

# Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 127-Spiritual virtues 67 (Beatitude #5: Mercy & the Human Will)

## 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

5: Hermeneutics

4: Linguistics

3: Epistemology 16

Existence 50

2:Metaphysics 32-  
 Trans. 50

1: Reality  
 Logic 32, Truth 32

P.R. - 32

John 8:32; Acts 20:26-27; Matt. 22:37, 38; Job 42:5-6. What does the Bible says about the church and Truth? 1 Timothy 3:15, *I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar (στῦλος) and support (ἑδραίωμα) of the truth.* Believers are to be pillars and supports of Truth! Truth is what it is all about. You have heard the saying "Truth hurts." What is the alternative? Regardless of our psychological reaction to Reality, truth is real & always enlightening because it is what is. Truth is a correspondence between the mind as what exists. Who is behind all of reality? BE!

When Paul spoke of declaring the whole counsel of God, he said he was "innocent of the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26-27), showing that the PT is responsible for teaching truth and the consequences in believer's lives for not teaching the whole truth.

"Pillar and support"--Christianity is not a series of truths in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital "T." How did Christianity get so far from foundation of truth as such? (Reality, metaphysics, epistemology, linguistics, & hermeneutics).

Outline of today's class for advancement in whole truth (1:15): 10 min of intro and **main point** of the spiritual life; 15 min of epistemology; 50 min of doctrine dealing with Psalms 51 and 32.

**The main point** is always a loving and growing 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship with God: Eph. 5:10 *trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.* This relationship with God has three aspects: 1) walking with God, 2) walking before God, 3) walking after God.

Stage 3

### 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.

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 2

### 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.

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: #16 – Cognition

1. The importance of philosophical realism (PR).
  - a. Without PR, the believer will use modern/evil philosophy as his foundation for his understanding of reality, the Bible, and God.
  - b. Regardless of the amount of Bible doctrine, unless the believer has a foundation in Realism, he will end up thinking very much like an atheist. He may have different *content* in his mind, but his methodology will be akin to irrational naturalism or fideism.
    - Deism really is an atheistic *way* of looking at God's relation to creation (scientism, mechanical). Recall the 6 options: materialism, agnosticism, deism, conservationism, concurrentism, occasionalism.
    - Conceptualism and nominalism are atheistic ways of viewing creation (materialistic, and mechanistic). Recall the 4 options: extreme realism, moderate realism, conceptualism, nominalism.
    - With PR the believer is able to go from seeing *Esse* giving existence to all things to the various immaterial forms in all things—Existence and essences.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #16 – Cognition

### c. Review of the 4 views.

#1 – Platonism/Extreme Realism (Plato, cf. Allegory of the Cave).

Forms/essences are the Real, not the changing physical instantiations. He was right about universals (outside of time, space, and the mind), but wrong in placing them in a 3<sup>rd</sup> realm.

#2 – Moderate Realism (Aristotle, Aquinas). There are things (universals) that exist that are distinct from their particular instantiation. They are real, but they are found in the particulars. The immaterial mind is able to abstract the immaterial essences/forms.

#3—Conceptionalism (Immanuel Kant, John Locke, Rene Descartes).

Universals do not objectively exist. They are only created by the mind. They do not exist apart from minds.

#4—Nominalism (our modern world). No such things as universals, period. Particulars just look similar.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #16 – Cognition

- d. Abandoning realism, as the founders of modern philosophy have done, was the single greatest mistake ever made in the entire history of Western thought. We are living with the destructive results everyday– it has been appropriately called the era of Aristotle’s revenge.
- Destruction of objective truth, giving us relativity.
  - Destruction of natural law (laws of divine establishment)
  - Destruction of objective human nature (loss of objective rights).
  - Destruction of human mind and free will (materialism).
  - Destruction of morality (promiscuity and homosexuality not viewed as unnatural since there is no such thing as objective natural essences/forms).
  - Destruction of confidence in biblical and spiritual matters, those are just things created by minds.
  - Destruction of rationality (exaltation of subjectivity and feelings).
  - Destruction of uniqueness of man (cf., attempts to save the whales, yet promote abortion industry).

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #16 - Cognition

2. Review of key fundamentals of epistemology.
  - a. Epistemology is all about the knower and the object known. Knowledge is an act.
  - b. The three acts of the mind.
    - 1) #1: Apprehension is the operation by which we lay hold of a thing, making the thing present in and to our intellect, but without affirming or denying. This is knowing what a thing is before ascertaining its existence or anything about it (cf. cat vs. unicorn).
    - 2) #2: Judgment is the act by which the intellect affirms or denies existence—a thing is or is not. This is where truth exists. Truth is correspondence between the mind and reality/existence.
    - 3) #3: Reasoning is a complex operation and involves many different types of movement, usually moving from premises to conclusions. (e.g., All men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal).

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #15 - Cognition

3. Overview of process of cognition.
  - a. The sensible thing in the external world acts on sense organs (sight, sound). This is why blind or deaf people have so much difficulty in learning. They are very limited in what they can know due to loss of sense organ.
  - b. All knowledge begins with the senses but not restricted to the senses. External world impinges on our sense organs. We spontaneously see, hear, smell, reason, and believe. We are all well aware of this direct contact with the external world. It requires no proof or postulation. It is self-evident.
  - c. As the external world impresses itself on us sensibly, there is a modification of the sense organ, which produces a likeness of the thing according to the mode of the sense (tasting vs. seeing).

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #15 - Cognition

- d. This external sensation is received by our internal sensation of perception (attention). For example, you might be distracted during this teaching or go off on a word and starting thinking about something else and not hear this next point. But if I wrote your name here \_\_\_\_\_ , it would most certainly gain your attention.
  
- e. The sensible impression is perceived by us internally. This perception terminates in a sense image (e.g., audio, visual) call a phantasm, which captures the richness of the object. False judgments are generally the result of false phantasms.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #15 - Cognition

- f. The intellect comes to the phantasm/image and abstracts the form/universal of the phantasm from its material aspects. This form comes to exist in man in a new way that can be applied to all other instances of the same kind.
- g. The end process is called a judgment (2<sup>nd</sup> act of the mind), “this is a cat.”
- h. Assent, is the final aspect of judgment. The will must give *assent*. Assent is a conscious discernment and commitment to the truth. Technically, we do not assent to things; rather, we assent to the truth about things.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #15 - Cognition

- i. Assent affirms that the intellect is in order to what things really are in their order. It seals the act of judging by stamping it with the mind's commitment to its own possession of truth. In other words, the way my mind grasps something is the way that it is in the world. Example, my mind is presented with a judgment "God is Love." the mind ranges over the evidence for this, from the world, from Scripture, and experience— so I look at the judgment and say "yes, God is love." In sum, the assent is owning that judgment.
  
- j. Assent is the conviction that the world aligns with the judgment in my mind. The intellect reflects on itself and then on the phantasm and its referent. The intellect calls for the evidence in reality, hovers over that evidence, and then assents to that being the way things are or are not.

# Christ's Concept of Blessedness

## Matthew 5:3-8

**#1 blessed** are the poor (**οἱ πτωχοὶ**) **in spirit**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**#2 blessed** are those who mourn (**οἱ πενθοῦντες**): for they shall be comforted.

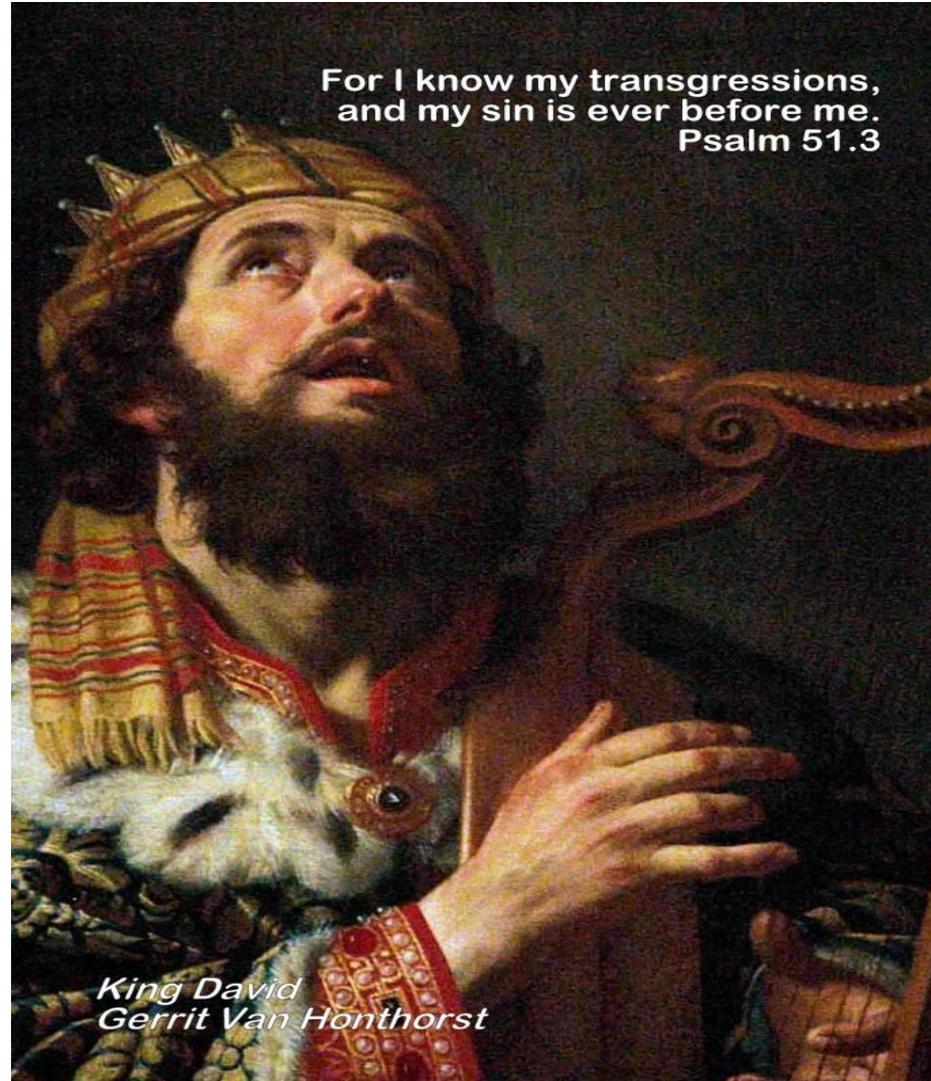
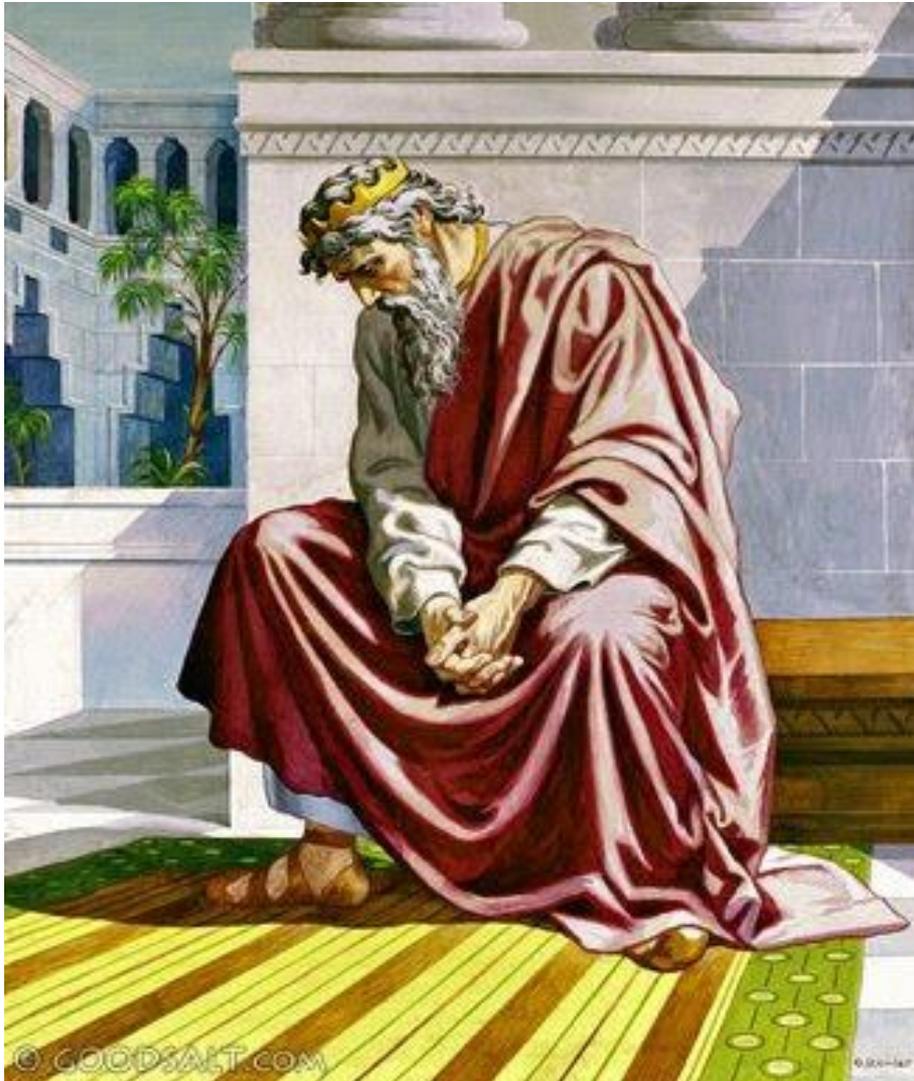
**#3 blessed** are the humble (**οἱ πραεῖς**): for they shall inherit the earth.

**#4 blessed** are those who hunger and thirst (**οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες**) **for righteousness**: for they shall be satisfied.

**#5 blessed** are the merciful (**οἱ ἐλεήμονες**): for they shall receive mercy.

- ✓ The divine simplicity of the Beatitudes covers a profound depth, both in regard to each single precept as well as the sequence of the whole.
- ✓ Those with the virtue of mercy have gained the settled disposition of looking and feeling (which has cognitive aspects) toward those who are suffering and need, especially those who have are blameworthy and bad.
- ✓ Note the chain: how consciousness of own sinfulness and weakness, causes one to bow in humility and yearn for righteousness, which in turn makes one more gracious in his judgment towards others.

Discussion of issues related to mercy, forgiveness, guilt, shame, fragmentation, and reintegration through sanctification in Psalm 51 and 32.



## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

1. All human beings (except the virgin-conceived Jesus ) begin with a defective will. While the universal depravity of man does affect the human mind and affections, the critical problem in the depravity of man is in man's defective will, cf. Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-19; Eph. 4:17-24.
2. Repairing the defective will for the unbeliever is humanly impossible. Unlike other problems that the will can decide to address, an unbeliever's defective will does not have the will to will loving God wholeheartedly.

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

3. No unbeliever has a higher-order will to love God. The only solution is to acquire a new nature (regeneration). Apart from a new nature, the unbeliever's will will continue to block his intellect from truly seeing God.
4. The unbeliever, however, does have a moral nature/essence/form (Rom. 2:15) which causes fragmentation and self-alienation. However, he does not have the grace of God to deal with his guilt and shame. This causes untold misery for the unbeliever. He is smitten with guilt, shame, denial, sublimation, and frantic search for happiness. There is a sense in which all unbelievers feel unlovable deep down and are alienated from their true self.

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

5. God's (the Christian solution) to man's guilt, shame, propensity to sin, and fragmentation is found regeneration/justification and sanctification.
6. At justification/regeneration a person receives a higher-order will that wills wholehearted love for God (the Good). This higher-order is called a global order for God.
7. Regeneration can be thought of as the beginning of love for God whereas sanctification is the continuation of that process of loving God— this is good news and bad news. At regeneration/justification the believer becomes instantly righteous because of the merits of Jesus Christ; sanctification, on the other hand, is a process, a work of the Holy Spirit and the believer synergistically working together. In sanctification there is a growing change of you as a person. This is distinct from justification and regeneration.

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

8. Faith alone in Christ alone is the only means of regeneration (John 3:16; 11:25; 20:31; Eph. 2:8-10). Faith is the necessary and sufficient condition for regeneration whereby the believer receives a new nature that in effect gives the believer a wholehearted/global desire for God. True faith is always a second-person faith in Christ.
  
9. Regeneration gives the believer the ability to grasp and desire the goodness of God, and to reject anything that threatens relationship with God, like sin and evil. Again, at regeneration the believer receives a global desire for God.

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

10. A believer can possess a global 2<sup>nd</sup> order will for God and at the same time have a 1<sup>st</sup> order will for particular sins and evil *as long as the 1<sup>st</sup> order for sin and evil does not destroy the 2<sup>nd</sup> order will for God*. However, such a believer will be fragmented and alienated from his true self due to pernicious activity in the first order.

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

11. Regeneration is wholly the work of God (monergistic) whereas sanctification requires both God and man (synergistic). Regeneration is instantaneous. Sanctification is a long process. The issue is always the will.

**Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;**

**Philip. 2:12 . . . work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

- The heresies of quietism and activism.
- Note how in sanctification God works with the will.
- There has to be a will to work with, it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> order will.
- The issue in the will is to love God wholeheartedly.
- The only obstacle to having a wholehearted reciprocal love for God is man's will, for God is always there with love and willingness.
- There is no sanctification apart from believer's higher order desire.
- The issue is integrating around God, the Good. This loving relationship automatically removes all shame as it bestows value and honor.