

Heaven-31 (The Absolute Goodness of God and the Eternal Perspective on Suffering)

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
Natural Theology

Psalm 73:24 outlines 2 parts to our lives. Consider suffering 1 Pt. 5:10; Phlp 1:29; Jn 16:33; 1 Pt 4:12

Preparation: Note how the ministry of the Holy Spirit works in concurrence, 1 Jn 3:24; 1 Cor. 2:9-10.

The 3 parts to Bible class.

1. The importance of grounding spiritual foundations of the SL in reality/CT (will, volition).
2. The importance of grounding language/meaning in reality/CT (truth/objectivity in language).
3. The importance of advancing in the Truths of Word of God/CT (the spiritual life and Heaven).

Grounding spiritual foundations of the spiritual life (SL) in reality.

1. Unfortunately, some of our biblical and theological heritage comes from anti-intellectualism of the First and Second Great Awakenings. These anti-intellectual influences adversely affect our view of reality and methodology in the study of God, Truth, creation, man, and the spiritual life. Although we have benefited from great pastors who tried to overcome these negative influences, they were not able to escape the positivism of their time. They simply were not given the realist metaphysics necessary to grasp the nature of God, creation, man, and CT.
2. Some of these destructive influences are very deep and form the mental maps by which we interpret the data of reality in both natural revelation & supernatural revelation. For example, consider how our “natural” view of emotions, which is basically naturalistic and Darwinian.
3. Overview of anti-intellectualism in both natural and supernatural revelation Baconian inductivism, Thomas Reid’s Common Sense (instinctivism/irrationalism), positivism, mechanism, methodological naturalism, pragmatism, emotivism, nominalism, Bible-onlyism, and conduitism.
4. There is simply no way one can rid oneself of these destructive “*ways of thinking*” apart from philosophical realism. The first two parts of Bible class are designed to rebuilding what we have lost in order to regain the rational and objective approach to the Bible and God.
5. Philosophical understanding (realism) of the human will and volition vs the nominal approach.
 - a. It is self-evident that man always chooses what he sees as a good in some sense.
 - b. As rational beings, we have 2 orders of wills. We have desires and we also have desires about those desires. Moreover those desires are geared to sensed and non-sensed goods.
 - c. Our effective wishes (- or +) become our volitions (- or +).

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-36

3: Epistemology 32
- Existence 50
- History 50

2:Metaphysics 32
- Trans. 50

1: Reality
- Logic 32,
- Truth 32

All human beings have wills/desires that operate under 2 influences: the senses & the intellect—sensed based & rationally based. There are also 2 levels: instinct and rational.

- 1) Sense-based desires: man's desire for material/physical objects like food, drink, comfort.
- 2) Rational desires: man's desire for immaterial universals like God, Truth, Justice, Value.

*Immaterial/rational/
spiritual divine goods*

Priority?

Sensed-goods



Volition:

- ❖ Volition is more than a wish or a desire.
- ❖ Volition is an effective desire, the choice—good or bad.

Illustrations of volition and goods: sensed-based vs. universal Good.

- Adam and Eve, Gen. 3:6-7
- Esau's soup, Heb. 12:16.
- Jesus in the wilderness, Matt. 4:1-11
- Investing in temporal or eternal treasures, Matthew 6:19-24
- "You seek Me for loaves and fishes," John 6:26.
- Temporal vs eternal treasures, 1 Tim. 6:6-19.
- Treasures of the kosmos, 1 John 2:15-16
- Judas Iscariot's orientation, Matt. 26:15-16; John 12:4-6
- Demas's love for the things of the world, 2 Tim. 4:10.
- God's love in Acts 2:42-46 vs. Love for world in Js 4:1-6, 5:13-5:5.
- Question: What do you think would be the biggest obstacle for modern believers regarding assembling for several Bible classes through the week? Lack of time due to time needed to study Bible and notes or lack of time due to being too busy and invested in this life?

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato (428-348 BC)
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Ferdinand de Saussure
(1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell (1872-
1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein
(1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-
1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-
2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of
meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.

Philosophy of Language-35 Aristotle

Aristotle—the Realist

1. Aristotle's key passage: *De Interpretatione* 1, 16a3-8: *Spoken words then are symbols of passions of the soul and written words are symbols of spoken words. And just as written letters are not the same for all humans neither are spoken words But what these primarily are signs of, the passions of the soul, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our passions are likenesses.*
2. The rejection of Aristotelian realist epistemology and metaphysics by evangelicalism (after the Reformation) became the fatal starting point or foundation, dooming the movement to subjectivity with respect to language, natural revelation, and special revelation. The basic approach of early American revivalist is very similar to modern TV preachers. While the content of teaching is different, the methods and focus are the same as modern Bible churches. There is no middle ground between Reid's instinctivism & Aristotle's laws of CT.
3. With the rejection of the realistic epistemology and metaphysics of Aristotle, the very nature of truth was changed. Instead of viewing truth as correspondence between the thing in the world and the thing in the mind, truth was redefined and understood in different categories:
 - a. Coherence: This is when Christians believe certain truths because they "make sense" and agree with their views, e.g., "It must be right because it matches what I believe."
 - b. Pragmatic: This is when Christians believe certain truths because they are pragmatic or functional, e.g., "This is truth because it works." This was the favorite saying of the revivalists before and after the War for Independence (1730, 1790).
 - c. Nominalism: This is when Christians believe they know something just because they have a nominal definition of something rather than obtaining a real definition of something by direct reference to the objects whose essence/form is in the mind.
 - d. A painful example of popular word studies in charismania and doctrinal churches.
4. Only in Aristotle's realism (CT) do we have mind-independent objects in the external world that have an isomorphic relationship with their forms in the mind. In CT the terms refer to real entities that are grasped empirically and rationally (forms). When the internal state recognizes an essence, the mental object is the same λόγος as the λόγος embodied in the external object.

Warnings:
Matt 6:19-34
Rev. 14:13
2 Cor 5:10
Rev. 19:8



Eternal Heaven/Earth
Rev. 21-22

Temporary Heaven

John 17:24; Philip 1:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:8; Rev. 1-19



Temporary Hell
Luke 16:19-31



Eternal Hell
Rev. 20:11-15; Matt 10:28-30

Christ and the unbeliever:

Mark 8:36 "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"

Matthew 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. ¹⁴ "For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."

No innocent person ever goes to Hell. Moreover, there is nothing evil about Hell. People go there because of rejection of God's grace.

Eternal Hell

Rev. 20:11-15; Matt 10:28-30

The believer and death

1. We are all afflicted with a terminal disease.
2. The Lord was clear that we should invest far more into the next life than spend all of our time investing in this life and trying to avoid our terminal disease.
3. The believer who really has died unto the world and lives unto Christ (Gal 6:14) has no fear of death or suffering because Christ is the issue, both in life and death, Philip. 1:21; Heb. 2:14-15.
4. The prosperity gospel is so unbiblical that apart from demonic influence, it is hard to see why any Christian would believe it.

Heaven 31:

The Absolute Goodness of God and the Eternal Perspective on Suffering

1. *Romans 8:17-18, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*
 - Note the connection between suffering and glory, no suffering, no glory.
 - How can one consider the present sufferings not worthy apart from the eternal perspective?
 - This is the normal perspective of the spiritual life.

2. *2 Corinthians 4:17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*
- Note the essential connection between present suffering and future glory. You cannot have the second without the first.
 - Naturalism robs the believer of the EP.

3. *2 Corinthians 12:7 And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸ Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. ⁹ And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

- The prosperity gospel claims that God's love causes Him to withhold suffering from His children. The Word of God, on the other hand, insists that God's love empowers His children to live gracefully and gratefully *with* their sufferings. Believers do not testify that they suffer less; rather, they testify that God empowers them to face suffering with a transcendent perspective.

4. Luke 6:18 “ He was healing them all. . . .20, And turning His gaze on His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 "Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22 "Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 "Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. 24 "But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full. ²⁵ "Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe *to you* who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

- How is this possible apart from the EP?
- Transcendent joy can only come from a transcendent realm.

5. Note the need for the eternal perspective for the spiritual life, suffering, and proper motivation. How can rewards be real incentives without the eternal perspective?

1 John 3:3 And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵ And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷ but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

Luke 22:29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you ³⁰ that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Hebrews 11:36 and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. ³⁹ And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,

Revelation 2:7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.'

Revelation 2:10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:26 'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;

Revelation 3:21 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Matthew 25:23 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

6. There are many crucial lessons in the book of Job regarding suffering and the absolute goodness of God.
 - a. Although no believer is immune to suffering, every believer is always in a position to gain the proper perspective, which brings the peace and blessings that only come from seeing God's goodness, grace, and power. It was only after Job saw the greatness of God that he glorified God.

Job 42:1 Then Job answered the LORD, and said, ² "I know that Thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of Thine can be thwarted. ³ 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." ⁴ 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask Thee, and do Thou instruct me.' ⁵ "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; But now my eye sees Thee; ⁶ Therefore I retract, And I repent in dust and ashes."

- b. Job was not “healed” or restored until he recognized the greatness of God and prayed for those who had maligned and mistreated him.

Job 42:10 And the LORD restored what Job had lost after he prayed for his friends, and the LORD increased all that Job had twofold.

- c. Job teaches us that insisting on having all of the answers for pain and suffering dooms the believer to a life of frustration and resentment toward God.

- d. God never apologizes to Job or becomes defensive about the problem of evil. Instead, He provides a 2nd person narrative to bring Job into a 2nd person personal relationship. Moreover, He concludes with something like, *'You are unhappy with Me, Job. You have questioned me. You assume you know far more than you do. Now it's my turn to ask you some questions.'* It should be remembered that God does not owe us an explanation of anything.

- e. God never faults Job for being finite, only for failing to recognize that he has no right to pass judgment on the wisdom and goodness of an infinite *Esse*.

- f. Job illustrates the absurdity of making ourselves God's judge. To judge God is absurd because we lack God's omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom, holiness, justice, and goodness. He is infinite and we are finite. Our inability to understand all God's purposes in evil and suffering should not surprise us.

Job 38:4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding

- g. The resolution of all suffering is in a Person and a Place. The person is God and the place is Heaven. As far as the person, the perspective must be 2nd person before there can be true relationship and fellowship.

7. The Goodness of God and the goodness of suffering. God always uses suffering for a higher good. Hence, to withhold it would be to withhold part of His absolute goodness.
 - a. Suffering is part of our God-given destiny. Philip 1:29 is as much part of God's grace as John 3:16.

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."

Philippians 1:29 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

- b. It really is the goodness of God that is behind our afflictions. For God to withhold certain afflictions would be to withhold 100% goodness.
- Psalm 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Thy statutes.
 - Psalm 119:75 I know, O LORD, that Thy judgments are righteous, And that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me.
- c. God uses suffering to refine us, for character building, Isa. 48:10; Heb. 5:8 with Rom 8:29.

d. God uses suffering for the good of punishing evil, 1 Cor. 11:27-32; Acts 5:1-11.

e. God uses suffering to display His work:

John 9:1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.

f. God uses suffering to get believers to trust Him, 1 Pet. 5:7; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.

- g. Suffering cultivates the good of humility, 2 Cor. 12:7-10.
- h. Suffering exposes idols in our lives, Mat. 6:24; 1 Cor. 10:7-14; Col. 3:5.
- i. Suffering reminds us of our inability to control life.
- j. Suffering draws independent and arrogant people to faith and teaches them dependence on Christ.

- k. Suffering shows us who we are so we can see what we need to become.
- l. Suffering prepares us for eternity.
- m. Suffering can build Christlikeness, Philip 3:10-11.
- n. Suffering trains us to share in His holiness, Heb. 12:7-11.
- o. Suffering enables us to enter into an intimacy with God that is otherwise impossible.
- p. Suffering teaches us the importance of obedience to God, Heb. 5:8.
- q. While it may seem counterintuitive to thank God for suffering, the Bible commands it (Eph. 5:20) and countless people have benefited from it.

7. God is 100% sovereign, 100% good, 100% of the time—even in the most terrible situations. There really are no other options given the nature of reality and the special revelation of Scripture: God is either in absolute control or we live in a world that is governed by chance, people, and demons.
 - a. The metaphysics of God's absolute sovereign control. God is the existential cause behind all causes.
 - b. Special revelation: Acts 17:27; Col. 1:17; Eph. 1:11; Matt. 10:29; Jn 21:18.

- c. Regarding the problem of evil, we are told that God is already restraining an enormous amount of evil and suffering: *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.*
- Why is it that when chaos breaks out, it is considered the exception rather than the rule)? Fatal car and airplane accidents are statistically rare.
 - Why haven't tyrants already destroyed this planet? Even on the terrible day when the New York's Twin Towers collapsed 15,000 came out alive.
 - What has kept infectious diseases and natural disasters from killing 99% of the world's population rather than less than 1%.
 - If God permitted people to follow their every evil inclination all the time, life on this planet would cease to exist.
 - Severe suffering is unacceptable to us precisely because we are unaccustomed to it.

- d. The goodness of God and sinful man. Fallen human beings could not survive in a perfectly just world where God punished evil immediately.
- What if every time a person sinned he was judged? Say that the instant a person became selfish, arrogant, idolatrous, gluttonous, lustful, ungrateful, a gossip, or a liar. What if God judged Him with a bolt of lightning to his brain that instant?
 - Do you believe that the world would be a better place if people were immediately judged for their sins?
 - Do you really want nothing but totally effective, instantaneous justice only to be followed by people being sent to Hell? What about Moses, David, Saul of Tarsus?
 - If God had not permitted the evil that I perpetrated as an unbeliever, then I would never have been able to enjoy life with Him now.

- e. We are not positioned to know how much suffering is required to accomplish the God's best eternal purposes, nor how much it might hinder those purposes for God to make these purposes obvious.

- f. The argument that a good and all-powerful God should not permit pointless suffering assumes—without proving—that “pointless suffering” exists. There is no way any finite person can see any suffering as pointless. Only God is in the position to determine what is and isn't pointless. Some of the most meaningful accomplishments of our lives come in the context of our most difficult, seemingly pointless suffering.

- g. Too many Christians get distracted by assigning their difficulties to Satan or to people or to self. You can have victory by knowing that God works through everything that comes our way. God can make everything good, from human genetics under the Fall, an unreasonable boss, or a surgeon's mishap to a horrible accident involving a small child. All we need to know is that it is all under God's control. And He always desires to fulfill His good purpose in all things, He is 100% good, 100% of the time

h. Satan loves to get believers to think that God is not perfectly good or absolutely in control. He knows that if we are not absolutely convinced that God is absolute Good, it will create a host of evil within our souls, beginning with lack of love for Him. Separation from understanding God's goodness creates distance and even rage against God for doing so little for us according to what we think is good. Then, we will choose to write our own scripts of life.

8. God's goodness includes a number of His other attributes:
 - a. His mercy, which is His goodness toward those in distress;
 - b. His grace, which is His goodness toward those who deserve only punishment;
 - c. His patience, which is His goodness toward those who continue to sin over a period of time.

d. God's goodness is linked to His love

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

e. God's goodness is linked to His holiness

Psalm 65:4 How blessed is the one whom Thou dost choose, and bring near to Thee, To dwell in Thy courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, Thy holy temple.

f. God manifests His goodness to all people,

Psalm 145:9 The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works.

Acts 14:17 and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”

Matthew 5:45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

- g. God's goodness is absolute, there is absolutely no evil in Him. All evil is essentially defined by its absence of God (even opposition to God). He will never accommodate evil in any way.

Habakkuk 1:13 You are too just to tolerate evil; you are unable to condone wrongdoing.

Matthew 19:17 And He said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good; but if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments."

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

James 1:17 Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

9. We humans define goodness from our finite and fallen perspective. Then, far too often, we tend to criticize God for failing to be good in our eyes.
 - a. Man's standards compared to God's are much lower and debased, though this does not keep man from saying 'If I were all powerful I would stop A, B, or C.'
 - b. Imagine your child saying 'if I were you I would never discipline me or give me a shot or make me take that awful tasting medicine. Just let me run free in the neighbor and do whatever I want.' As a loving parent you never base your standards on your child, but on your knowledge and integrity and love. A loving parent makes their children eat veggies, clean their rooms, get their shots, and stay at home at nights. This is different from parents who let their kids do anything, including hanging out at the mall, and sleeping over with their sleazy buddies.
 - c. Illustration of a father who is seen slapping his son as he speeds down the road. What appears harsh could be great acts of love.

10. The existence of evil does not contradict God's goodness since God can use evil to bring about a greater good.

11. A good God will eliminate evil as far as He can without losing a greater good or bringing about a greater evil. God could eliminate some evil, but the result would be a greater evil. He could have killed Adam and Eve after they sinned, but then there would be no human race.

12. God's goodness on this earth is but a small sampling of the goodness of God that we will see in the ultimate Heaven when He will remove all evil, Rev 21:3-5. Then, we will see it all, the beauty of it all. We will be united with Beauty as we are united with God and His restored creation.

13. The eternal perspective and accountability at the JSJC.

- a. The point of the JSJC is accountability. Yes, both the believer and unbeliever are held accountable. The exception is that the believer is never accountable for his personal sins, Rom. 8:1. This is the single greatest blessing! Moreover, the JSJC is only for the bride of Christ.
- b. The central issue in all evaluations is love for the Lord and things of the God. Love really is the root, hinge, and central factor in all rewards. It is love for the Lord that motivates all activity worthy to be honored, 2 Tim 4:8; 1 Cor. 13; Mat 25:46; John 13:34-35; 1 Jn. 4:7-16.

- c. We will be evaluated by how our lives and ministry followed the Word of God, Jn 14:15. The Scriptures, with their commands and principles, will form the objective standard used by the Lord. He will not reward us based on traditions. It is all about His revealed Word. The study and application of God's Word is a key to our rewarding. How seriously do we take the Master's instructions? There are going to be a lot of surprises, especially in the ranks of liberal churches.

- d. We will be evaluated based on the extent to which we have been faithful stewards of all that He has entrusted to us, 1 Cor. 4:2; Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27. Believers must always remember that they are held accountable for what has been given to them. Not what has been given to another.

- e. We will be evaluated on the basis of our motives, 1 Cor. 4:5. The Lord is not interested only in what we do but also why we do it (or do not do it). Those who live and serve with a desire to please and honor Christ will receive great reward. Those who live and serve motivated by self-promotion, financial gain, or some other illicit goal will not receive rewards.

- f. Negatively speaking, there will be loss of reward and a sense of shame for those who lived self-centered lives instead of Christ-centered lives, 1 Cor 3:15; 1 Jn 2:28.

- g. Positively speaking, rewards will consist of many blessings and privileges such as
- Serving Christ in greater ways in the Kingdom (Mat. 25:19-23; Lk 19:16-19),
 - Enjoying special joy and fellowship (Mat 25:21, 23; 1 Pt 4:12-13).
 - Being recipients of divine commendation, Matt 25:21
 - Receiving a variety of crowns, 1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pt 5:4.
 - Receiving rewards simply for remaining faithful under trials, Js 1:2, 3, 12; Rev. 2:10; 3:11.

- It will be the bride's exalted privilege to reign WITH the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There is a sense in which the bride is a co-sharer of the reign whereas others are only subjects of the King.
- It will be the bride's exalted privilege to spend eternity in Christ's palaces and on His throne. We will be companions and partners with Christ for all of eternity. He is preparing us for that now.
- The challenge for the Bride now is remain pure to Christ alone, 2 Cor. 11:2. We should never be tempted to live for the world as if it were our true lover and standard of value (1 Jn 2:15; Js 4:4; Rom. 12:2; Matt. 6:24).