

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; Matt. 22:37, 38; Acts 13:22. Overview and outline of Bible class (10+15+50).

We have noted that the church is designed to be the pillar and support of Truth (1 Tim. 3:15), which means that believers are designed to be grounded in Whole Truth regarding reality and God.

Psalm 11:3 asks, *If the foundations are destroyed, what are the righteous to do.* The destruction of foundations of truth in our nation are obvious.

Consider the destruction of foundations of Truth in contemporary Christianity: 1) Truth (how many Christians could even define truth or faith as such? Or how logic anchored in Reality?); 2) Metaphysics (how many Christians are turned off by the very word? Yet metaphysics is required for understanding the nature of God and Reality; 3) Epistemology (how many Christians could give the scantiest summary of the human cognitive processes or the nature of the human soul, will, appetites, or Forms? 4) Linguistics (how many pastors understand how language works with reality?) 5) Hermeneutics (how many Christians understand the foregoing principles for objective understanding? Should we just ignore the foundations as long everything is working? Is it OK to be doctrinal in knowledge about God [in theory], but think like unbeliever regarding natural world? Mortimer Adler vs. doctrinal believer or Centurion vs. the disciples of Jesus Christ.

I agree with Adler that anti-intellectualism (not about IQ) is a sin against man’s glory as the only intellectual animal on earth. This sin/ evil is more egregious among Christians as it destroys true understanding of God, Reality and Christianity.

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.

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|---------------------------|
| 5: Hermeneutics |
| 4: Linguistics |
| 3: Epistemology 21 |
| Existence 50 |
| 2:Metaphysics 32- |
| Trans. 50 |
| 1: Reality |
| Logic 32, Truth 32 |

EPISTEMOLOGY: #21 – Forms and Cognition

1. Epistemology is the science of how we know what we know. Philosophical Realism provides a self-evident account of knowledge and truth, i.e., the knower's direct contact with the object of knowledge, reality (Form).
2. Objects of knowledge. Note how the human immaterial intellect automatically abstracts forms from the objects of knowledge. Every human does this naturally (don't even need a PhD to understand causes). We are just attempting to understand the causal explanation: Let's say you are walking through a park and you see a ball. Your material senses are modified to create a phantasm, an image, from which your intellect abstracts the form of "ball." To give a complete account for the reality of the ball would be to give the four causes.

EPISTEMOLOGY: #21 – Forms and Cognition

3. The four causes, in combination, provide a complete explanation of anything.
 - a. What is it made of? (material cause = rubber)
 - b. What is it? (form, formal cause = ball)
 - c. By what is it made? (efficient cause = ACME)
 - d. For what end was it made? (final cause = sports or for a child to play with)

4. This does not mean that in asking about the ball, for example, you would not have further questions: “Where does the rubber come from” or “Who made the factory?” However, the answers will always be just further examples of material, formal, efficient, and final causes.

5. The four causes apply throughout the world, from human artifacts to human hearts (e.g., muscle, heart, biological processes, pump blood). Viewing reality through the 4 causes goes a long way in enabling a person the ability to see the stupidity of modern atheists.

6. Man possesses two distinct, in kind, modes of knowing: material sense knowledge and our immaterial intellectual knowledge.
 - a. Material knowledge is all about sense data that culminates in a phantasm. This is our knowledge of particulars: this thing (Bible), this thing (podium), this thing (table), this thing (wall), this thing (floor). Material senses do not know the essence of anything! Animals have material knowledge.
 - b. Immaterial knowledge is all about the abstraction of the immaterial forms from the phantasms so you know that this is a Bible . . . podium . . . table . . . wall . . . floor . . . as universals. Immaterial knowledge knows what sense knowledge delivers. No animals has immaterial knowledge.

- c. Both material sense knowledge and immaterial intellect are aspects of the same human intelligence, which is the cognitive faculty of the human soul. Remember, man is a body-soul composite.
- d. Material sense knowledge is similar to that of animals; it can be measured by intelligence tests; it develops with age and education; it differs from one individual to another. It is intimately connected with images, the senses, and the brain. The object of all material knowledge is material reality, anything which affects our senses.
- e. Immaterial intellect, on the other hand, although it needs the collaboration of the senses, transcends the domain of the senses and can read supra-sensory reality. It is capable of self-reflection. It resembles the intellect of angels. It cannot be studied experimentally; it does not grow with age; it is the same in all human beings. In it we find the habitual knowledge of first principles.

7. Intellective knowledge/will/appetite and sense knowledge/will/appetite.
- a. Man possesses a rational appetite known as the will, which is essentially different from and superior to his sense drives.
 - b. Every man has a free intellective will with respect 2nd order desires. Every act of self-control is an act of the free will. Animals do not have free will because they do not have capacity for morality.
 - c. What determines moral and spiritual character, good or evil, is what man does with his non-rational sense appetites- the rational or irrational yielding to or checking the urges of his sense appetites.
 - d. The rational seeks what is true and honorable and the senses seek what fills its needs or gives it pleasure and satisfies its sense organs.

- e. The rational seeks universals and recognizes such things as justice, righteousness, grace, goodness, love.
- f. The senses know nothing of universals or abstract truths. All the senses know is of a “good” in terms of “satisfaction” to help the sense life.
- g. The senses in and of themselves are unmoral, non-deliberate, and not free. They are neither moral or immoral in themselves, they just respond to sense cognition.

- h. Temptations are often conflicts between rational desires & sense desires
- i. Acts of sense appetites are non-reasonable. They are independent of thinking, they do not wait for the intellect to examine further. They do not have a rational nature.
- j. Our lower non-rational sense natures are to be under the control of our rational natures, e.g., drinking bitter castor oil when sick, or drinking dangerous sea water when stranded out at sea.

- k. Material knowledge and desires *in and of themselves* are non-cognitive. This means that they do not reflect or have morals in and of themselves. Desire for food, water, and sex are natural physical desires that, *in and of themselves*, are amoral.

- l. It is the immaterial knowledge and desires that determine how the material appetites function. This is why no one is born homosexual. The sense appetites just desire sex in response to biological maturity, but it is the intellect with its norms and standards or lack thereof that sets up the nature of the specific desires. Again, no one is born a homosexual; they are just born with physical desires and for whatever psychological reason their intellect chose a member of the same sex. Psychological issues such as problems with father or mother or a peer or being incarcerated/deprived or a bad marriage are just that: psychological, not biological. Physical desires and mental desires are much different. We can also see this with food. If you stop eating certain things that are bad for you, your intellect will no longer desire those things—but the issue in the intellect not raw biology.

Psalm 51:1-12: The grace and mercy of God.

Psalm 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom.

1. Note the problem in verse 5 and the solution in verse 6.
2. A few principles on the soul (regardless of the “when” question).
 - a. Due to lack of Realism (= bad philosophy), modern psychology (science of soul) has lost its soul. What’s worse is that modern Christianity, due to anti-intellectualism, has a very distorted view of the human soul. The existence of man’s soul is self-evident, despite claims to the contrary (cf., Skinner, Hume, Freud). Consider the *philosophy* of the Christian who rejects philosophy in this question, “What theory of truth do you hold, correspondence, coherence, or pragmatic?” “I don’t do philosophy, I just know what works and makes sense to me.”

Psalm 51:1-12: The grace and mercy of God.

- b. Unbiblical distortions. The philosophical influences of Rene Descartes (man is defined in terms of mind/ghost + body/machine) and Plato (the soul is the real you, a Casper of sorts, that does not really even need the body) are widespread among Bible-believing Christians.
- c. Part of the difficulty is that in even talking about body and soul, we inject a bit of Cartesian dualism.
- d. The truth of the matter is that a human being is not made up of two separate substances. Rather, He is soul/body composite. The soul is the form of the body and the body is the matter of the soul. Instead of thinking about the soul as a separate entity inhabiting a body, think of the soul as an energy life force that pervades the entire body, giving it life and all of its capacities.

- e. The fundamental meaning of soul is simply the principle (origin or source) of life. It is that which gives life to a living thing and that which distinguishes a living organic thing from an inorganic thing. The soul is created by God. It is not something that could have ever evolved anymore than things could evolve out of nothing. The soul has to be directly created by God all at once. It does not have parts. You cannot get soul out of matter anymore than getting life out of machines. The transition from matter to soul/life is like going from non-existence to existence.

- f. Philosophically speaking, this organic life principle requires creation by a transcendent source ex nihilo. The Bible tells us that God creates the soul. This means that God continues to perform about 400,000 miracles daily.

- g. This life principle is the source of intuitions/instincts, affections, and cognition. All three of these powers have two levels: a material sense level (animals and man) and an immaterial intellectual level (man only)
- h. The human soul, called the rational soul, has three powers animals do not have: 1) the power of reason (the power to understand, judge, and argue); 2) free will (from morality); 3) genuine creativity (cf., inventions).

- i. The human soul is more than just functions. It is more than the three foregoing powers. There is someone at home who has these powers, a someone, an abiding “me,” a referent for all of my predicates.
- j. The soul is the seat of personhood. “Person” is not a legal term. It is whatever has these three powers (reason, free will, creativity). God and angels have these powers. This means that you are not only an object but a subject. Unlike a projector that cannot put itself on the screen, you can look at yourself.
- k. When I speak of *my* mind, and *my* will, and *my* feelings and *my* body, who is the *my* that possesses all of these? Consider when you make an oath or vow or pledge. This tracks with the image of God, the great “I AM,” the only time God names Himself and not just His relationships to His people. This is why we can say “I”: because each is made in the image of God.

- l. The soul is a substance. In other words, it is a noun, not an adjective or a verb. An entity, a being. This is denied by modern psychology = nobody is home (= no substance, just what you do and what you are). Literally nobody is there, just a bunch of brain states. This materialism is nothing but a bad knock-knock joke.

- m. Because the soul is a person and a substance and created by God, it is immortal. It simply is not the kind of thing that can die. It is not a compound or gets life from something else. It is the source of life itself. We can demonstrate all of these with Realism alone (e.g., 3 levels of soul, seat of the “I,” that it is an entity, it cannot evolve from matter).

3. In sum, the soul is **1)** the form (the essence/nature/structure, living thing) of the human body; **2)** in principle not an independent substance in its own right; **3)** immaterial and thus created directly by God; **4)** simple (not composite; thus, it does not come from parents); **5)** the vivifying principle in the body/matter composite that gives it life and unity; **6)** extrinsically dependent upon matter for some of its activities; **7)** intrinsically independent upon matter for other activities; **8)** extended throughout the human body, but it is not coextensive with the body (the whole human soul is present to the whole human body and the whole human soul is present to each part of the human body); and **9)** since, the soul is immaterial, there is no image/phiasm to picture it. However, it is neither unintelligible nor irrational.

4. Four Causes of the human soul.

- a. What is it made of? Immaterial, spiritual substance.
- b. What is it? The immortal life energy in the body.
- c. Who made it? God.
- d. What is it for? What is the soul for, what is its destiny? What is its purpose? Augustine, “Thy hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.”
 - 1) Biblically, we see that it is designed for union with God and ultimately, the beatific vision. It is designed to love God.
 - 2) Existentially, we can see that nothing here ever really fulfills us, certainly not for long (cf., C.S. Lewis’s “Argument from desire”).

The grace of God and the nature of man in Psalm 51:1-12.

Sanctification and free will, Psalm 51:10-12:

*Psalm 51:10 Create in me a **clean heart**, O God, And renew a **steadfast spirit** within me. 51:11 Do not cast me away from Thy presence, And do not take Thy **Holy Spirit** from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, And sustain me with a **willing spirit**.*

1. David cries out for mercy as he recovers from reversionism
 - Compare David in Psalm 51 with beatitudes 1: poverty of spirit, 2: mourning, 3: humility, 4: hungering/thirsting for His righteousness, 5: mercy; 6: purity of heart).

2. Regeneration is wholly the work of God (monergistic) whereas sanctification requires both God and man (synergistic). Regeneration is instantaneous. Sanctification is a life-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 (κατεργάζεσθε) 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.
- 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, from forgiveness to progressive sanctification. This loving relationship removes all guilt shame as it bestows value and honor.

*Psalm 51:10 Create in me a **clean heart**, O God, And renew a **steadfast spirit** within me. 51:11 Do not cast me away from Thy presence, And do not take Thy **Holy Spirit** from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, And sustain me with a **willing spirit**.*

3. The synergism in progressive sanctification is God's supernatural work of sanctification through the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the believer's 2nd order wish. No believer has 2nd order volition to change first order volition.
4. The nature and need of the ministry of the Holy Spirit as outlined in John 14:16-26; 16:7-15.
 - a. Note the connection of the Holy Spirit with *loving* obedience in John 14:15-16 . Love for God (**willing spirit**) in the 1st order volition is only possible through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, cf. Gal. 5:22-23.
 - b. Love for Christ in the 1st order volition is the highest reward and the largest gift from the Other Helper (ἄλλον παράκλητον). This is the source of David's and Paul's personal love for Christ, 2 Cor. 5:14.

- c. “Helper” refers to an advocate, one called alongside (παράκλητον). “Comforter” is a bad translation. This Helper is in the area of providing strength, goodness, and purity--to make you strong in 1st order volition. Consider the implications are far as strength for continual fellowship. Consider what kind of strength/virtue it would take to give us the ability to stay in fellowship longer. What kind of strength do we need for purity and strength?
- d. Note the implications for the believer’s 2nd order will in the promise of Christ in John 14:13-14. Christ’s actions are in response to our prayers. Note Christ’s continual activity before the Father as High Priest:

Hebrews 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water

- e. Note Christ's identity with the other members of the Godhead as well as with man. Note the mutual operation in the Trinity and His love for man. He truly is the Theanthropic person of the universe. Note how the Trinity is vital to Christianity.

- f. John 14:16. Note the difference between the ministry of the Holy Spirit that David prayed for and its permanence in the church age: "He will be with you forever." There is no sin a church age believer can commit to drive away the Holy Spirit.

- g. Note how the Great Helper will do His work: He is the Spirit of Truth (14:17). This is not bringing new truth. Rather it is enabling us to see the Truth before us whether it be in natural or supernatural revelation that we already have.
- h. Note the awful darkness of the world, the mass of mankind, considered godless and separate from Him. The world is like brutes without understanding, incapable of higher thoughts of God or perceiving the Holy Spirit. The world is dead to the reality of God.
- i. The unbeliever's cognitive abilities, tastes, inclinations, desires, hopes, purposes, and strivings are all limited to the visible world. They lack the spiritual capacities that work in the intellectual processes that enable them to perceive the Helper and His activity among man.

- j. John 14:17b: Note the effect of the existentially work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer: “you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” The possession of the Holy Spirit working in the intellect gives us an existential knowledge of spiritual matters; thus the importance of living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit . . .

- k. John 14:25-26. Advancement of thought from the internal ministry of the Helper Spirit to internal ministry of the *Holy* Spirit, the latter of which points to purity as a result of consecration to God—a purity built on connection with God, the Transcendent.

- l. There is no true deep knowledge, inclination or love for God apart from purity of heart, a holy heart, made so by the Holy Spirit.
- m. The person who has no desire (D2) for purity before God has no capacity to love God (V1), let alone enter into deep knowledge of God.
- n. It is the Holy Spirit, the spirit of consecration, that illuminates and so teaches us all things. This certainly includes natural revelation as well as supernatural revelation.
- o. Those who believe that the Holy Spirit is not interested in Total Truth are only giving evidence of their lack of fulness of Spirit. Holy Spirit teaches and enlightens. He makes scholars of Christians. He is not anti-intellectual.

MORE ON 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 affects the human mind and affections, the most critical area is in man's defective will, cf. Romans 1:18-32; 3:9-19; Eph. 4:17-24.
2. Repairing the defective will in 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) solution to man's guilt, shame, propensity to sin, and fragmentation is found regeneration followed by progressive 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 global love for Good, love for God, and sanctification is the continuation of that process of loving God. 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 which are instantaneous. The good news and the bad news . . .

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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.

THE WILL: HUMAN PROBLEMS AND GRACE SOLUTIONS

10. A believer can possess a global 2nd order will for God and at the same time have a 1st order will for particular sins and evil *as long as the 1st order for sin and evil does not destroy the 2nd order will for God*. The first thing to go is 2nd order volition to be followed by 2nd order desires. When a person loses 2nd order desires, there is little hope of recovery. He will never change. He will live out his life fragmented and frustrated. Hence, the importance of sanctification, the only solution to self-destruction of 2nd order volition and will.