

Heaven-18 (The Bridegroom and Bride)

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
 Natural Theology

Opening: Life with God by knowledge and by love (Luke 10:27; 1 Cor. 10:31; 13:12-13; Luke 10:20).

Foundations for love for and knowledge of God

1. Spiritual foundations (1 slide): More on natural virtue, supernatural virtue, and the local church.
2. Philosophy of language-23 (1 slide): Cratylean exegesis and the methods of knowing reality.
3. Heaven-18:— Heaven: Christ the Bridegroom and His exalted Bride.

Spiritual foundations: supernatural virtue and Christ's church.

1. Overview of the fundamental distinctions between morality (Pharisees), natural virtue (Abimelech), and supernatural virtue (OT heroes in Heb. 11; Apostle Paul, the Thessalonians).
2. A person with natural virtue is one with right thinking, right wishing, right affections, right sentiments, and right passions. There is no fragmentation between the mind and the will: he desires what he knows is right and does not desire what he knows is wrong.
3. A person with supernatural virtue also has right thinking, right wishing, right affections, right sentiments, & right passions, but these virtues are supernatural. There is no fragmentation between what he knows and how he feels. This is only possible by Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:1-8
4. Supernatural virtue is developed by fellowshiping with God. This fellowship has three aspects: walking with God, walking before God, and walking after God. This fellowship is not being in a circle. It is nothing less than 2nd person relationship with God: for example, "OK, God let us do this" (with God) "OK, God, I need to make adjustments (before God), and "O, God I want to be closer to you" (after God). We see each of these with David. 2nd person relationship is the key!
5. The local church is Christ's preferred institution for the development of Total Truth (1 Tim 3:15) necessary for development of virtue. For example, it is the place where the family of believers are to develop love for each other according to the wishes of Christ, Jn 13:34-35, 15:12, 17; 1 Jn 3:11, 23; 4:11; 2 Jn 1:5; 1 Thess 4:19; 1 Pet. 1:22.
6. Overview of 4 supernatural virtues in church: **Acts 2:42** *And they were continually devoting themselves to the **apostles' teaching** and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**.*
 - a. Supernatural virtue and daily devotion to Bible doctrine.
 - b. Supernatural virtue and daily fellowship.
 - c. Supernatural virtue and appreciation of the grace of Jesus Christ.
 - d. Supernatural virtue and prayer.

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-23

3: Epistemology 32
 - Existence 50
 - History 50

2: Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50

1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

Philosophy of Language-23 (Plato's *Cratylus*)

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato (428-348 BC)

Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.

Cratylus: the relationship between language and reality.

1. There are two positions that we are examining in Plato's *Cratylus*.
 - a. The Cratylean position that teaches that one can come to know the essence of something by etymologizing alone. But, how did the first name givers know essences?
 - b. The Socratic position is that one understands the essence of things by examining the essence of things themselves.
 - c. Consider how a child learns the essence of a tree. The same method holds true for love.
2. Historical overview of approaches to knowledge and reality.
 - a. Platonic position. We knew the essences of things before we came into this world and upon contact with them our memory recalls those things.
 - b. The Rationalists position. We come to know the essences of things by innate knowledge. The Rationalists always starts with thinking instead of reality, for example: "I think therefore I exist," which leads to I think x therefore x exists. Historically, this method was the method of European continental Rationalists.
 - c. The Empiricist starts with what the senses record. The problem with this method is that one never sees essences. Hence, most Empiricists deny essences or forms and say that we just call them kinds/species for convenience. British empiricism (Hume, Locke) . . .
 - d. The Idealist believes that it is all about thoughts in the mind.
 - e. The Realist starts with senses but understands how the immateriality of the human intellect penetrates matter & abstracts the essences from the matter (whatness).
3. With reference to Bible studies the dominant method in Christianity is the Cratylean position where one tries to get to essences by words. We have been noting the untenability of this method with **σπλαγχνά/splagchna**, cf. Jesus; 1 John 3:17; Col. 3:12; 2 Cor. 7:13-15. The proper method is to begin with an examination of man through realism and universal laws of reality.
4. Just as no human being can know treeness without abstracting treeness from trees, no human being can know what kindness/humility in doctrine (Christ-likeness) looks like without abstracting this essence from its instantiation in an individual. Because of Nehemiah we can understand this essence in a new and fresh way. My abstraction of these virtues as they are instantiated and depicted in Nehemiah, have motivated me to redoubled my efforts in attaining these Christ-like, TGB, virtues.

Warnings:
Matt 6:19-34
Rev. 14:13
2 Cor 5:10
Rev. 19:8



Temporary Heaven
John 17:24; Philip 1:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:8; Rev. 1-19

Eternal Heaven/Earth
Rev. 21-22

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. 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!



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.

Temporary Hell
Luke 16:19-31

Eternal Hell
Rev. 20:11-15; Matt 10:28-30

Warnings:
Matt. 7:13-14
Luke 12:16-34
Luke 14:18-20

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HEAVEN 18 (Bridegroom and Bride)

1. A closer look at the Bridegroom and the Bride (this is where we left off in our last Bible class).

Revelation 19:7-9 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright *and* clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. And he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

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2. Who is Jesus of Nazareth and why did He live and why did He die? Over the centuries there have been hundreds of answers to this question.
 - Some say He was a great teacher, a rabbi, who lived to tell others about the love of God and died because some did not like what He was teaching.
 - Some say He was a great prophet, who came to proclaim the coming kingdom of God, and who died because some did not understand the true nature of the kingdom of God.
 - Some say He was the Messiah who came to fulfill the prophecies of Israel and was killed because He was viewed as a threat.
 - Some say He was the divine Son of God who became man so He might offer Himself for the sins of the world.
 - All of these answers can be found in the New Testament. But a central theme throughout the Word is Him as the Yahweh Bridegroom who has come to unite Himself with man. This truly is the Greatest Love Story in the universe.

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3. Let us begin with John the Baptist:

John 3:28 "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. "He must increase, but I must decrease."

- a. Bridegroom? Normally we think of Jesus as Messiah or Lamb of God first. However, what goes much deeper is His love as the Bridegroom for His Bride (cf., Ex 32:1-8; Jer. 7:34, 33:10-11, 14-17; Isa 61:10, 62:5)
- b. The God of the OT is the Groom who has now become incarnate to wed Himself to man in the greatest love story ever told. There are biblical allusions to this theme that extend from Adam and Eve to the eternal love story highlighted in the last chapter of Revelation.

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4. The first miracle at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11).
 - a. Mary understands Jesus as the Promised Divine Bridegroom. In this Jewish context, she is asking Him to assume the role of Bridegroom.
 - b. This is all about the wine of salvation from Yahweh, the Bridegroom, as prophesied in the OT (Isa 62:4-6; Amos 9:11-13).
 - c. By performing the miracle, Jesus accepts the role of the divine Bridegroom of the Old Testament.
 - d. “His hour” refers to the Cross by which He will consummate the marriage (cf., Mark 14:41-42; Mat 26:45; Jn 12:27-29). He is telling Mary that He will provide the wine of salvation and provides a sign through the miracle. The bridal chamber for Christ is the Cross. It is where He will consummate the marriage with His death/blood.

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5. The Last Supper: “**1 Corinthians 11:24** and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same way *He took* the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
 - a. Note the parallels with the Old Covenant: the covenant, blood, and the meal (Ex. 24:8-11).
 - b. This speaks of a new union between God and His people illustrated by death and wine supper. The covenant is no longer by the blood of bulls and goats but by the Son of God.
 - c. The New Covenant is all about union of God with His people (Jer. 31:31-33), which will culminate in an eternal marriage. It really is a marriage covenant or a nuptial feast. Christ is the Yahweh Bridegroom

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6. Jesus' bridal chamber was the Cross, Mark 2:18-20.
 - a. The attendants of the Bridegroom (sons of the bride chamber) were not under any Jewish regulations during the time of the wedding, which took place for 7 days.
 - b. The sons of the bride chamber refer to Jesus' disciples.
 - c. "Taken away from them" refers to being taken away to the Cross. In the parable it also refers to bridal chamber where the Groom would be united with his Bride, the church.
 - d. His wedding day was the day of His death, when He would be taken away to the marriage chamber of the Cross and His disciples would mourn.

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- e. What we have here is a picture of the supernatural marriage between God and His people.
- f. We also know that the bridal chamber was designed after the tabernacle's Holy of Holies both with respect to size and colors. Even modern Jews take vows in a portable bridal chambers designed to look like the tabernacle.

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- g. We also know that the groom wore a crown and a seamless robe. The robe was a priestly robe, not to be torn.
- h. The tabernacle was the supreme place for sacrifice. God is united with His people by the sacrifice in the tabernacle.

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7. Paul's commentary on Christ and His Bride, Eph. 5:22-32.
 - a. The mystery is the mystery of Christ's spousal love for the church when He loved her and gave Himself for her on the Cross.
 - b. There are also allusions to Adam and Eve, the creation of Eve from Adam's side— the flesh and blood given for the church as per Adam.
 - c. There may also be allusions to the water and blood as symbols in reference to the side of Christ on the cross. At any rate, it is through His death that we are joined with God.

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- d. Marriage means different things to different people. Some see it as a convenient partnership. Some see it as a civil partnership. For many it is neither sacred or permanent and has a lot to do with personal happiness and “love.” For others it is sacred institution established by God as per Gen 2:24.

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- e. Christian marriage is more than a contract or even a sacred contract or a institution for family. Christian marriage is living symbol of a sacrificial spousal love between Christ and the Church. It is an outward sign of the mystery of Christ's love for His bride.

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- f. Paul is not saying that the marriage of Christ to the church is like human marriage. Rather, he is saying that Christian marriage is to be like Christ's marriage to the church filled with *supernatural* love and nourishing. This rules out male chauvinism. He is telling Christian husband to take leadership and be a living example of the sacrificial love of Christ. He is also telling the wife to submit to the husband's sacrificial love and be an example of the church. Each spouse is to be an influence to the other for sanctification. He is to love her no matter what. She is to respect him and never speak ill of him.
- g. Earthly marriage is to be a foretaste of the marriage with the Lord.

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8. John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.
 - a. Isagogically we know that the Jewish bridegroom prepares a home for bride so that when the marriage was consummated he could take her to His own home to be with His family.
 - b. The Father's House is the Heavenly Temple of which the earthly is but a copy.
 - c. The great divine wedding is still underway as God continue to unite to Himself His people. Many have not yet entered into that bridal relationship.
 - d. Father's Home is our home because we are in the family of God.

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9. Revelation 19:7-8; 21-22.

- a. Bible begins and ends with marriage.
- b. History ends with an eternal marriage in the New Heavens and New Earth.
- c. All of human history is headed for the wedding supper where the Groom and the Bride will be unveiled (“revelation”). This is the sight that the universe is anticipating and will celebrate.

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10. Why there is no earthly marriage or sex in Heaven, Mark 12:18-25.
 - a. The reason there is no marriage in Heaven has nothing to do with marriage being wrong or sinful in any way. Earthly marriage was God's means of procreation, "be fruitful and multiply." All of the blessedness we find in earthly marriage are fulfilled in our marriage to Christ.
 - b. While there will be no earthly marriage in Heaven, there will be the Heavenly Marriage to the Divine Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. Marriage to God/Christ replaces all earthly shadows of marriage.
 - d. Once the eternal reality of God being married to His people is fulfilled, there will no longer be any need for the earthly sign.
 - e. In the eternal state the goal of all marriage: personal communion and the gift of life will be fulfilled in our marriage to Christ, Eph. 5:32.
 - f. We will all enjoy a far more blessed relationship with our spouses in the eternal state than we ever could here in our earthly marriage.

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11. Celibacy and Heaven.

- a. Bible on celibacy (Jesus, 1 Cor 7:32-34).
- b. Christ spoke of three types of eunuchs, Mat 19:9-12. There is a sense in which eunuchs do provide an illustration of the future reality in Heaven of no earthly marriage or sex.
 - 1) Eunuchs who are born that way.
 - 2) Eunuchs who were sterilized
 - 3) Eunuchs who voluntarily give up sex for Heaven.
- c. The bottom line is that Christ takes precedence over everything else, whether one is married or not.
- d. This does not mean that celibacy is superior to marriage or vice versa.