

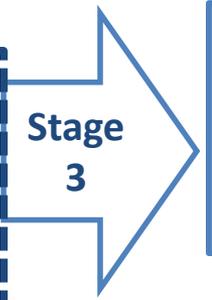
Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

- T/G/B**
- Eschatology
- Thanatology
- Ecclesiology
- Israelology
- Dispensationalism
- Doxology
- Hodology
- Soteriology
- Hamartiology
- Natural Law
- Anthropology
- Angelology
- Pneumatology
- Christology
- Paterology
- Trinitarianism
- Cosmology
- Theology Proper
- Bibliology

P.R. - 32

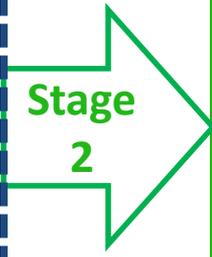
Hermeneutics
Linguistics
Epistemology
Metaphysics -25
Reality -Logic 32, Truth 32

1. Paul's warning: Colossians 2:8 *See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.*The 2 columns. . .
2. The unique opportunities for believers of FBC for whole truth and nothing but the truth (PR+SFL+BD). The need for a complete system of classical/reality-based whole truth.
3. 'Ehyeh-Metaphysics 25: JR's farm and esse-metaphysics of his horse: 1) Philosophical/Biblical/Esse (active metaphysical mind); 2) Paleyan/ ID/ Jeffersonian (evidential, deistic mind); 3) Kantian (subjective, agnostic mind); 4) Humean (passive, atheistic mind). After discussing being, Parmenides and Heraclitus walk up to our Christian gathering & ask about reality of the physical being of horse. Answer: *All being is either in act or potential = Modes! The whole of reality is shot through with act and potential.*
4. The SL: the need to actualize natural and supernatural/spiritual virtue (mind, will, emotions).



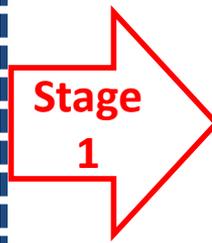
Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God.
- Virtuous love for God: Intellective, volitional, emotional love of God. Enduring fellowship.
- Understanding “above all you could ever ask or image” (1 Cor.)



Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

- Nominal understanding of God.
- Through BD this believer has gained a great deal of perinoetic truth regarding God and the spiritual life.
- However, he continues to have some pagan views about God's *nature* due to lack of metaphysical development.
- He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.



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 the problem of 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 or personal encounter with truth. If it works or feels good , they think it must be true and enough.

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Intellect

MIND

Before anyone can possess a robust understanding of human virtue (natural and supernatural/spiritual), he must have a biblical & classical understanding of human nature as well as virtue/goodness and its relationship to true happiness.

Proverbs 10:9 He who walks in integrity (יָשָׁר) walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known.

- There are 3 areas of our beings that must be matured and have integrity before we can actually become virtuous/good people by nature and habit.
- A person's virtue or lack thereof will always become manifest through his intellect, will, or emotions.

Volition

WILL

affections
- love/like, hate/dislike

Emotions

11 fundamental emotions

Feelings

6 basic emotions

Towards Good

Love/like
Desire
Delight

Away from Evil

Hate/dislike
Aversion
Sadness

Difficult to attain good

Difficult to remove evil

5 intensive emotions

hope or **despair**
-pleasure
-joy
-peace
-suffering
-misery

fear or **courage**
-pleasure
-joy
-peace

anger

Virtue, Power for Good

1. Overview of biblical concepts involving in virtue, Rom. 12:1-2; Philip. 4:8; 1 Tim. 6:6-21 ; 2 Pet. 1:5-11; 2 Pet. 2:20-
2. Lexical definition of virtue (**ἀρετή**) by Thayer: *a virtuous course of thought, feeling and action*. The need to understand the metaphysics of lexicographers. To this, we also need to bring out the idea of *power* for good that is inherent in all virtue—a power for goodness according to subjects nature.

3. It is virtue, that power of and for goodness, that makes a man truly good and happy. This is the biblical and classical view, in contrast to modern view that attempts to tie happiness and goodness to utility (Mill, Darwin).

4. Consider the misery of the person who is weak in his intellectual, volitional, and emotional natures: bored due to mental dullness, inability to see Esse and the TGB, complaining, whining, cowardice, self-pity, resentment, lack of power to love God and others, lack of power for forgiveness and patience.

5. Lack of virtue illustrated in Lucifer, demons, Adam and Eve, Cain, Lot, David, Solomon, Sampson, Peter, Judas, Saul, Corinthians, Galatians, Demas, and the Laodecian believers). Contrast this with Aristotelian virtue ethics:
- Aristotle, *"Happiness, as we said, requires both complete goodness and a complete lifetime. . . no supremely happy man can ever become miserable. For he will never do hateful or base actions, since we hold that the truly good and wise man will bear all kinds of fortune in a seemly way, and will always act in the noblest manner that the circumstances allow . . . And this being so, the happy man can never become miserable."*
 - While Aristotle does acknowledge that the life of virtue is not an absolute guarantee of complete happiness in severe circumstances, he does say that, at least, a man will be happier than the non-virtuous man.
 - Aristotle, as a pagan, did not have the resources for supernatural happiness, the joy inexpressible and full of glory.

6. Without virtue, the believer is unable to develop, actualize, the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and love in God. Without virtue, he will always have trouble trusting God, hoping in the future with God, and truly loving God. One must have capacity to see and enjoy good, which requires virtue.

7. All human failures are due to weakness of mind, will, and/or emotions for the Good. Hence, all failures are due to lack of virtue, natural or supernatural. The main culprits are ignorance (mind) or bad choices (will).
 - Some Christians, like Plato and Gnostics, believe that all they need is more doctrine to have virtue, that knowledge to remove ignorance is all that is needed, that all problems are related to ignorance. This is demonstrably false.

8. Apart from virtue, we will remain trapped with our old evil way thinking, wishing, and emoting, constantly having to confess constant MAS.
- We, not circumstances, are responsible for the kind of person we are.
 - We all have had plenty of opportunity to actualize potential virtue in our cognitive faculty, volitional faculty, and emotional faculties. Key areas:
 - Intellectual vice of ignorance regarding God and good.
 - Volitional vice of bad choices and motivations.
 - Emotional vices of fear, anger, lust, jealousy, resentment. We are responsible to moderate and redirect our feelings?

9. A deeper look into intellectual virtue (in contrast to the “vegetative” life that does not actualize the tremendous God-given potentials).
 - a. 1st act: quidditative knowledge, knowing what something is: the deeper the abstraction the greater the virtue, cf. water bottle, angels, creation, Esse, esse. As far as biblical data, this moving beyond nominal and 2nd hand understanding. This is knowing God & reality beyond words.
 - b. 2nd act: existential knowledge: essence-existence distinction. The greater the connection with reality and the sustaining power of God, the greater the virtue. This is knowing what is real, orientation to reality.
 - c. 3rd act: reasoning knowledge: the logical connection between propositions—for yourself. The greater correspondence to reality, the greater the virtue. This is ability to check and formulate doctrines. This is thinking for yourself and knowing they whys (epistemology).

- d. Intellective virtue has the power to see and appreciate the three fundamental and the objective classical and biblical values: truth, goodness, and beauty.
- Classical and biblical views: Everything which *is* is in some measure or manner subject to denomination as true or false, good or evil, beautiful or ugly: the true to thought and logic; the good to action and ethics; the beautiful to enjoyment and aesthetics. The classical view of the TGB is that anything of worth can be exhaustively judged by reference to these standards and no others.
 - Modern view (Spinoza, Mill, Darwin, Freud). Man and utility determine truth, goodness, and beauty. Man is measure of all things, and in particular man measures truth, goodness, and beauty by the effect things have upon him, according to what they *seem* to him to be.

10. Seeing the beauty of God. The need to regain classical view of beauty, truth, and goodness to understand the inherent and objective nature of truth, goodness, and beauty in all beings and most particularly Ultimate Being.

Psalm 27:4 One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to meditate in His temple.

Psalm 90:17 And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.

11. The highest development, the actualizing of potentials, of our cognitive, desiderative, and emotive faculties is to “see” the beauty of God, a beauty that is fused with truth and goodness. Job was able to see how
- God is infinite Truth, absolute Goodness, and infinite Beauty.
 - God’s beauty is fused with truth and goodness in all perfection.
 - God’s effulgent beauty brings more pleasure than anything else.

12. All believers will one day, through supernatural knowledge, see the Beatific Vision in which God is beheld intuitively. This will bring greatest joy and absolute fulfillment, for the first time in life, as the believer sees God in absolute truth, goodness, and beauty—instead of just analogically in creation as we do today.

The Will, Volition

1. The need to understand the will, aka volition. It is the key to life and virtue. It is not just about knowledge, even though one cannot have a virtuous will apart from knowledge. However, a person can have a great deal of knowledge, even classical and biblical knowledge, yet not have a virtuous will.
2. Our wills are constantly bombarded with “values,” from counter judgments of the intellect and passions from the emotions, e.g., “I never should have done that . . . If only I had stopped to think . . . If only I did not let my temper get the best of me.”
3. Without volitional virtue, “goods” are constantly in flux as one whim displaces another. The believer without volitional virtue is double-minded.

4. Because of the universal/spiritual nature of the will, no human being will ever be completely satisfied unless and until he experiences the beatific vision.
 - Man has inherent capacity to always be able to think of something better.
 - This is only possible because man is a being who can form what we might call the notions of an absolute and infinite good.

5. The will longs for absolute good. This is why man's will is dominated by restlessness, striving, boredom, and eventual dissatisfaction, in some way, with anything and everything. We always want something newer, better, and more fulfilling. Due to the nature of our wills, dissatisfaction on some level is inevitable.

6. Because the will is not dominated by the intellect, it is free. Because it is free, we can understand such things as the fall of Satan and demons. They all had untainted knowledge of God. They also all had freedom of will.

7. It is in our wills that we choose our values and command our actions.
8. Our wills are free because with their universal power, they are able to make comparisons with different standards of values. We are always caught up in the interplay between free judgment and free choice.
9. The fact that our wills seek infinite good shows that they are free from particulars. They are capable of recognizing Good and seeking it in God.

10. The freedom of the human will and its desire for perfection explains the mania around human celebrities as well as man's boredom and misery.
11. Because we are free, we are also responsible. This means that we are all without excuse regarding the potentials in our intellects, volitions, and emotions.
12. The greatest problem every person faces, pride, is primarily a function of the will.
13. Pride is the root and supporter of all sins, from the rich to the poor, from apathy to fanaticism, from ignorance to intellectual arrogance, from anti-intellectualism to outright rebellion against God.

The Vice of Pride

1. God fights against the proud, James 4:6.

James 4:6 But He gives a greater (μείζονα) grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed (ἀντιτάσσεται) to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

- God only promotes grace oriented people.
- Pride is the antithesis of grace. The believer who is arrogant is blind to the grace of God.
- God has a perfect grace plan for your life, which cannot be fulfilled apart from His grace.
- Only through grace can any believer thrive.

The Vice of Pride

2. Pride always corrupts the mind regardless of a person's IQ or how much they know. There is no such thing as a wise person, one in touch with Ultimate Reality, who is also proud, cf. Rom. 1:18-25; Satan.
 - There are approximately 22 Greek words and 27 Hebrew words for pride. The predominant idea is of "going beyond" reality.
 - Pride includes wrong thinking, wrong volition, and wrong emotions.
 - All failure in the POG is a result of the sin of pride.
 - In pride the person moves into jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, revenge, conceit, slander, gossip, and maligning.
 - In pride the person becomes occupied with self and moves into self-admiration, and an exaggerated view of his abilities.

3. In pride, one turns away from God as the True, Good, and Beautiful, Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:14-17. Pride was the original sin of Satan, “I will be like the Most High.”
- Pride always overflows into motivation, decision making, and into activity.
 - Pride always blinds one to the True, Good, and Beauty of Whole Truth, Total Truth, and nothing but the truth.
 - Pride always destroys love for the Word of God and truth as such.

4. Pride always leads to spiritual ignorance, heresy, and apostasy (1 Tim. 3:6; 6:3-5, 2 Tim 3:1-7; Js 1:21).
 - In pride, a person is unteachable.
 - Pride destroys ability to see God as Truly Good.
 - Pride destroys capacity for life, love, and happiness.
 - In pride, a person cuts himself off from the salubrious ministry of the Holy Spirit, which will affect his attitude to truth and all of life, Gal. 5:16-23. Thus, he cannot stay in fellowship with God for long periods of time.

5. The warning against pride in a context of Mammonism, 1 Tim 6:17-19; James 4:13-17.

- The problem with wealth is that it comes with the temptation to think that one is better than others because of wealth or positions of power. This would include one's personal abilities, looks, or achievements.
- The proper attitude is "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me," 1 Cor 15:10.
- The bottom line is to be happy with the grace God has given you and use all of the opportunities and potentials He has awarded you. The issue is always activating your potentials—act and potential.

6. The virtuous person is the person who has developed the intellectual, volitional, and emotional distaste for pride. This can only come through BD and God's grace. This is achieving good tastes.

Proverbs 8:13 "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, And the perverted mouth, I hate.

7. Other passages on the perniciousness of pride: Dt. 8:3, 11-18; Psa. 10:2-11; 25:8-9; 49:11; 73:6-9; Prov. 3:33-35; 6:16; 8:11, 13; 11:2; 13:10; 15:5, 10-12; 16:2, 18; 23:29; Mark 7:21; Lk. 14:11; Rom. 1:18-25; 3:27; 12:3; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 10:12; 15:10; 2 Cor 12:7-10; James 3:14-16; 1 Pet. 5:5.

The Relationship between Virtue, Goodness, and Happiness

1. Understanding the relationship between virtue and happiness is critical to one's view of God, the plan of God, and progressive sanctification—indeed, it is germane to one's whole philosophy of life.
2. The modern dominant view is that virtue/goodness is related to duty and responsibility and that these are separate from happiness (Kant). Under this view, one ought to orient to duty and what is right just because it is right, without any regard to personal happiness.

3. In this legalistic (Kantian) view, man is supposed to pursue duty instead of happiness.
 - A distinction needs to be made between happiness and some “pleasures” of this world.
 - Also the deception of happiness is seen that even a miser thinks he is happy as he clutches another penny.

4. The dichotomous view that virtue/goodness is separate from true happiness is the source of much misery, legalism, and evil throughout Christianity. This is not the view of the Bible (cf., from the Garden of Eden to the Beatific Vision, from Genesis to Revelation, cf., Gen 3; 12:1-3; Jn. 15:11; 17:13; 1 Jn. 1:1-4; 2 Jn. 1:12; Rev. 21:1-7) or classical Christianity. True happiness is always found in the Good. This is biblical and Aristotelian.

5. How can any Christian thrive in the CWL if deep down he thinks that the plan of God is something that one *must* be faithful and dutiful to in contrast to the place of true happiness?
 - The believer must understand that God and good are co-extensive with true happiness.

6. How can any believer advance in God when he sees it as burden or duty instead of movement in the direction of his greatest good and happiness?
- How can anyone ever love God when God is viewed as boring, difficult, or cruel—a real Killjoy, that one must keep a distance from?
 - How can someone live under the pressure and stress in being torn between his personal happiness and what is right before God?
 - How can that kind of life ever be satisfying?
 - How can a person count sufferings in terms of all or pure joy out of duty (James 1:2-4; Philip. 4:4; 2 Cor. 12:7-10).

7. How can any believer really advance in moral virtue as long as he believes that morality stands in opposition to his greatest happiness and enjoyment?
8. How can any person not be filled with joy and enthusiasm upon the discovery that his greatest good, ultimate virtue, true meaning of life, and supernatural happiness is found in God? Consider Saul vs. Apostle Paul.

9. While all men desire happiness—"Man wishes to be happy, and only wishes to be happy, and cannot wish not to be so" (Pascal). most end up bringing much misery on themselves (cf. Sophocles, Montaigne, Lucretius, Solon, Faust, Augustine).
- Why is this the case? How many have gotten what they really thought would make them happy, only to be unfulfilled, bored, and disappointed over and over again?
 - Can we ever find complete and immutable happiness in phase 2?
 - What about habitual happiness, in the now?
 - Is not this evidence of man's fallenness?

10. Virtue (natural and supernatural) is required for any happiness because only virtue can regulate man's intellective, volitive, and emotive natures, which is always requisite to obtain goodness, which is always co-extensive with virtue and happiness.

11. Only Christianity offers Ultimate Good and therefore the Ultimate Happiness in time and in eternity. In eternity, in the divine presence and glory, all the natural desires of the human spirit are simultaneously satisfied—the intellect's search for truth, the will's yearning for good, and emotions enjoyment of the good will be totally and immutably fulfilled.

The 2 Levels of Virtue

1. There are two levels of virtue (settled dispositions toward Good).
 - a. **Natural virtue**, Rom. 2:14-15; Acts 10:1-2, 22; 11:14. Natural virtue is the development of intellectual, volitive, and emotive virtue for good. It is honorable, but it is always relative in scope and goal.
 - 1) Intellectual virtue according to rational nature. The virtuous person lives according to reason, understanding good and evil. He habitually lives according to the laws of DE.
 - 2) Volitive virtue. Virtuous motives would include good intentions. A good will. Willing to die for loved ones and country. Desires to be honest and respectable. This is moral virtue. This is dependent upon the intellect, but they work together.
 - 3) Emotional virtue. Good feelings about the good as per the morality and the laws of D.E., family. Maturing emotional nature. Mature and moral emotional feelings.

b. Supernatural virtue, Rom. 15:13; 2 Cor. 3:18; 10:5; Gal. 5:16, 22-23; Philip. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:3; 6-9; 1 Jn. 3:14; 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

- 1) Intellectual virtue, excellence in knowing the good (the will of God), Rom. 12:2; Heb. 13:21. Intellectual vice is foolishness, 2 Pet. 2:20-23; 1 Cor 3:1-3.
- 2) Volitive virtue, excellence in choosing the good, Philip 2:13. For volitive vice, see 1 Thess. 5:19 (resisting the HS)
- 3) Emotional virtue, excellence in enjoying the good. For emotional vices that grieve the HS, see Eph 4:30-31; Gal. 5:22-23.

2. It is important to understand the relationship between the natural and supernatural virtues in order to avoid superstitious or mechanical forms Christianity, and the tendency of some to use grace to destroy nature.
 - ✓ Grace does not suppress nature.
 - ✓ Theology does not suppress philosophy.
 - ✓ Supernatural virtues are not in contrast to natural virtues. Rather with regeneration they are a perfecting of human nature in the image of Jesus Christ through grace resources.
 - ✓ One cannot live in vice and expect to cultivate supernatural virtues in intellect, will, or desires by mere mechanics.

3. The believer gains supernatural-theological virtues at the point of salvation, 1 Pet. 1:3. He gains a living hope which means that for the first time in his life he has gained intellectual, volitional, and emotional virtue. His thinking changes, his will changes, and his emotions change immediately by the grace of God.

4. Supernatural virtues cannot be acquired by any natural means. They come from God and are truly supernatural. They enable the believer to endure all things with a transcendent love for and inexpressible joy in God, 1 Pet. 1:6-8.

5. With supernatural virtue gained at salvation, the believer moves instantly into wisdom, a right way of thinking. This is not something that is cultivated. He receives supernatural wisdom regarding the reality of God and the things of God.
- ✓ While he does not gain new reasoning skills, the reasoning that is there is enable to see God and the things of God. For the first time in his life, he is able to penetrate into God.
 - ✓ In an instant, he moves further than any unbeliever who has spent a lifetime developing natural theology in understanding God. The believer, for the first time, takes a giant step toward Truth and thus Reality.

6. The supernatural wisdom the new believer gains at salvation moves his will and emotions for the first time to the true Good. There is a complete metamorphosis as the believer is moved into an initial grasp of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love in God.
- ✓ He is moved to trust God, to be devoted to His will, and to enjoy Him. He, for the first time, is moved with regard to his whole being to God.
 - ✓ He gains the has a supernatural virtue of devotion to God. He gains transcendent desires and emotions.

7. However, it is possible for the believer who begins with supernaturally acquired virtue to lose those virtues, which means loss of love for God.
 - ✓ Loss of intellectual virtue, 2 Peter 2:20-22.
 - ✓ Loss of volitional virtue, 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17; James 4:17; Matt. 6; 1 John 2:15-16;
 - ✓ Loss of emotional virtue, Philip 3:19; Rom. 16:18.
8. With the loss of virtue comes loss of happiness which is sublimated by frantic searches for happiness.

9. It is impossible for a person without virtue to see what is truly good. Only the Christian with the right classical and biblical understanding really believes that that good is coextensive and coterminous with happiness, that the good constitutes happiness.

10. God is committed to our good and therefore to our happiness, Rom. 8:28-30; 5:1-5.

11. The supernatural virtues cannot operate in an immoral context that lacks basic virtue. A person who does not have moral virtues is going to have great difficulty in staying in fellowship and walking with the Lord through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

- ✓ Consider the impossibility of cultivating supernatural *intellective* virtues in an immoral context (e.g., indulging in wrong, anti-intellectual, and foolish thinking; rejection of critical thinking skills).
- ✓ Consider the impossibility of cultivating supernatural *appetitive* virtues in an immoral context (choosing, indulging and activating wrong desires).
- ✓ Consider the impossibility of cultivating supernatural *emotional* virtues in an immoral context (indulging in wrong emotions; failure to mature emotions).

12. A believer without moral virtue is going to have a great deal more difficulty trusting God, hoping in God, and loving God. His thoughts and feelings for good will be on evil as a good instead of God as a good (cf. David and Bathsheba). He may confess regularly, but he still has the wrong desires that make it very difficult to stay in fellowship with God very long.

13. Again, the three theological virtues for the Christian are faith, hope, and love. These all translate to having the right attitude to God, the right hope in God, and the right love for God. The virtuous intellect and will always bear on the operation of the right emotions toward God as vividly illustrated in the Psalms of David (e.g., love, joy, peace) and in the life of Jesus and the Apostle Paul (Philip. 3).

14. The spiritually virtuous person is one who is committed to an intellectual, appetitive, and emotive life of faith in God, hope in God, and loving God and his neighbor (all of those around him). These virtues become his dispositions and character rather than mere isolated acts. Furthermore, he really believes these are his goods that contain true happiness.

15. Only the virtuous person has the ability to see God and all of the Word of God as true, good, and beautiful. Negative volition picks and chooses and is always looking for a quick fix or a slogan to deal with deep and abiding issues. There cannot be any moral virtue without development of intellectual virtue. There can be no emotional virtue apart from intellectual and desiderative virtue.

16. To be morally weak translates into being spiritually weak due to lack of virtue in the intellect, will, and emotions. There is serious problem among many Bible believers with a Platonic type of Christianity. They continue to think wrong, desire wrong things, and emotionally be attracted to wrong things. Confession of sin alone is not going to magically give them supernatural virtue in the face of vice.

17. Testing and continued suffering for sin and evil are designed to inculcate more virtue: loving what is right and hating what is evil (David, James 1:2-4). Testing is always designed to give the believer the right thinking, the right desires, and the right emotions, cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-9.

18. Unless the believer grows in virtue, he will be a spiritual failure. Unless the appetites change, he will find God and Christianity unappealing and boring instead of exciting and the source of ultimate happiness. Duty is not enough, one must see Christianity as the TGB above all else.

19. The virtuous person sees, lives for, and enjoys the Good—what is truly True, Good, and Beautiful. He has developed capacity and thus enthusiasm for the Ultimate Good. He truly sees God, Bible doctrine, the spiritual life, the plan of God as coextensive with + Happiness. He has a healthy mind, desires, and emotions which continue to grow throughout his life.