



The “Problem” of Evil and Suffering in the Presence of an All-knowing, All-good, All-loving, and All-powerful God (43):

Job 32: Elihu enters the picture

<http://www.fbcweb.org/sermons.html>

Philosophical/Theological/Doctrinal & Spiritual Edification

Bible Doctrines

- Eschatology
- Thanatology
- Ecclesiology
- Israelology
- Dispensationalism
- Doxology
- Hodology
- Soteriology
- Hamartiology
- Natural Law
- Anthropology
- Angelology
- Pneumatology
- Christology
- Paterology
- Trinitarianism
- Cosmology
- Theology Proper
- Bibliology

This chart is my way of addressing the pathological/anti-intellectual problems that are virtually ubiquitous in contemporary Christianity.

The information and concepts on this chart enable the believer really to stretch his mind.

Sacred Theology
Book 2
(2 Tim 3:16-17)

Prolegomena
P.R. for objectivity (20)
Foundations!

- Hermeneutics
- Linguistics
- Epistemology
- Metaphysics
- Reality -Logic 32, Truth 32

Natural Theology
Book 1
(Rom 1:18-20)

Broad and deep understanding of BD

1 Corinthians 2:9 but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.

Enough BD to be overcomer

1 John 2:14, "you are strong, and the word of God abides in you"

Lacks BD, DV

Eph 4:14, children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming

Mature Believer - Level 3- Metaphysical Maturity - Extremely powerful believer

- High abstract metaphysical understanding of BD; Esse, Evil, Good, attributes of God, natural law
- Enormous capacity for synthesis of BD and grasping of spiritual realities.
- Ability for sustained contemplation of the true nature of God.
- Developed grasp of attributes of God

Young adult - Level 2- Doctrinal conceptualization -

Systematic understanding of -- God's Word/Truth, Systematic Scriptural view of att. of God, i.e. systematics

Baby believer - Level 1 - Understanding of Omnipotence

- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Unable to apply doctrine or divine viewpoint to *all* the issues of life
- Very limited view of att. of God

Carnal believer lacks integration with God and Truth due to human viewpoint background

The Need for Philosophical Realism for Objective Biblical Interpretation (20).

1. Biblical interpretation is facing a crisis of objectivity.
2. Today modern Evangelicals are unable to articulate and reasonably defend a notion of objectivity that transcends all perspectives and reaches beyond one's own historical context—even though they believe that the Bible is the inspired inerrant Word of God.
3. Because of the failure to give an account of biblical objectivity, Christianity and its doctrines will continue to be viewed as simply another point of view by non-Christians as well as many believers.

The Need for Philosophical Realism for Objective Biblical Interpretation (20).

4. Apart from being grounded in philosophical realism (reality, metaphysics, epistemology, linguistics, hermeneutics), there is no objective standard for biblical interpretation. Some of these areas are difficult, but they are the only way for the believer to really grow his mind. The worst thing that any church can do is to teach below or even to the level of the congregation. Some of the teaching *must* be over the people's heads or the mind will never grow, even if it has more content of Bible doctrine.
5. The generally accepted principles of hermeneutics—i.e., the “plain” meaning of the Bible—is unable to deliver biblical and doctrinal objectivity.

The Need for Philosophical Realism for Objective Biblical Interpretation (20).

Van Kampen

The first principle is that all Scripture is to be taken in its customary, natural and normal sense (i.e. literal), allowing, of course for obvious symbolism, and figures of speech.

Finis Dake

Remember this: Take the Bible literally whenever it is at all possible. When the language can not be taken literally then we know it is figurative. Then get the literal truth conveyed by the figurative language as if it were expressed in literal language without the use of figures.

The Need for Philosophical Realism for Objective Biblical Interpretation (20).

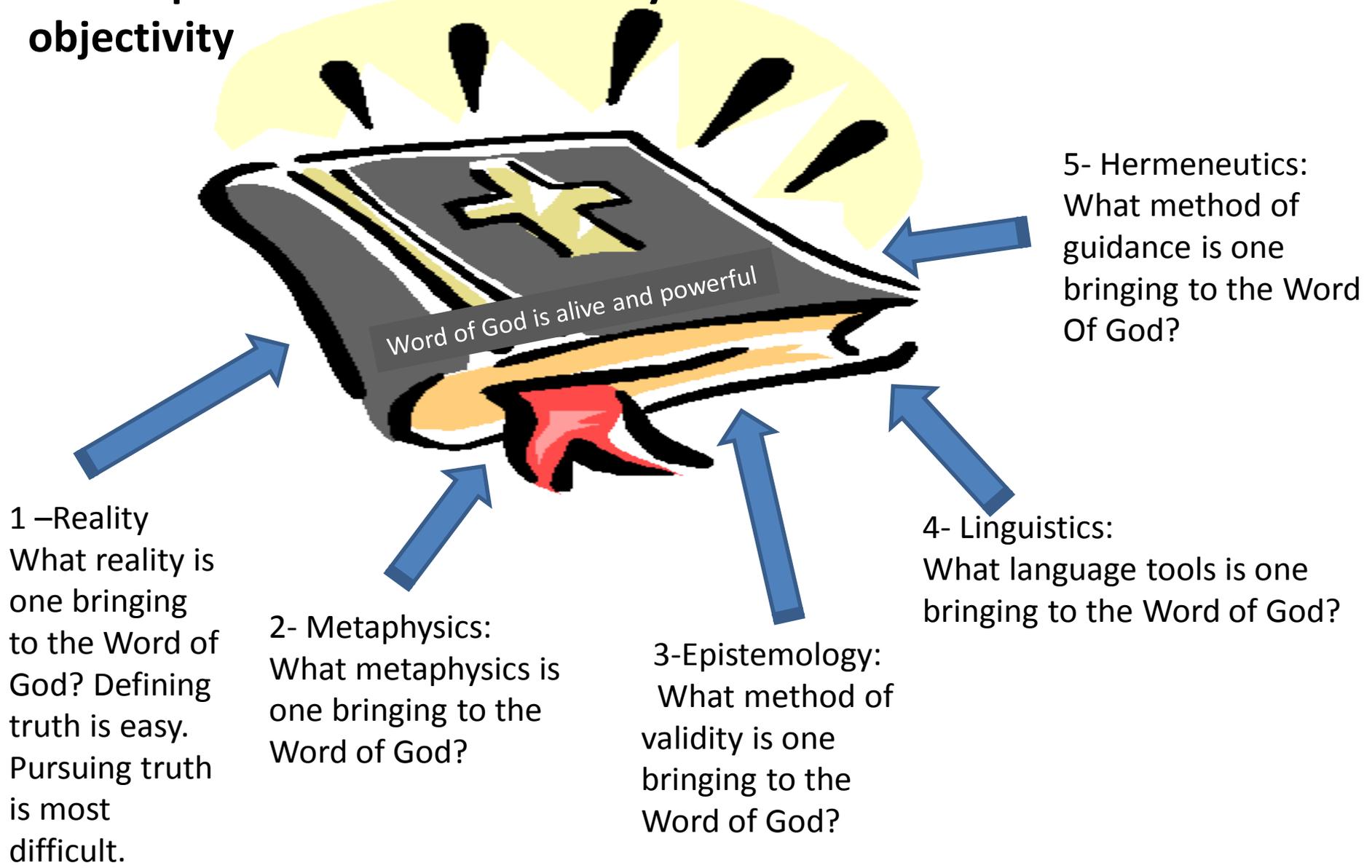
Van Kampen

The second principle has to do with the context of a word, phrase, or larger passage. Sometimes that involves careful understanding of the complete Bible book being studied, carefully interpreting a given idea or principle in the light of the overall thrust and nature of the book as well as in the light of its immediate context.

Finis Dake

Often to fully understand a passage of Scripture, the scope or plan of the entire book must be known . . . If the definite purpose of the book is not stated, the purpose of the book must be gotten from the contents and from the design of the Bible as a whole as is clear in John 5:39; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17.

Philosophical Realism is the Only Method for Biblical and doctrinal objectivity



Spiritual Life Foundations: the Holy Spirit

1. God the Holy Spirit is God's gracious provision whereby every person can come to God apart from any evidences for Christianity. It is the instigation of the HS that gives the unbeliever and believer assurance of Christianity. He is the medium for obtaining Christian Truth for anyone whose cognitive faculties are functioning properly. However, He can be resisted and suppressed:

John 16:8-11 [for unbeliever] "And He, when He comes, will convict the world (ἐλέγξει τὸν κόσμον) concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

Galatians 4:6 [believer] And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Foundations: Holy Spirit

Rom 8:15-16. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

1 John 3:24 And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 John 4:13 By this we know (γινώσκομεν) that we abide in Him and He in us, (ὅτι) because He has given us of His Spirit.

Foundations: Holy Spirit

2. The questions arise: “Why do we need philosophical realism if the assurance comes from the HS and not from human arguments or any evidence?” If ultimately knowing Christianity to be true is by the inner witness of the HS, why do we need any evidence?
 - a. There is a crucial distinction between knowing something to be true versus developing an understanding its truths and showing it to be true. Consider the various denominations and Peter commenting on Paul’s epistles.
 - b. It is one thing to be convinced of the reality of God and salvation, it is quite another thing to be rational in understanding God, BD, and Christianity. It is one thing to know, but another to understand and be able to show others.

Foundations: Holy Spirit

3. It is crucial to make a distinction between theology and apologetics, both of which the Holy Spirit uses.
 - a. Theology deals with the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Apologetics deals with giving evidence for Christianity.

Foundations: Holy Spirit

- c. When witnessing one should use evidence in apologetics (which includes biblical truths) rather than appeals “to have an open heart” or “sincerity” (like the cults).
- d. It is important to find common ground with evidence when getting into other issues when one gives the gospel. With the Jew we use Old Testament evidence, with the cults we use the New Testament evidence, and with everyone else we use philosophical evidence to demonstrate their philosophical fallacies that are used to suppress the truths of Christianity. There are no Scriptural or philosophical /scientific defeaters of Christianity.

Job 32: Elihu Enters the Picture

1. **The introduction of Elihu, 1-3.** Although Elihu is a bit more measured, he is essentially a divine-command theorist.
2. **Elihu's thoughts about the discourse between Job and his friends and willingness to share his "wisdom" 4-22.** He is upset at the three amigos and Job.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

1. Suffering: grasping its purpose and blessedness.
 - a. Understanding the suffering of Job in God's antecedent and consequent wills.
 - b. All suffering is designed to bring greater closeness to God. Suffering is designed to remove fragmentation (psychic disintegration) and those obstacles that keep a person from desiring to be closer to God.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

- c. The empirical evidence that traumatic events provide a springboard for people into greater personal growth is overwhelming.
- d. The phenomenon of positive change following trauma (e.g., cancer, heart attacks, rape, sexual assaults, military combat, tornadoes, disabilities, major life changes, etc.) has been labeled as posttraumatic growth (PTG). The evidence for PTG is sound and the literature is growing.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

- e. The quantum change people undergo are often necessary before a person is willing to let God be closer to him.
- f. These studies (PTG) also support the idea of psychic integration and reconceptualization and reorganization of self.
- g. Suffering has the power to contribute to spiritual growth; but it cannot guarantee them due to man's free will.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

- h. God wills suffering (consequent will) because it is the only way He can get what He desires: to be closer to the person. God cannot be close to any human being who is internally fragmented and alienated from self.
- i. It is the suffering that provides the catalyst for a change in the state of mind for the believer that is requisite to moving closer to God. It is designed to remove a person's resistance to being closer to God.
- j. If God had given His speeches to Job before all of the suffering, Job would not have been in a state of mind requisite for personal love for God as expressed with "Now I see."