

**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
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Reality –Logic 32, Truth 32

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“And you shall know the truth and the truth shall free you,” Jn 8:32. Truth is the issue. Not just certain partial truths that we like, but wholeness of truth as vividly illustrated in Job’s grasp of Truth in Job 42:5-6. Job’s repentance was all about his partial non-current view of God’s love. Job did not have a loving relationship with God until he understood divine loving concurrence.

The goal of life is to love God with all of our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. It is what transforms us, giving us that vertical transcendent capacity for the blessings as well as the challenges of life. Knowing that behind every single thing in our lives is God , who is attempting to draw us to Him, is the key. This is easier to apply to others than to ourselves.

Loving God with all that we are and have translates to living for Him and His will, rather than living for the world and the will of others, cf., John 8:29; Gal. 1:10.

There are at least 3 major views on developing virtue: 1) Platonic, which teaches that it is knowledge that forms character. The more you know, the better you will be; ignorance is the only issue to overcome. 2) Aristotelian, by doing the deeds you gain the character. 3) Spiritual/Biblical, new character is bestowed by grace through faith in both regeneration and progressive sanctification, which requires both knowing and doing (Eph. 2:8-10; Psa. 23:1-3).

**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-49

### Concurrentism: Divine Final, Formal, and Efficient Causality

1. The great darkness in the modern world and throughout Christianity is due in a very large part to rejection of metaphysics (beings) and philosophical thinking (Realism). Consider the pernicious effects of rejection of metaphysics:
  - ❖ Science corrupted into scientism, with its destruction of objectivity, humanity, love, justice, whole truth, and values.
  - ❖ Society: Deism and the bifurcation of God from the natural realm.
  - ❖ Seminaries and pastors: Lack of philosophical ability to study God, creation, and man; pastors are reduced to psychologizing and sermonizing—they are deceived into thinking they are actually doing biblical studies and theology when they have been captured by nominalism, deism, and Cartesianism.
  - ❖ Lay Christians: Even the most biblically and doctrinally informed believers have very little ability to think with biblical philosophy of realism. They know the words, but have a hard time grasping the nature of God, man, or the created world. Unknowingly, they mix their bad philosophy with God word, e.g., Cartesian view of man, deistic view of God/creation, Platonic view of the spiritual life, nominalistic view of the original languages.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-49

### Concurrentism: Divine Final, Formal, and Efficient Causality

2. In all that occurs, God is at once the **final**, **formal**, and **efficient** cause of all things and all causes.
3. God is the source of **final causality**.
  - ❖ This is not the push and pull of Newtonian science (efficient causation). Final causality is recognized as a necessary category of explanation, especially in biology.
  - ❖ Since final causality is the first cause of the causality, God is the First Cause.
  - ❖ All creatures consciously or unconsciously seek some end/good, namely, the fulfillment of its nature. This can be seen in Roman 8:22, where we have the groaning of all of creation.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-49

### Concurrentism: Divine Final, Formal, and Efficient Causality

4. God is the source of **formal causality**.
  - ❖ The form is the essence of a thing. It is far more than a collection of parts. There is recognition of a whole with a distinct causality of its own beyond the sum of its parts, cf., form/soul and matter/body of man.
  - ❖ The form is what makes the whole to be a distinctive entity and not just a hodgepodge of parts as per reductionism.
  - ❖ It is the unique wholeness that directs the parts, not vice versa. There is a causal power beyond the parts; the parts are a byproduct of the whole.
  - ❖ Is a tiger a tiger because it has stripes, or does it have stripes because it is a tiger? Those who see the whole as a epiphenomenon of the collected parts would say that it is a tiger because it has stripes- the whole is a product of its parts. Those who begin with the whole and see it as the source of the parts will say it has stripes because it is a tiger.
  - ❖ The whole takes precedence over the part.
  - ❖ It is self-evident that we have enduring selves.
  - ❖ God is the sustaining cause of the forms in all things, e.g., the human soul which itself guides and directs the parts of the body.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-49

### Concurrentism: Divine Final, Formal, and Efficient Causality

5. God is the **Efficient Causality**.
  - ❖ The notion of efficient causality never disappeared from empirical science. It was reduced in Newtonian science to the force that moves the atoms.
  - ❖ Hume reduced took it out of ontology and put it into epistemology
  - ❖ Heisenberg declared that causality was disproven, but science has outlived Heisenberg's declaration.
  - ❖ Efficient causality appears more often in divine causality than any other mode of causality.
  - ❖ How God manages to do this without interfering with creaturely causes is often viewed as the fundamental problem.
  - ❖ Only concurrence teaches that God is the transcendent cause of all proper causality of creatures. His causation is not univocal with natural causes. When two univocal causes interact, their effect belongs partly to one and partly to the other. Cooperation is a zero-sum game: the more one does, the less the other can do.

## **EPISTEMOLOGY: #9, Grasp of Existence-49**

### **Concurrentism: Divine Final, Formal, and Efficient Causality**

6. God is the transcendent source that actualizes all potentiality. Every actualization of potentiality, every instance of causality, requires the action of the ultimate source of actuality, who is God.
7. Secondary causes exercises their own proper causality, but do so only under the influence of the Primary Cause.
8. Since God is the Creator, who has gifted each creature with its own proper causality according to its nature, His influence does not interfere with proper causality of the creature, rather He is its source.
9. When a primary and secondary cause act together, the effect is not divided between them, but belongs wholly to both. In this way, God acts in all things, since God is the source of the very causality of the creature in giving it being in substance and accident. God's action is actually the most effective.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Eternal Perspective

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 need to spend extra time understanding difficult passages.

❖ Consider the eternal focus as Christ turns the values of the kosmos inside out, making it clear that the real payoff is in Heaven.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

1. μακάριοι are the **poor in spirit** [= removal of pride in self]
2. μακάριοι are those **who mourn** [= removal of human self-satisfaction]
3. μακάριοι are the **gentle**: [removal of arrogance before God]
4. μακάριοι are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**: for they shall be satisfied [hunger and thirst for God and His righteousness].

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

1. Consider the darkness that one is guaranteed by simply not choosing the long-term, vertical, heavenly perspective,

Matthew 6:19 "Do not treasure up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But treasure 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. 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 **"But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!** 24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon/materialism.

- ❖ Darkness with respect to God and the Ultimate Good.
- ❖ Darkness of loss of faith.
- ❖ Darkness of fear with respect to your eternal destiny.
- ❖ Darkness of agnosticism, skepticism, and fear of death.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

2. Consider the source and type of righteousness that one is to seek and its impact on one's estimation of self and earthly values.

Philippians 3:4 although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the **flesh** [whole man apart from God] I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless [pride]. 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing **value** of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung in order that I may gain Christ, 3:9 and may be found in Him, **not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith** [bestowment at regeneration and progressively in sanctification]

❖ Note the aim that stretches beyond this life.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

3. Consider how the entire Christian life is about the vertical, long-term perspective of being with Christ in Heaven. There is absolutely no place for horizontal philosophies (secularism, hedonism, humanism, pragmatism).
  - 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.
    - ❖ Seeking things above shows direction of entire life. This, at the very least, means longing to be with Christ. He is our life and identity.
    - ❖ No soul can look upon the things above if its eye is only on the things below, this temporal realm.
    - ❖ Our affections will always follow our minds and wills.
    - ❖ New relationship with Christ means death to old self.
    - ❖ Unless a man dies to flesh, the self-will, and the world, he will never live a life that is worth calling a life, let alone a true Christian life.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

4. Consider Christ's illustration of the insanity of putting material wealth above the spiritual wealth of God Himself, Luke 12:13-31.
  - ❖ Luke 12:16 And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a certain rich man was very productive. 17 "And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' 18 "And he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" 20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' 21 "So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

5. Consider Christ's illustration of the insanity of men's "excuses" for rejection God and the grace life for temporal blessings, Luke 14:15-20.
  - ❖ Note the insanity of man: "they all, with one consent, began to make excuses." What strange unanimous refusal to accept God's feast of grace. What, but an epidemic of insanity, plagues the world? How lame! Who made the "must"? What accounts for lack of *desire*? All excuses will disappear one day.
  - ❖ Consider the value of land, oxen, and a wife compared to the gift of Jesus Christ: grace, forgiveness, righteousness, peace, victory over old self, control of passions, supremacy over circumstances, eternal life, Heaven opened, perfection—all possible because Christ's work on the cross.
  - ❖ Consider how value of the land, oxen and wife are raised when placed under the umbrella of God's eternal perspective.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

6. Consider Christ's illustration of the reality of eternal blessedness and eternal damnation contrasted with earthly temporal perspective, Luke 16:19-31.
  - ❖ Christ is not teaching, and never taught, the communistic doctrine that wealth is sin and poverty is a virtue. There is nothing wrong with purple linen. Problem is not with what you have, it is what you do with what you have , cf., Denzel Washington recent advice.
  - ❖ The problem here is not in never hearing the gospel, but the aversion of the will. God knows who would respond.
  - ❖ "Child, remember." Consider the crucial nature of memory in the Next Life. All will all have perfect, unfragmented memories throughout the Next Life. Memories will contain the whole life simultaneously. Consider reports on how one's whole life flashes before one at the moment of death situations.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

7. Consider the richness of Abraham's vertical, long-term perspective,

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.

- ❖ Note his eternal perspective. He had a clear focus on the eternal future.
- ❖ Why is it that contemporary Christianity is woefully lacking in clear vision and desire for their eternal future? Why is it that sermons about the next life are so scarce, especially as part of the Christian life?
- ❖ Consider the contrast between Abraham and Lot with his wealth, and his subterranean brimstone and naphtha fire.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

8. Consider fullness of life that the eternal, vertical perspective provided in the lives of Abraham, Job (42:17), and David (1 Chron. 29:28)

*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.*

- ❖ Satisfaction with life is only possible with the eternal perspective. Satisfied begins with fellowship with God now and then more fully later.
- ❖ Horizontal life never satisfies. All it leads to is vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit.
- ❖ Is there nothing sadder than to see the frantic grasping for more and more as life's opportunities dwindle and dwindle with age?
- ❖ "to his people." Both believers and unbelievers will be gathered to their respective people/places.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

### 9. Consider the eternal perspective in Old Testament super grace believers.

Hebrews 11:16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

- ❖ They all recognized the transient nature of this life. They did not live in denial of their mortality.
- ❖ Faith enables one not to be enslaved to this temporal life or any of its circumstances.
- ❖ Man can live by sense and die in sorrow, or live in the blessed realities of the Son of God and the Next Life.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

10. Consider the richness of David's vertical, long-term, heavenly perspective:

Psalm 16:2 I said to the LORD, "Thou art my Lord; I have no good besides Thee."

Psalm 23:1 A Psalm of David . The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. 3 He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me. 5 Thou dost prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Thou hast anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

- ❖ David is looking back at his life in context of God's guardian care.
- ❖ Note how the temporal takes on transcendence.
- ❖ Note the works, the paths of righteousness, that follow the restoration of the soul.
- ❖ Note the eternal perspective, cf., Rev. 21-22.

## Hungering for Righteousness and the Long-Term Perspective

10. Consider the richness of David's vertical, long-term perspective,

Psalm 63:1-8 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah . O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. 2 Thus I have beheld Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory. 3 Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise Thee. 4 So I will bless Thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name. 5 My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. 6 When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches, 7 For Thou hast been my help, And in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy. 8 My soul clings to Thee; Thy right hand upholds me.

## Modernity's spiritual disease of spiritual complacency

1. Both contemporary society and Christianity are plagued with the moral and spiritual disease of sloth, that lack of moral and spiritual hunger and thirst for righteousness. It is what sets our modern world apart from all other cultures in human history.
2. What is most conspicuous about spiritual and moral lukewarmness is the lack of passion for what is right and for sanctity. Serious believers, believers with zeal, are not only mocked by society, they are mocked by fellow lukewarm believers.

## Modernity's spiritual disease of spiritual complacency

3. Moral and spiritual sloth is always accompanied by illicit hungers for the stuff of the kosmos, cf. 1 Cor. 10. It is amazing how much hunger and energy man can muster for earthly ambitions and entertainment to fill his emptiness, yet so little time and thought for God and the things of God.
4. What makes spiritual apathy so wicked is that it is a sin against directly against loving God and the things of God, cf. Judas, Demas. The problem is that God is not viewed as a treasure at all. He is not viewed as worthy of attention and effort. Rather than loving God, the person actually loves the world, 1 John 2:15-16, which means finding meaning, purpose, and value in the evil world rather than in God Himself and His grace. In spiritual apathy the person identifies himself with things of the world rather than God because they look more valuable.

## Modernity's spiritual disease of spiritual complacency

5. Christ's diagnosis and prognosis of the disease of spiritual lukewarmness, which is but lack of zeal for God and the things of God, 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 in spiritual apathy.
  - 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.

## Modernity's spiritual disease of spiritual complacency

- d. Spiritual lukewarmness is contagious, especially in our material-driven world of commercialism, like Laodicea. All the believer has to do is look around at the lack of dedication to the Lord to think he is doing OK, fine, in fact. In lukewarmness zeal for the Lord is as distasteful as it is uncool.
- e. The spiritual disease of lukewarmness is much more difficult to cure than problems related to spiritual coldness, just like it is easier to move someone from immortality to morality than from amorality to morality.

## Modernity's spiritual disease of spiritual complacency

- f. Note Christ's prescription for the spiritual disease lukewarmness.
- *"Be zealous"* (ζήλευε). This is only possible by increasing grasp of spiritual truths—any zeal apart from this will lead to hypocrisy. There is no place for ignorant emotions, a warmth without light.
  - *"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 eye salve."* The need to open one's eyes to see the facts of Reality. Note the spiritual blindness among believers.
  - *"Buy from Me white garments."* Put off the old man. This points to the importance of staying clothed with the spiritual life, namely, living the Christian life.
  - *"Buy from Me gold."* See the true wealth in God.

## 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.