

“Behold, God is Exalted”

הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

(Job 36:26)

**The “Problem” of Evil and Suffering in the Presence of an All-knowing, All-good, All-loving, and All-powerful God (48):
Job 36: Elihu “Exalts” (Peddles?) God’s Greatness**

<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

Prolegomena:

P.R. - 25
(Foundations)

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

Broad and deep understanding of BD

Consider the three following views of God:

1. Philosophical Realism (natural theology, metaphysics).
2. Bible only.
3. Philosophical-biblical- doctrinal view.

Apart from the philosophical realism, consider the view of God and of the various doctrines we are left with.

We simply cannot afford to be ignorant about the nature of God.

Jesus Christ was the consummate philosophical realist.

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

Luke 2:49 Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" cf. 1 John 2:13 for baby believers knowing God the Father.

▪ Jesus Christ, 'Ehyeh, Esse, Ultimate Reality, Exod. 3:14; Jn 1:1; 8:57-58; John 17:5.
Colossians 1:17, *And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (συνέστηκεν).*

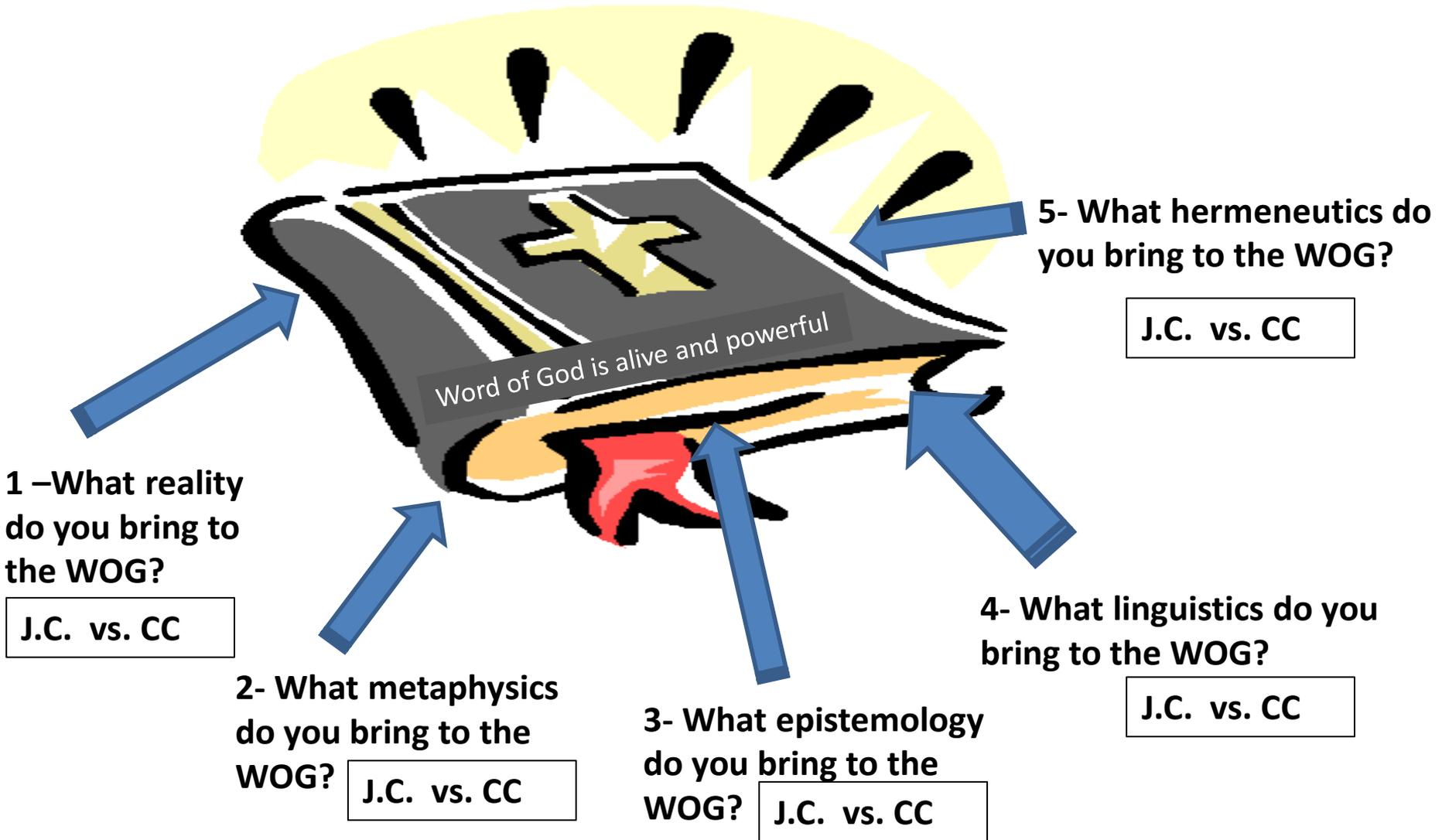
Young adult - Level 2- Doctrinal conceptualization -
Systematic understanding of -- God's Word/Truth, e.g. .
Matthew 4:4 *But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'*"

Baby believer - Level 1 -

- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Unable to apply doctrine or divine viewpoint to *all* the issues of life
- Jesus Christ, Luke 2:40 *And the Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom (σοφία); and the grace of God was upon Him.*

Philosophical Realism (25)

Jesus Christ vs. Contemporary Christianity (CC)



Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

1. There are two categories of truth.
 - a. Demonstrative Truths discovered by the light of reason. These truths can be demonstrated. These include the existence of God as well as Him being an Uncaused, Simple, Non-contingent Being with Unimaginable Intelligence and Power. In a word “Ehyeh” (אֶהְיֶה) or “Esse”
 - b. Faith Truths that exceed (but do contradict) all ability of reason. These truths cannot be empirically demonstrated. These truths far exceed man’s empirical abilities to discover or scientifically demonstrate. This includes truths like the Trinity, incarnation, atonement, salvation.

Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

2. Faith/revealed truths depend upon the authority of God whereas demonstrative/scientific proofs depend on demonstration.
3. Consequently, there are some intelligible truths (demonstrative/scientific truths) about God that are open to the human reason; but there are others (faith/revealed truths) about God that absolutely surpass its power.

Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

4. God in His matchless grace provides faith/revealed truths so that all men would easily be able to share in the knowledge of God—and this without uncertainty and error.
5. There is complete harmony between demonstrative/scientific knowledge and faith/revealed knowledge—between natural knowledge and revealed knowledge. The truth of reason (demonstrative/scientific) knowledge is not opposed to the truth of faith/revealed knowledge. The difference between trusting Einstein on the theory of relativity versus God is that God is never wrong and thus never corrected.

Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

6. Although there is a universe of evidence for the existence of God, belief in Christ is properly basic (rational) even without evidence (cf. Alvin Plantinga).
 - a. One can believe and know that Jesus Christ died for his sins merely on that statement because of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Learning the other evidence, though not necessary for salvation and knowledge of God, does enable the believer to better understand his faith and share evidence in the face of opposition.
 - c. There is a distinction to be made between knowing and showing.

Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

7. This is God's world and He reveals Himself through the Holy Spirit. We actually come to know God and spiritual *realities* via the Holy Spirit without the need for evidence.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness (συμμαρτυρεῖ) with our spirit that we are children of God,

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.

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

Spiritual Foundations (25): The Holy Spirit and Evidence

8. The Bible is very clear that full assurance and complete confidence is a result of the Spirit's work. Only God can provide complete confidence and full assurance), Col 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; Rom. 4:21; 14:5.

Foundations: The Holy Spirit

9. For atheists who reject the notion of inner testimony of the Holy Spirit, we have many powerful arguments that prove the existence of a God who is eternal, uncaused, creator, sustainer, with unimaginable power and intelligence (by metaphysics of the observable world). The evidence is so powerful that unbeliever is without excuse.

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Foundations: The Holy Spirit

10. In dealing with unbelievers who *challenge the gospel*, it is important to attempt to find common ground.
 - a. For unbelieving Jews, the Christian should focus on the common ground of the Old Testament, Acts 2:22, 25-31.
 - b. For various cults who claim to be Christian, the believer should focus on the common ground of New Testament, 2 Tim 4:2-4.
 - c. For all others, the Christian should focus on philosophical reasonings to show the challenger that his philosophy is flawed (Acts 14:16-17; 17:2-4; 17, 24-28; Rom. 1:20).

Foundations: Holy Spirit

11. It is helpful to understand three categories of non-theists in an effort to find common ground.
 - a. Positive atheism – *claims* to have legitimate arguments or evidential reasons that God does not exist: e.g., “I believe there is no God” because of x, y, z.
 - b. Agnosticism – *claims* no one can know for certainty: “No one can know if there is a God,” “There is no way to establish if God exists.”

Foundations: Holy Spirit

- c. Negative atheism – *no claim*, just “I don’t believe in God,” “I am not theist.” There is no claim for God or against God. It is popular but a lame. These atheists offer no arguments whatsoever. This is simply “argument” by assertion. Instead of “I believe there is no God because of x, y, z (positive atheist),” the negative atheist says “I just do not believe there is a God.”

Job 36 – ELIHU “EXALTS” (Peddles?) GOD

1. Elihu “Exalts” (peddles?) the greatness and providence of God, 1-23.
2. Elihu proclaims (peddles?) the Majesty of God, 24-33.



DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

1. In Job 36, Elihu touches on various issues related to the nature of God, e.g., His omniscience, eternity, sovereignty, and providential activity.
2. God's eternity. The classical/traditional view of God affirms that God is above and beyond time. God has no past, present, or future. He simply has an enduring eternal present.
3. The timelessness or atemporality of God has fallen on hard times in contemporary Christianity due in no small part to neglect and rejection of metaphysics, lack of in-depth teaching on divine attributes, and anthropocentric Bible teaching.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

4. Historical basis for the eternality (timelessness, atemporality) of God.
 - a. From the earliest times the Fathers of the church have been virtually unanimous in their declaration that God is a timeless Being.
 - b. Throughout the Medieval Period there was virtually unanimous consent on the nature of God as an a-temporal Being.
 - c. The Reformers and beyond insisted that God is beyond time and experiences no sequential changes (e.g., from Luther, Calvin, Arminius, Edwards, Wesley). These great theologians understood that God's eternality, omniscience, and immutability went hand in hand.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

5. Biblical basis for God's eternity:

- a. Since time does not begin until the universe does, this places God beyond time (cf. Gen. 1:1).
- b. God created time and is therefore outside of time, Heb. 1:2.
- c. Exodus 3:14 teaches us that God is self-existent, אֶהְיֶה , 'Ehyeh, the I AM, John 8:58.
- d. Psalm 90:2, "Before the mountains were born, Or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting (וְיָמֵעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם), Thou art God."

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

5. Biblical basis for God's eternity:

- e. Isaiah 57:15," For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever (תַּעֲרֵב לְעַד),"
- f. I Corinthians 2:7 "but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων) to our glory;"
- g. John 17:5 "And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was (πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι)."

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

5. Biblical basis for God's eternity:

- h. 2 Timothy 1:9, "who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων),"
- i. Titus 1:2, "in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before ages of time (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων),"

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

5. Biblical basis for God's eternity:

- j. John 1:3, "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."
- k. 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."

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

5. Biblical basis for God's eternity:

- l. Hebrews 1:2 “in these last days He has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ages (τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησεν).”

- m. Jude 1:25 “to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time (πρὸ παντὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος) and now and forever. Amen.”

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

6. The classical view of the eternality of God solves many vexing problems in theology, including, for instance, the apparent incompatibility of divine omniscience with human freedom, the atemporality of God, the immutability of God, predestination, foreknowledge, et al.
7. Only the classical view of the attributes of God provides integrity for all of God's attributes and a hedge against modern heresies such as Open Theism.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

8. God's eternity should never be confused with limitless duration in time, an isolated static instant, or a frozen instant.
9. The eternity of God has always been understood and viewed as very important throughout most of church history in Christian theology and metaphysics.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

10. Boethius's definition of God's eternity is this: *Eternity is the complete possession all at once of illimitable life*. There are four aspects in this definition:
- a. First, is life. The first concept is that it is a *life*. This excludes things like numbers and triangles.
 - b. Second, it is Illimitable. The life is illimitable; the life of an eternal being cannot be limited; it is impossible that there be a beginning or an end to it. This means that the existence is unlimited in either direction. It is infinite in duration, beginningless as well endless, infinite duration. The life cannot be limited in extent.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

- c. Third, illimitable life entails duration of a special sort. It is a pastless, futureless, present eternal life that entails duration.
- d. Fourth, the life is complete possession all at once. This is unlike temporal beings where the events occur sequentially, some later than others, so it cannot be said to possess all of its life *at once*. No temporal life can be said to have complete possession of all of its life at once. Whatever has the complete possession of all its life at once cannot be temporal. God is atemporal.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

11. The existence of temporal beings, such as human beings, is spread over years of the past, through the present, and into the years of the future. However, for such temporal beings the past is not, the future is not, and the present must be understood as no time at all, a durationless instant, a mere point at which the past is continuous with the future.
12. However, the existence of God, an atemporal Being, nothing future is absent from Him and nothing past has flowed away, whereas of everything that has temporal duration it may be said that from it everything future is absent and everything past has flowed away.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

13. What has temporal duration does not yet grasp tomorrow but yesterday it has already lost; even today it exists only; in a mobile, transitory moment, the present instant.
14. Atemporal/timeless duration is a duration none of which is not—none of which is absent (and hence future) or flowed away (and hence past).
15. Eternity, not time, is the mode of existence that admits of fully realized duration.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

16. Since God is atemporal, the mind that is God must be different in important ways from a temporal human mind. Considered as an atemporal mind, God cannot deliberate, anticipate, remember, or plan ahead
17. All of these mental activities essentially involve time, either in taking time to be performed (like deliberation) or in requiring a temporal viewpoint as a prerequisite to performance (like remembering).

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

18. However, it is clear that there are other mental activities that do not require a temporal interval or viewpoint. Knowing is a case whereas learning, reasoning, inferring, take time, knowing does not. One can say I am learning logic, but not knowing logic.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

19. Knowing is not the only mental activity requiring neither a temporal interval nor a temporal viewpoint. Willing, for example, unlike wishing or desiring is another. Awareness is another. This is all to show that an atemporal mind is not incoherent. An atemporal mind can have a variety of faculties or activities. Such a mind must be considered a living being.

DOCTRINAL PRINCIPLES

20. Because of the different vantage points, namely an atemporal (E) God and temporal (T) beings there can be E-T simultaneity. Consider STR and relativity of simultaneity in time with this illustration:

Imagine a train traveling $6/10^{\text{th}}$ s the speed of light. One observer (the ground observer) is stationed on the embankment beside the track; another observer (the train observer) is stationed on the train. Suppose that two lightning bolts strike the train, one at each end, and suppose the ground observer sees those two lightning bolts simultaneously. The train observer also sees two lightning bolts, but, since he is traveling toward the light ray emanating from the bolt that strikes the front of the train and away from the bolt that strikes the rear of the train, he will see the lightning bolt strike the front of the train before he sees the other strike the rear of the train. Hence, we have an illustration of different events occurring at different places which are simultaneous in one frame of reference will not be simultaneous in other frame of reference. This is known as the relativity of simultaneity.