

Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 117-Spiritual virtues 57 (Hungering and Thirsting for Righteousness)

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
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Epistemology 9 Existence 46
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5/21/2014

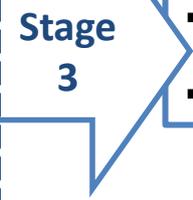
The believer's attitude toward the Bible's teaching that his ultimate good is in loving God with all of our heart, soul, and mind (Matt. 22:37-40) reveals a great deal about his spiritual life, especially his present love for and dedication to God or the lack thereof.

Each believer is either a believer like David, men and women after God, or like the Israelites in the wilderness who craved evil from the kosmos for satisfaction rather than hungering for the plan of God (1 Cor. 10).

Consider what God says about those who seek God: Psa. 89:20; 1 Sam. 13:14; 1 Kings 11:6; 15:3; Acts 2:25; 13:22.

Anything we do for God that is not done out of a motivation of a loving relationship does not qualify as a true relationship, which is what Christianity is all about. All that God is doing in our lives is to get us to see His loving concurrence in all things. This is what Job and his friends lacked, even though Job was blameless, he did not have a personal love relationship with God.

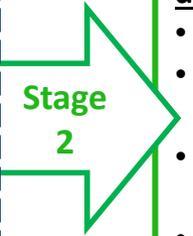
There are three levels of understanding God. It is not until the believer moves into metaphysics that he really gets it: parroting doctrines does not constitute wisdom, prudence, and discernment, which are all spiritual virtues.



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”

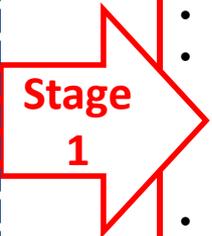
Holy Spirit Bible Doctrine



Stage 2 – 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 – 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-46

Concurrentism and miracles

1. A false methodology will eventually cause you to distrust biblical realism, and eventually the Bible. If your methodology does not account for the truths in such passages at Romans 1:20 and Matthew 6, or the four causes (material, formal, efficient, final) of Reality, then you need to get rid of it. God never intended for any human being to live in agnosticism and skepticism regarding His existence demonstrated in the material world.
2. Consider the powerful impact of divine loving concurrentism illustrated with Job.

Job 42:5 "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; 6 Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

3. God is involved as the First Efficient Cause in every creaturely act, not as negating or interfering with the proper causality of the creature, but as its very source.

4. A miracle is not a “violation of the laws of nature” as per Hume’s definition and abiding influence.
 - a. Oxford English Dictionary, “A marvelous event occurring with human experience, which cannot have been brought about by human power or by the operation of any natural agency, and must therefore be ascribed to the special intervention of Deity or of some supernatural being; chiefly, an act (e.g., healing) exhibiting control over the laws of nature, and serving as evidence that the agent is either divine or is specially favored by God.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

- b. American Heritage Dictionary, “An event that appears inexplicable by the laws of nature and so is held to be supernatural in origin or an act of God.
- c. Both definitions invoke some reference to nature as part of the meaning of “miracle.” The first notes that a miracle is not ascribable to the operation of any natural force; the second, that it is not “explicable by the laws of nature.” Both also make reference to God. The first mentions divine “agency” and the second “an act of God.”

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

- d. Contrary to Hume's, and modern concepts, this is a tacit rejection of the idea that a miracle is a violation of nature or the laws of nature.
- e. What the definitions do show is that a miracle involves some relation to God (or at least the supernatural) and to nature, but there is no implication of any violation of nature.
- f. Instead of viewing a miracle as a violation of nature or against nature, miracles are simply outside or beyond nature. Since a miracle is beyond the whole order of nature, God alone can be its author.
- g. The only way one can argue against miracles is by assuming scientism, which is manifestly not true science.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

5. One reason that modern man has trouble with God interjecting in the world is due to his view of God's power as univocal with that of nature.
6. When God acts in the natural world, He does not become just another *natural cause* or does He contradict His own causality as Creator.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

7. God is the first cause, the efficient cause of all being who causes the natural actions of secondary causes. As such, God can produce effects by His causal power alone—as per lack of burning in the furnace of Daniel 3.

8. In all these actions, God's influence is not contrary to nature since God is the primary agent and all things that come after Him are like instruments for Him. God's action cannot be against nature, since He is the author of nature. To do something *beyond* the ability of a secondary agent is not to go against it.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-46

Concurrentism and miracles

9. All concepts found in thinking and talking about divine “intervention” stems from a deist picture of God as “outside” of His creation, making quick forays or incursions from time to time and then retreating to His distant observation post.
10. God never acts against His own causality. And He does not bring univocal causes in natural forces. There is God’s usual way of dealing with His creation and then there is God’s special causal inputs some of the time. One really is no more interfering than the other.

Spiritual Virtue: Christ's 8 Beatitudes Against KD (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.

❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.
 - ✓ Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.
 - ✓ Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.
 - ✓ 1 Timothy 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.
 - ✓ 1 Chronicles 29:28 Then he died in a ripe old age, full of days, riches and honor; and his son Solomon reigned in his place.
 - ✓ Psalm 16:11 Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy; In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.
 - ✓ Psalm 17:15 As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.
 - ✓ Psalm 73:24 With Thy counsel Thou wilt guide me, And afterward receive me to glory.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life:
 - ✓ 2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; 3 inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. 4 For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. . . 6 Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- for we walk by faith, not by sight-- 8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. 9 Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or worthless.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life:
 - ✓ 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. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory
 - ✓ Matthew 6:32 "For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. 34 "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

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

- ❖ It is impossible to develop supernatural spiritual virtue or even truly live the Christian life with the right motivations apart from proper orientation to Heaven, the next life.
 - ✓ Genesis 25:8 And Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people.
 - ✓ Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Spiritual Hunger vs. Spiritual Apathy

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

- It is impossible to acquire any of these supernatural virtues apart from orientation to the transcendental, vertical, eternal perspective and rejection of the horizontal perspectives (secularism, hedonism, pragmatism, scientism, humanism).
- The modern concept that the Christian way of life is mainly concerned with this life stands in contrast to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the entire Bible. The idea that the Bible was written *primarily* to give us psychological peace from such devices as Faith Rest misses the whole point of God and the spiritual life as such.

Spiritual Hunger vs. Spiritual Apathy

Virtue #4: **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled;**

1. The phrase 'hunger and thirst for righteousness,' οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, is made up of present active participles used substantively (adjectivally). They point to progressive habitual character, to virtue.
2. This righteousness in view is progressive and culminates in ultimate sanctification, the eternal completed righteousness in Heaven, when there will be no angst related to sin and evil.

Spiritual Hunger vs. Spiritual Apathy

Virtue #4: **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled;**

3. Every human being hungers, hunger is not in question. The real question is *what* do people hunger for, cf., 1 Cor. 9:24-10:14, God (and thus righteousness and the spiritual life) or the kosmos (and thus unrighteousness of sin and evil), Matt. 6:24. The single greatest fear is when a believer loses his hunger and thirst for the spiritual life; in other words to become lukewarm.
4. Although not everyone hungers for righteousness, everyone hungers. Everybody's looking for something. Hunger is in man's very nature. No one but God is self-sufficient.

Spiritual Hunger vs. Spiritual Apathy

Virtue #4: **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled;**

5. Man's mind hungers for truth, his will for goodness (righteousness), and his affections for beauty. Our immaterial nature have natural desires for God, truth, goodness, and beauty. This hunger extends to righteousness, the very nature of God's goodness itself.
6. Our physical being hungers for food and water and is *filled* when those needs are met.
7. Our immaterial being hungers, knowingly or unknowingly, for God and the things of God, and is only *filled* when those needs are met. Man lives in angst until he finds the source of righteousness and the gift of righteousness in God. It is the fool who mistakes something else for his true good. God has left man with the grace of unhappiness as a warning signal to turn to Him.

Spiritual Hunger vs. Spiritual Apathy

Virtue #4: **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled;**

8. This righteousness that Jesus speaks of comes from the very nature of God Himself. It is not merely justice, but a holiness, goodness, a likeness to God.
9. Note God's guarantee: all those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled. All seekers find. If righteousness is what you really want, you will infallibly find it, sooner or later, in God's time and in God's way. Again, it's guaranteed. The best things of life, the things of grace, are always free. All you have to do to gain more of God is want more of God. Again, all those who hunger for God's righteousness will be filled with it.
10. Do you hunger for God's righteousness? Consider Augustine's test.

The spiritual cancer of spiritual complacency

1. Spiritual sloth, that lack of spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness, is what uniquely sets off our modern world from all other cultures in the history of man—which is foreshadowed in Rev. 2-3. Modern man is slothful toward God because God is dead to Him—so man is left to live and die without meaning, purpose, or value, and that is the end of it. The lukewarm believer, like the world, has no passion for sanctity—none!

2. Modernity's spiritual complacency, lukewarmness, apathy, are sickening to Christ and deadly to the believer's spiritual life with God (Rev. 3:16). As a sin, it falls in the category of a sin of omission. Specifically, its essence is more evil than merely sinful.

3. Spiritual sloth is not to be confused with laziness in general or lack of energy for physical activity. Rather, it is a *spiritual* inertness, lack of enthusiasm and delight and spiritual energy due to lack of interest in God and the things of God.

4. Spiritual sloth is always accompanied by a hunger for the kosmos, cf. 1 Cor. 10. Consider our busy, anxious, fast-moving, success-worshipping, performance-oriented, materialistic society, and Martha-type Christianity. Consider the empty busyness of modern man who attempts to fill the hole in the foundation of his existence with stuff.

5. The spiritually slothful person, because he has boxed himself in a horizontal life, rarely considers the greatest questions of life: Where did I come from? Why am I here? and Where am I going? In spiritual sloth a person denies his most primary need, the need for meaning, which causes a frantic activism and search for happiness. By the way, science is totally unable to give meaning—pointing to its absurdity regarding being an explanation of total reality.

6. The reason that spiritual sloth has always been considered such a horrible sin (mortal sin) is because it is a spiritual sin. It is a sin against the cardinal virtues of faith, hope, and love. It is a sin directly against God Himself. It does not find God or the things of God worthy or attractive. In fact, it is the most diabolic of all sins.

7. Spiritual sloth pervasively destroys the entire spiritual life like an aggressive form of cancer. It removes spiritual vitality by robbing believers of their appetite for God, their zest for God, and love for the Word of God. Saltiness of believers becomes tasteless, and the light that is in him becomes darkness.

8. One of the things that makes sloth so dark and deadly is that it is a lukewarm, not hot or cold. It is not so much rebellion against God, but indifference. It is much easier to recover from anger at God than recover from indifference toward God, just as it is much easier to go from immorality to morality than from amorality to morality.

9. As a result of boredom with God and the things of God that accompanies spiritual sloth, one will always fasten his *love* on the things of kosmos diabolicus. The believer becomes involved in illicit love and sublimations to fill cravings in his soul that only God can fill. The only thing that never gets boring: God. The God-shaped vacuum in us is infinite and cannot be filled with any finite object or action. Therefore if we are bored with God, we are bored with everything else.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

10. Laodecian warnings, Rev. 3:14-22.

- a. All it takes is a little negligence before God, in any area, before complacency begins to grow throughout the life, like a malignant cancer, until it has eaten all of the spiritual life out of a believer.
- b. Note how the Lord addresses the affections. In lukewarmness the believer has lost any warm feelings for the Lord. There is very little warmth of personal affection for Jesus Christ.
- c. One of the most dangerous things about the spiritual disease of lukewarmness is that the person who has it is totally unconscious of his problem.

10. Laodecian warnings, Rev. 3:14-22.

- d. Spiritual lukewarmness can be contagious, especially in our mammon driven world of commercialism, like Laodicea. All the believer has to do is look around at the lack of dedication to the Lord and think he is doing just OK, fine, in fact. Look at all of the energy that modern man puts into the world, all the devotion. Note how it depresses spiritual vitality.
- e. The spiritual disease of lukewarmness is much more difficult to cure than problems related to spiritual coldness, just like it is easier to cure an immoralist than an amoralist.

10. Laodecian warnings, Rev. 3:14-22.

- f. Note Christ's prescription for the cancer of lukewarmness.
- "Be zealous" (ζήλευε). This is only possible by increasing grasp of spiritual truths. Any other zeal will lead to hypocrisy. There is no place for ignorant emotions, a warmth without light. Be like David . . .
 - "*Therefore, and repent*" (μετανόησον). Note the connection with the first virtue in the Beatitudes. There must be a true change of mind, a concerted effort to break with the past and make a new beginning.
 - "Buy from Me gold." See the true wealth in God.
 - "Buy from Me white garments." Put off the old man. This points to practical righteousness and the importance of the spiritual life.
 - "Buy from Me eye salve." The need to open one's eyes to see the facts of Reality. The problem of spiritual blindness among believers.

More on 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 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.

Purity of heart

This 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 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.

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 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.