

# Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 128-Spiritual virtues 68 (Beatitude #5: Mercy and 2<sup>nd</sup> Order 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

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 designed to be pillars and supports of truth. Yet, how many could not even define truth, let alone understand that Christianity is about Truth with a capital T? This requires grounding in 1) reality, 2) metaphysics, 3) epistemology, 4) linguistics, & 5) hermeneutics—before there can be any objectivity in understanding the Bible or reality.

When Paul spoke of declaring the whole counsel of God, he noted that he was “innocent of the blood of all men.” The language echoes the thoughts of Isaiah and Jeremiah who lived in times of great apostasy (not even one believer with positive volition), a time ripe for judgment, cf. described in Jer. 23:25-29. God hardens the heart of unbelievers and believers (Isa 6; Matt. 13) in accordance with their 2<sup>nd</sup> order wills. The devastation of Jerusalem was horrific. Yes, there was hope (Lam 3:22-23), but consider the language in the rest of Lamentations.

Outline of today’s class for advancement in the whole truth (1:15): 10 min of intro and **main point** of the spiritual life; 20 min of epistemology; 45 minutes on Matt. 5; Psalms 51 and 32.

**The main issue for every Christian** is always a loving and growing 2<sup>nd</sup> person relationship with God. Can you be categorized as a person after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22; Psa. 51:10-12) in 2<sup>nd</sup> order will?

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.

5: Hermeneutics
4: Linguistics
3: Epistemology 17 Existence 50
2:Metaphysics 32- Trans. 50
1: Reality Logic 32, Truth 32

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

1. Metaphysics: Consider some of the results of modern rejection of Christian metaphysics.
  - a. Christians who do not develop their God-given metaphysical capacities may not abandon their faith in God, but their view of God, biblical truths, the spiritual life, and creation will be radically altered from what the Bible teaches. Apart from metaphysics believers will have a very materialistic (irrational) view of reality, which will cause them to live out their lives very disconnected from the true God of the Bible. While a believer can survive through fideism, he will live out this life in great blindness with respect to many aspects of God in reality as such.
  - b. Consider how strange it for believers to have such a hard time believing what God explicitly teaches about the radical dependency of all of creation on Him (cf., Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3; Matthew 6). The blinding power of materialism is frightening.
  - c. It is far more difficult to fix a materialistic-fideistic believer than simply to correct a believer regarding some doctrine.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

2. Consider the 6 gradations of views of God according to one's metaphysical capacity.
  - a. Level 1 (small child). God is literally an old man with a white beard, a wizard-like being with very human thoughts and motivations who lives in a place called Heaven, which is like the places we know except for being very far away.
  - b. Level 2 (Bible-only, anti-philosophical view, cf. Dake's Study Bible and "Word of Faithers"). God has a spirit-body substance. He has thoughts and motivations very much like ours. He is like us, but He is vastly more intelligent and powerful. Each member of the Trinity has a spirit-body and soul.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

2. Consider the 6 gradations of views of God according to metaphysical capacity.
  - c. Level 3 (Most believers, even some apologists). God does not have a body form. However, He is of spiritual substance. He has an essence in addition to His existent. His thoughts are different from ours in many respects. Still, He is much like we are. He made the world like a carpenter builds a house, as an independent object that would continue, even if he were to go away. However, He may decide to intervene in its operations from time to time. This view is shared by many apologists after the order of William Paley. This leads to a very functional but distant view of God.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

2. Consider the 6 gradations of views of God according to metaphysical capacity.
  - d. Level 4 (the biblical metaphysician, cf., Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas). God is not an object or substance alongside other objects or substances in the world. He is Pure Being or existence itself. He is distinct from the world of time, space, and things, all the while maintaining their being at every moment, and apart from whose ongoing application of natures, they would all instantly vanish into nothingness (e.g., music). Furthermore, none of the concepts of the world, including ourselves, apply to God in anything but an analogous sense. Literally He is not even a person in the sense of being one individual being among others.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

2. Consider the 6 gradations of views of God according to metaphysical capacity.
  - e. Level 5 (Personal direct encounter with God during one's life; Job 42:5; Luke 5:8; Isaiah 6:1-6). Supernatural direct 2<sup>nd</sup> person encounter with God. This is only attainable if granted supernaturally by God.
  - f. Level 6 (Beatific vision, attained by believers after physical death; Philip. 1:20-21). Highest and most blessed level.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

3. Epistemology- review of building blocks.
  - a. Meaning of epistemology.
  - b. Epistemic responsibility of rational beings.
  - c. Rene Descartes, the Cartesian revolution (also cf., Kant, Hume).
  - d. Truth and the primacy of the external world.
  - e. How the senses and intellect work: the senses grasp materiality while the intellect abstracts immaterial forms/essences from the material.
  - f. The power of immaterial intellect to abstract immaterial objective forms from their material instantiation.
  - g. The distinction between knowing and believing.
  - h. Knowledge: an act between the knower and the known.
  - i. The nature of truth (judgment, 2<sup>nd</sup> act of the mind).
  - j. The nature of assent (the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of judgment).
  - k. The nature and power of the will in assent.
  - l. The nature and need for the phantasm.
    - Illustration of youngster in school and the use of a pie to abstract universal.
    - Man understands nothing apart from phantasms.
    - Phantasms are the link between material and immaterial.
    - Phantasms must be appropriate (cf., rock vs. man; racism).

## EPISTEMOLOGY: #17 – Cognition

4. Review of the 4 views of creation and the nature of abstraction of universals. The one unchanging thing (universal/immaterial: dog) in the changing particular/physical (Fido). Only in realism do such invisible things objectively exist: objective morality and justice, immaterial essences (in which material particulars participate in). Why are these invisible realities real? Only because God said so? In realism, universals/forms are real and not reducible to anything material or mental (cf. form of justice).
  - a. Extreme Realism/Platonism (Plato, Augustine)
  - b. Moderate/direct Realism (Aristotle, Aquinas)
  - c. Conceptualism (materialistic).
  - d. Nominalism (materialistic).

# Christ's Concept of Spiritual Virtue/Blessedness

## Matthew 5:3-8

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

**#2 blessed** are those who mourn: for they shall be comforted.

**#3 blessed** are the humble: for they shall inherit the earth.

**#4 blessed** are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be satisfied.

**#5 blessed** are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.

❖ Rate yourself on these 5 virtues (0-5), 0=no virtue; 5=great spiritual virtue

#1—See wealth in self/world=0.....5= See wealth in God/POG

#2—Complacent about sinfulness=0..... 5=Grasp the gravity of your depravity

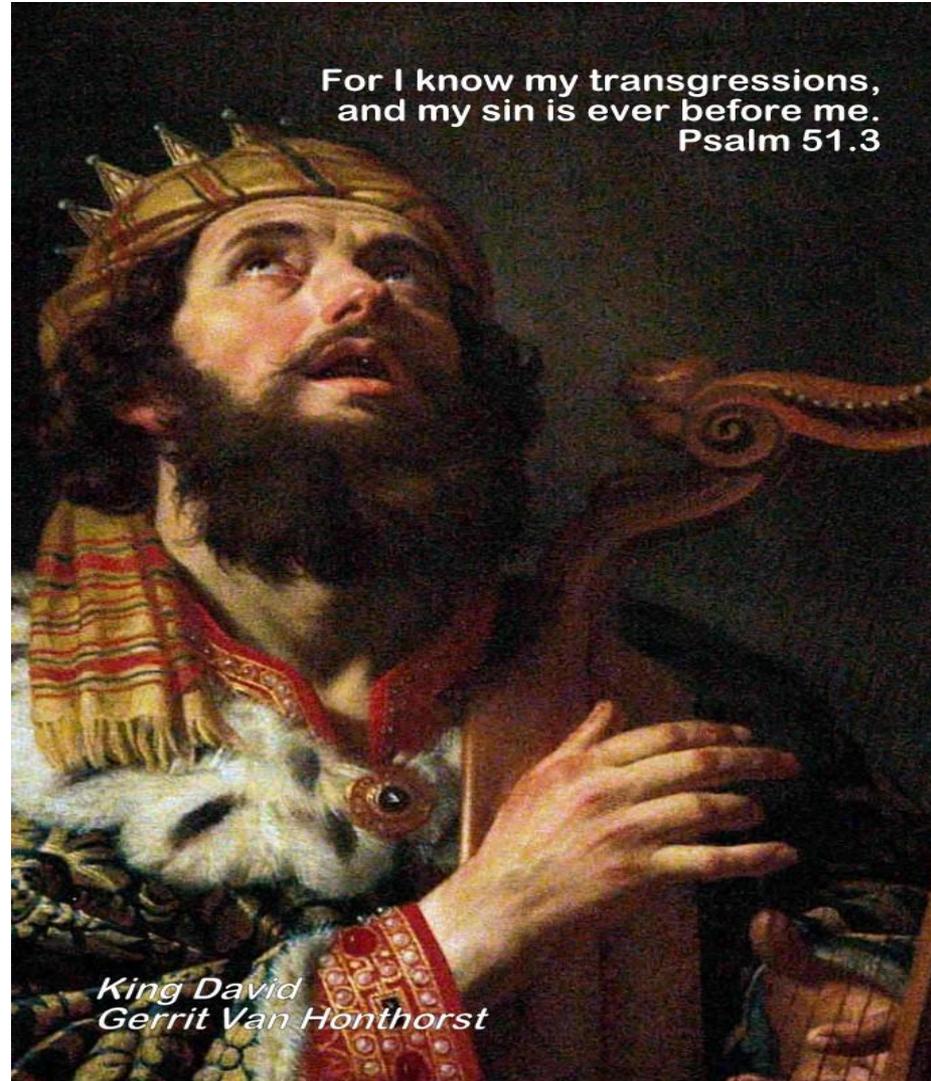
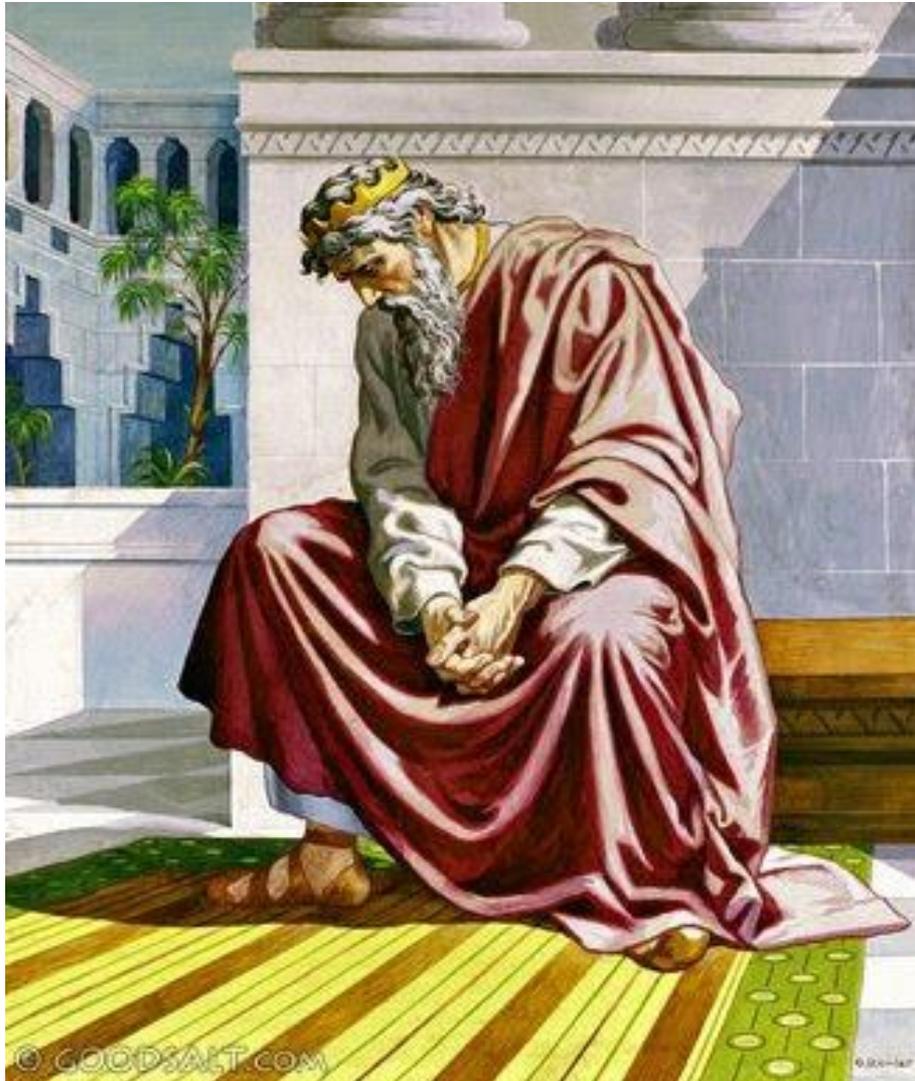
#3—Self-will/arrogance=0 ..... 5=Compliant/obedient to God

#4—Spiritual Sloth=0 .....5=Zealous for God and His righteousness.

#5—Vengeful/unforgivability= 0 ..... 5=Forgiving, reconcilable

❖ Why is spiritual sloth so evil (even categorized as a mortal sin in church history)?

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 could 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 selves.

Romans 2:14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

## THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

5. God's (the Christian's) 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 alone; 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 of his 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 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.**

**Philip. 2:12 . . . work out your salvation [sanctification: salvation from the power of sin] 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.