cause on whom all second causes radically depend.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-44

Concurrentism

5. The same power and action are needed to preserve anything at each individual moment of its duration as would be required to create that thing new as if it were not yet in existence.
6. Before initial creation there were no finite substances and no properties; hence original creation was a creation of both substances and their original properties.
7. Since the Creator uses the same power after initial creation to preserve each substance, it requires the preservation of each substance complete with all of its properties and activities.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-44

Concurrentism

8. In concurrentism the same effect ascribed to a natural cause and to God, but not as though part were affected by God and part the natural agent; but the whole effect proceeds from each.
9. God is the total efficient cause of everything and yet created substances have a real causal role in each and every effect after the initial creation.
10. Concurrentism is essentially the view that for every state of affair after initial creation, God and some set of finite causes are both efficacious in producing it.

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.
- ❖ The great privilege of being able to study and gain insights into what the Lord, the God-man, taught the crowds nearly two thousand years ago. The blessings of have the informed option to choose the plan of God.
 - ❖ **Μακάριοι** always refers to a great quality of soul that makes a person truly great in the sight of God. Such greatness always brings peace and happiness.

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

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

1. It is in this fourth virtue that the believer moves into true greatness before God. To be sure, the desire to be great among men is often filled with pride and illicit desires; however, the desire to be great *in the sight of God* is a noble thing.
 - To want to be great in the sight of the Lord translates into it not mattering very much what men or the kosmos think of us.
 - There is no spiritual greatness apart from poverty of spirit, i.e., genuine humility.

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2. A word or two about the comparison of the genre of the Beatitudes and Proverbs (wisdom literature) in both form and substance. E.g., note the universal principles of **hungering , thirsting for, and living in righteousness**, cf., 1:1-12, 20-23; 2:1-22; 3:1-8; 4:20-27; 5:1-9, 15-23; 6:6-19; 10:1-2, 9; 11:1-3; 19:1).
 - The focus in the Word is never on just knowledge. While knowledge is a necessary condition, it is not a sufficient condition for the transformation of the whole character of man (contra Platonism and Stoicism).

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Spiritual greatness, going from poverty of spirit to riches of living righteously, as instantiated in John the Baptist:

1. John the Baptist is explicitly called “great (μέγας)” in the sight of the Lord by the angel Gabriel and by the Lord Jesus Christ. Although all believers are equal in regard to positional righteousness, not every one is equal in the sight of God as far as their character and spiritual lives (cf., Laodecians, Corinthians, Galatians, and the apostates in Peter and Jude). Some people are great and some are small in the eyes of God, though God loves all.

Luke 1:15, He will be great in the sight of the Lord.

Luke 7:28 "I say to you, among those born of women, there is no one greater than John;

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2. John's greatness is reflected in his desire for Christ's greatness over his own:

John 3:26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him." 27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing, unless it has been given him from heaven. 28 "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' 29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this joy of mine has been made full. 30 **"He must increase, but I must decrease.**

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

3. John's greatness is reflected in his attitude toward himself. There is no greatness in the plan of God for any person who is "self-seeking" according to the standards of kosmos diabolicus.
 - "A voice in the wilderness."
 - "Friend of the Bridegroom"
 - "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

4. John's greatness is reflected in his detachment from "worldly goods," materialism (poverty of spirit). No man can be great if his aims are low (horizontal: hedonism, secularism, materialism, humanism, existentialism).
 - Luke 7:25 "But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces. 26 "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet.
 - No man has the right to be called great if his aims are low, short termed or if he makes idols out of the kosmos. It is not about our bank accounts. Rather, it is about what our hearts, our wills, are attached to.

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

5. John's greatness is reflected in his indomitable strength. No man can be great if he lives in fear for what other's think of him.
 - Matthew 11:7 And as these were going away, Jesus began to speak to the multitudes about John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind?"

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

6. John's greatness is reflected in the strength of his convictions. No man can be great if he lives in doubt.
 - Matthew 14:3 For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. 4 For John had been saying to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her."
 - Before anyone can have conviction, he must have a clear grasp of and unflinching devotion to truth. There must be a devotion to truth regardless of the consequences.
 - There cannot be true courage in the issues of life apart from a real devotion to total truth, absolute truth. If we are not convicted about Truth given the time we have been in doctrine, the fault is with us.

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

7. John's greatness is reflected in his fiery zeal for Truth.

- John 5:35 "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.
- There was nothing lukewarm or complacent about John.

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

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The spiritual greatness of Mary, the mother of Jesus:

1. Mary's greatness is reflected in her poverty of spirit, her humility.
 - Luke 1:38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bonds slave of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.
 - Luke 1:46 And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bonds slave; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.

From Poverty of Spirit to the Riches of Righteousness

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2. Mary's greatness is reflected in her understanding of God's grace.

- Luke 1:48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. 49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name. 50 "And His mercy is upon generation after generation Toward those who fear Him.

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3. Mary's greatness is reflected in her understanding the banefulness of pride and the blessings of humility.
 - Luke 1:51 "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. 52 "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. 53 "He has filled the hungry with good things; And sent away the rich empty-handed. 54 "He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy,
 - ❖ She identifies the poor, hungry and oppressed with Israel. She has no idea, at this time, that Israel would reject the Messiah. She has no idea of the intercalation of the church age.
 - ❖ She still is unaware of the sword that will pierce her own soul.

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The spiritual greatness of the Apostle Paul

1. Paul's greatness reflected in his appreciation of the humility and exaltation of Jesus Christ, Philip. 2
2. Paul's greatness is reflected in his views of "losses" and gains, Philip. 3.
 - Note the perniciousness of pride which always destroys poverty of spirit and appreciation of the grace of god.
 - Note the hunger and thirst for righteousness that accompanies all poverty of spirit.
 - Note his ultimate aims and meaning of life.

More on Blessedness in the 8 Spiritual Virtues

Blessed are those: 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.

Mercy

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.

- ✓ 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.

More on Blessedness in the 8 Spiritual Virtues

Blessed are those: 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.

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.

More on Blessedness in the 8 Spiritual Virtues

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Peacemakers

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.

An overview of Christ's Kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom

1. There is a form of Christ's kingdom that exists during our Church Age. While the epistles speak of a future earthly Davidic kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1; Matt. 25:1-46) and a future eternal kingdom (2 Tim. 4:18), the most common reference to kingdom is the present mystery form of the kingdom in the church age.

Colossians 1:13 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.

Christ's Kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom

2. Christ gave many directives for our present mystery form of kingdom in the parables.

On the use of wealth, see Luke 12:16-21; 16:1-13, 19-31. The mandates are all related to short term verses long term goals.

On faithfulness, see Luke 12:42-48. He makes it clear that privilege brings responsibility and that responsibility entails accountability.

1 Corinthians 4:2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

On humility, see Luke 14:7-11. Christ warned against seeking preeminence for oneself. True honor is not what one confers on self.

Christ's Kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom

3. Satan also has a kingdom that is in active rebellion against the kingdom of God. From the time he fell, he has been entirely opposed to God's authority.

2 Corinthians 4:4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Christ's Kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom

3. Characteristics of Satan's kingdom.

- Lawlessness and rebellion against the authority of God, 2 Thess. 2:4.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

- Darkness rather than light. This darkness refers not only to ignorance but to evil and wickedness.

Colossians 1:13 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

Christ's Kingdom vs. Satan's Kingdom

3. Characteristics of Satan's kingdom.

- Deceit and deception.

Revelation 13:14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

- Hostility against Christians

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.