

**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

John 8:32; Acts 20:27; Matt. 22:37-39; Job 42:5-6.  
 Even though the Bible teaches that Christianity, the church as a whole, is to grow up in Truth (Eph. 4:13), the modern church seems content with believers being childish in their thinking. Consider the statements of Paul in 1 Cor. 13:11, *When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things*, or Ephesians 4:14 *As a result, we are no longer to be 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*. Instead of the Church growing believers into adulthood, it seems content on creating giant nurseries. Key feature of mature thinking is direct and deep connection with Reality. True Christianity has so much more to offer than the world's pop psychology (Psa. 23; Heb. 2:14-15; SOS; Eph. 5:31-32; 2 Cor. 10:5).

Outline of today's class for advancement in whole truth (1:15): 10 minutes on **main point** of the spiritual life: loving of God; 15 minutes on epistemology; 50 minutes of doctrinal development of mercy, forgiveness, guilt, shame, and love.

**The Main point:** intellectually grasping the form of love in contrast to linguistic word games (Gen. 22:2; 27:4; 29:20, 32; Exod. 20:6). The curse on those who do not love the Lord (1 Cor. 16:22).

← This chart lists the 5 philosophical sciences required for objectivity in Biblical interpretation as well as for objectivity for everything else.

**Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!**

- Metaphysical understanding of God, creation, the spiritual life, man, and Bible doctrine.
- Transcendent relationship with God rather than nominal relationship with God.

Stage 3

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

**Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!**

- Still Nominal understanding of God.
- Increase in perinoetic truth about God & the spiritual life. However, still plagued with pagan philosophy in view of God's nature due to lack of metaphysics, which is due to modernism's philosophical assumptions.
- He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.
- Orientation still more about words than the reality.

Stage 2

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.

Stage 1

5: Hermeneutics

4: Linguistics

3: Epistemology 14

Existence 50

2:Metaphysics 32-

Trans. 50

1: Reality

Logic 32, Truth 32

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

1. Epistemology is the study of human cognition as such.
2. The metaphysics of cognition includes such things as
  - a. The immaterial nature of human intellect.
  - b. The intellect's abstraction from sense data.
  - c. Knowledge and cognition as acts.
  - d. The three acts of the mind.
  - e. The cognitional grasp of existence with the 2<sup>nd</sup> act of the mind (participle).
  - f. The primacy of external reality.
  - g. The distinction between believing and knowing.
  - h. Knowledge as an extension of the knower.
  - i. Knowledge as opposed to materiality.
  - j. Knowledge as a non-physical union
  - k. Knowledge and representation (phantasm).

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

3. The distinction between believing (πιστεύοντες) and knowing (γινώσκοντες).
  - a. The epistemic difference between believing and knowing has to do with connection to the referent.
  - b. When a person *s* knows a fact *f*, then just to the extent that *s* does know *f*, *s*'s mind conforms to *f*. Otherwise *s* does not know *f*. If there is no conformity between *s* and *f*, then there is no knowledge and no truth.
  - c. However, person *s* could believe a fact *f*, and to the extent that *s* believes *f*, *s*'s mind conforms to *f*. However, while this correspondence between the mind and the fact obtains truth, it is still faith and never knowledge.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

- d. Sense/content and referent are the same in knowledge but different in belief. The distinction is that in knowledge you are direct contact with the referent/object. In faith you are only in contact with content of mediated knowledge—you depend upon the cognition of another.
- e. Examples of going from faith to knowledge: learning math, learning the original languages of Scripture, going from linguistic concepts of love to abstracting their reality. Remember, that once you are in direct contact with reality, it is self-evident, not a postulation or assumption.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

- f. Faith is always based on intermediating cognition of others, e.g., news media. Someone else is perceiving the events and narrating them. You are not there to directly perceive and infer. You either believe it or not (“I don’t believe that”).
- g. Faith is all about the acceptance of a tenet through the mediation of someone else’s cognition.
- h. Faith is always based on the trustworthiness of the authority of the mediator. Faith always includes some authority, e.g., map makers, news reporters, parents, pastors, God, the Bible.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

- i. Because faith is based on mediating cognition of others, there is always possibility of error. No one has time to check out all of the steps between the narrator and you.
- j. However, in spiritual and biblical faith the authority is God and therefore there can never be error. God cannot be deficient either in knowledge or in veracity. The authority of God and the Bible are not open to defect and guarantee absolute certainty rather than mere probability, as with all other forms of faith. The primary difficulty in spiritual faith is establishing the fact of and the correct understanding of the content of divine communication.
- k. Even though spiritual/biblical faith is absolutely certain and corresponds to Reality, which is in perfect accordance with the Divine Mind, spiritual faith is still faith. Absolute certain faith is still faith and not knowledge. Knowledge requires direct contact with Referent, e.g., direct contact with God as per 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

### 4. Four major views of reality.

- a. Realism. Things really do have a metaphysical formal element. The form makes the matter what it is. In PR the intellect is immaterial and it is able to pull out or abstract the forms of entities as well as from phantasms. Only the intellect can give meaning.
- b. Platonism. The form (catness/humanness) is a separate existence in reality existing somewhere apart from material instantiation (Plato, Augustine).
- c. Conceptualism. Catness/humanness is not real, just a creation of the mind to help us talk about things. These things do not really exist.
- d. Nominalism. Weakest form in that it teaches that the only things that exist are particular things. We just use words to refer to things that seem similar. No such thing as humanity either in the mind or the external world.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

5. The form in the external world is the same as the form in the mind.
  - a. Things in the external world causes knowledge in our immaterial intellects.
  - b. The thing in the mind and the thing in the world are the same. They are formally identical (what the thing is) and existentially diverse. The form of the thing outside of the mind is individuated in matter. It is identical with the form that comes to exist in the mind, as immaterial cognitive existence.
  - c. Both the form and the mind is immaterial. The mind abstracts the form from material substance. However, they are existentially diverse otherwise the material thing would have to exist in the mind.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #14

6. Overview of the metaphysics of intellection.
  - a. Sensible things in the world act on sense organs.
  - b. This produces a likeness of the thing according to the mode it is sensed.
  - c. This external sensation is perceived by our internal perception.
  - d. This terminates in a sense image (phantasm, which captures richness of the sensorial objects, e.g., tastes, songs, and images).
  - e. This phantasm is the immaterial go-between of the senses and the intellect. It is immaterial but it is based on all of the particulars of the originally sensed object. The form of the thing is present in the phantasm, but its presence is captured with material or sensorial aspects.
  - f. The human intellect comes to the phantasm and abstracts the form from the material aspects of the phantasm, disengaging it from material aspects.
  - g. This is how the form of the thing comes to exist in the human in a new way.
  - h. Again, the senses give rise to a phantasm which is stripped of its formal element which gives us the idea (e.g., catness in my head which is a universal stripped of all of its particulars. Then, we can take the universal and apply it to multiple instances of the same kind.

## Christ's Eightfold Concept of Blessedness

**#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.

- ❖ I dedicate this to all Christians who believe that Christianity centers on human pragmatism and the prosperity gospel.
- ❖ Christ never asked for recruits under false pretenses.

## Mercy, forgiveness, guilt, and shame

#5- **μακάριοι** are the **merciful**: for they shall receive mercy.

1. True love, biblical love, plays a critical role in solving the otherwise intractable spiritual and psychological problems related to guilt, shame, forgiveness, and mercy.
2. The shamed and guilty person expect rejection of the two dynamics that are always inherent in true love.
  - a. True love always has a desire for the good of the object.
  - b. True love always desires appropriate union with the object
3. A guilty person anticipates anger and punishment, thus is deprived of “a.”
4. A shamed person anticipates rejection and abandonment, thus is deprived of “b.”

5. A man who feels guilty with respect to his wife versus a man who feels shame before his wife will have different anxieties. There is a psychological difference between the fear of anger and punishment (lack of good), and the fear of rejection and abandonment (lack of union).
6. A wife who feels guilty has anxiety over receiving anger (not her good) whereas in shame she will fear rejection (lack of union).
7. A person with guilt feels that the anger against him is warranted. He feels, given the offense, that anger is justified. The fear is deserved punishment.
8. A person with shame feels that lack of desire for him is warranted. Given the offense, he feels that rejection is warranted. His feels unwanted.

9. In guilt the anxiety is over what a person did. It is all about an action or actions.
10. In shame the anxiety is over what a person is. Furthermore, the shame tends to focus on the whole self rather than action that is done. The person in shame has a sense of ugliness about them that leads to a form of self-loathing and self-alienation.

11. Problems related to lack of ability to love and forgive *oneself* is common problem in our age. The guilty person will feel the need to punishing self. The shameful person will move into some form of self-loathing. Because he cannot love himself properly, these problems are never resolved. Again, he punishes himself for guilt (self-laceration) and loathes himself as a result of shame. The two-fold dynamics of love found only in the grace of God is the only way to solve this intractable problem.
  
12. Forgiveness alone does not resolve problems related to shame which consists of such things as a sense of being devalued, degraded, debased, and defiled—totally unworthy of love. Failure to understand the distinction between guilt and shame often keeps a person from God and His healing.

13. In true forgiveness, there is a willingness to love someone even after being hurt by him. Forgiveness of injustice must include love, which consists of a desire for the good of the guilty person as well as union with that person.
14. Shame is much more difficult to resolve than guilt. Remember, a person in shame feels unattractive, unworthy, unlovable. The only remedy is honor. Honor needs to be restored. Just to help a person who feels shame can actually make the person feel more helpless and shameful. They need inherent value or goodness, to feel lovable.
15. In shame a person becomes fragmented and divided within himself between his shame and the self that has internalized the standards giving rise to his feeling of shame.

16. Shame and guilt is often imposed on people by false standards. The key here is not to accept the standards of kosmos diabolicus.
17. God both forgives and removes all shame. In grace God removes chastisement as well as bestows value and worth. God's love always includes both goodness and union.
18. However, for the person who remains fragmented, even God is kept from closeness and union. God cannot be close to a person who is not integrated around the Good.

19. The same is true of human relationships. No matter how you forgive someone if that person is internally fragmented, it is impossible to be close to him.
20. Given the human proclivity to guilty and shameful behavior and rejection God's grace, it is no wonder that self-alienation, misery, and depression are so common
21. The only true solutions to guilt and shame is God and His grace, which necessitates that the guilty and shameful person integrate around the Good.
22. Orientation around the Good is what is found in progressive sanctification. More on sanctification, love, and forgiveness in our next class. . .

23. The Christian model for forgiveness and mercy is based on God's forgiveness and mercy of believers.

- Matthew 6:12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen .' 14 "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.
- Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.
- Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

24. Christ's lesson on the importance of those forgiven to forgive others, Matt. 18:21-35.
  
25. A look at David's sin and God's mercy and two-fold love (desiring his good + desiring unity with him), 2 Samuel 12:1-24; Psalm 32:1-2; 51:1-4.

## John 13:34-35 – A New Kind of Love

1. What a tremendous standard! The wishes from dying lips. This is a new object of love, and a new measure of love, and a new kind of love. and a new motive. It is as applicable today as it was then, see 1 John 3:16. This is the only way to remove both guilt and shame.
2. The new scope of the new commandment. The divisions between people then was worst than it is today, especially with regard to women. Paul speaks of these divisions. This is truly a new thing in the world. Never anything like this breaking of all bonds and coming together under Him. A community held together by love and not by geography, race, gender, or linguistic affinities. Stronger love than separating tendencies.
3. Every believer is under obligation to recognize his relationship with all other believers. far greater than the superficial differences. The mind with its norms and standards affects the affections and passions, so it is not all about emotions. What we have in common far exceeds our differences.