

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 -31

Reality -Logic 32,
Truth 32

8/5/2013

1. **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.* Consider how deceptive philosophies of Ockham, Descartes, Hume, & Kant have robbed us of so much wonderful Truth re: Reality, God, creation, us.
2. **The unique opportunities at FBC** for whole truth (PR+SFL+BD) for a comprehensive explanation and grounding in all reality, not just higher SL principles to memorize.
3. **Metaphysics 31:** a) its universal scope and undeniability; b) how it allows one to see Christ's sustaining power (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; Jn 1:3; Acts 17:28); c) its empirical, scientific, self-evident nature; d) its essentialism (vs. reductionism and atomism); e) its form/matter illustrated at JR's farm (stone, horse); f) its hylemorphic manifestation in 5 year old Ava.
4. **The spiritual life.** The need for supernatural virtue, Gal. 5:22-23; Eph 5:18; 4:30; 1 Thess 5:18.

Stage 3

Stage 2

Stage 1

Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God.
- Virtuous love for God: Intellective, volitional, emotional love of God. Enduring fellowship.
- Life of “above all you could ever ask or imagine”

Holy Spirit



Bible Doctrine

Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

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

Holy Spirit



Bible Doctrine

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.

Metaphysical breakthroughs in Reality by moving out of anti-intellectualism

1. The nature of God as 'Ehyeh, Exod. 3:14. Pure Act with no essence who gives act to all act/potentialities.
 2. The nature of man as hylemorphic (removal of Cartesianism and Hobbesian materialism).
 3. Souls in all living things. This removes mechanistic view of nature.
 4. The distinction between rationality in humans and imaging in animals.
 5. The invisible/immortal nature of man's mind with a *telos* for Ultimate Truth.
 6. The invisible/immortal nature of man's 3 acts of the mind.
 7. The nature of immaterial abstraction to grasp essences.
 8. The nature of intellectualive virtue.
 9. The invisible/immortal nature of man's volition with a *telos* for Ultimate and Infinite Good.
 10. The nature of volitional virtue.
 11. The nature of man's "emotions," e.g., affections, passions, experiences, mental states.
 12. The nature of emotional virtue.
 13. Emotional life of Jesus Christ in the Synoptics.
 14. The difference between substance and accident in change as per metaphysics.
 15. The philosophical principle of "be is as be does" (natures) in contrast to reductionism and Darwinism.
 16. The wonders of *beings* of creation (cf., Job) in contrast to Platonic depreciation of the sensible world.
 17. The distinction between perinoetic truth and dianoetic truth.
 18. The power, beauty, and place of logic as a tool for Truth and the SL (cf. law of non-contradiction; Isa 55:8-11).
 19. The need for congregation to think philosophically and metaphysically about the Bible and Reality.
 20. The whole truth, full truth of Christianity rather than just "higher spiritual life" truths.
 21. The True, Good, and Beautiful, especially in relation to creation, God and His Word.
 22. The ability to move believers into deeper realities beyond the original languages.
 23. The act-potentiality that is shot through all of creation (all beings are dependent and only change modes).
 24. The timelessness of God.
 25. The insufficiency of Dakean and Baconian methodology (problems with ICE as a methodology).
 26. The nature and evil of spiritual anti-intellectualism and anti-science.
 27. How God and good are coterminous with true happiness.
 28. We have gained all of these things simply through philosophy, which only depends on reason and reason alone.
- (I would not want to live one day without these wonderful realities. I am so glad I learned these before going Home)

Intellect
MIND



Volition WILL

-Intellective appetite

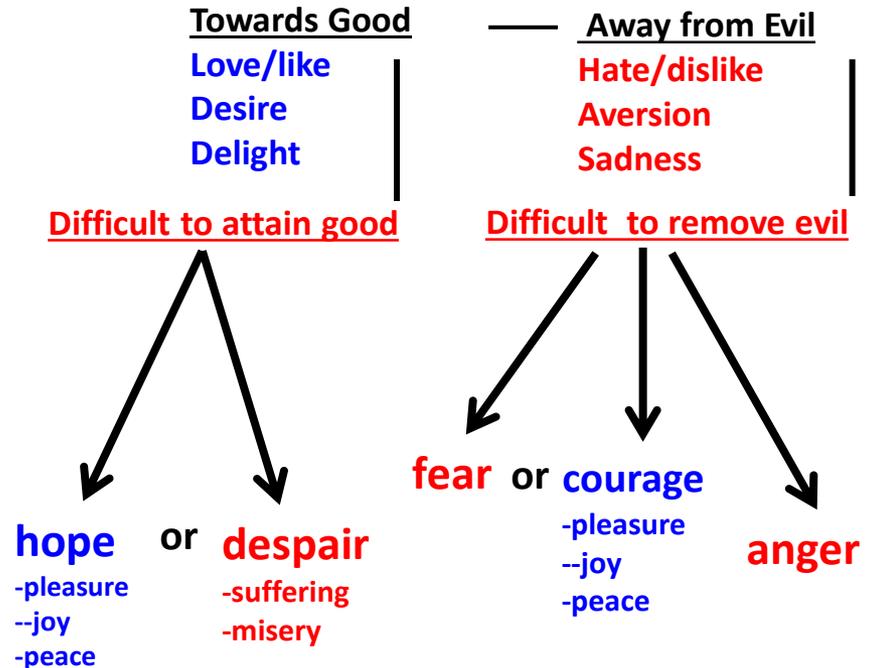
-Sense appetite



Affections Human
Passions Experiences

1. The will (or volition) is what is known as the heart in the Bible, Prov. 2:2; 3:5; 5:12; 6:18, 14:14; 16:1, 5; 19:21; 23:17; Matt. 6:19-21; 22:37; Acts 13:22; Heb. 4:12.

2. The will is the single greatest issue in life, bar none. It determines more about your life, temporal and eternal, than any other single factor in life.



What we care about: the desires of the Will

3. Understanding basic nature of the will (volition).
 - a. The will (volition) is the general name applied to all activity involving attraction-aversion tendency resulting from intellectual awareness.
 - b. The will is a conscious tendency regarding an intellectually known object.
 - c. The will is not completely free. It has an intrinsic and spontaneous appetite (like/love) for what it considers good.
 - d. The will is always in some state regarding its object: e.g., desire/love (object absent or not possessed), enjoyment (object possessed).

- e. The will has a multifaceted web of attributes and activities.
- It has *interests* as general dispositions to direct activity toward a specific goal/good.
 - It has *intentions* with regard to goal or end.
 - It is *resolutions* with regard to means.
 - It is has power of *choice* between motives and goods.
 - It is always involved in two causes: efficient and final. It is the means whereby the human being exerts efficient causality, and according to elicited appetite, it moves to a final cause or purpose.
 - It has *motives* regarding an intellectually known good.
 - Its strength or conviction is related to knowledge in the intellect.
 - It is naturally *determined* to seek the good.
 - Upon finding good, it moves into joy. Joy occurs when the will is resting in some good.
 - Restlessness, boredom, and suffering occurs when the will does not find its good.

- f. The ontology of the will:
- It is unextended in space (as part of the unextended intellect). This means that it has no physical dimensions.
 - Since it is immaterial, no matter can determine its operations. It is non-determined. Determinism is false.
 - It operates on two levels: spiritual and physical.
 - Its invisible nature seeks universal, absolute, and infinite Good.
 - The will's inability to find its desire fulfilled leads to a host of psychological and spiritual pathologies.
 - The dominant characteristics of a will that does not find a worthy object of good is boredom and a frantic search for happiness.
 - There is no material object that can sustain the invisible will's interest.
 - Only God can capture the will's enduring interest, because God is the only infinite good.
 - The ontology of the will is one of the key reasons for exhortations to set the will on the Infinite, Matt. 6:19-34; Col. 3:1-4.

4. Since all wills cannot help but seek what it values as good, the most important thing is capacity to know the Good, which is what virtue is all about: the power of understanding and desiring and enjoying the Good.
5. Supernatural virtue (the supernatural power for divine good), is required before any believer can have a blessed will that leads to flourishing and happiness in the Good (Gal. 5:22-23; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).

6. Only with supernatural virtue will the believer's will see and seek God as the Ultimate Good and connect all temporal goods with Eternal Good. Once the believer really sees God as his Good, he moves into seeing God in terms of love rather than utility, pleasure, or duty. The will must be changed to see God as Ultimate Goodness and thus source of all true happiness.
7. The will not only determines one's attitude toward God, it also determines one's happiness in the temporal life.

8. Suffering is intimately connected with the will, goods, and offsetting goods/benefits.
 - a. Consider the agonies the best athletes voluntarily put themselves through for a greater good in contrast to lesser pains that violate their wills.
 - b. Consider the pain (and joy) women go through who voluntarily refuse anesthetics in childbirth in contrast to lesser pains when their wills are violated (purse snatching or rape).

- c. The stronger the human will is that is violated, the greater the pain and suffering. Suffering is always about the will.

- d. A major source of suffering is when a human being fails to get desires of the heart, some good that is intensely desired. It is not healthy for a will to live in sorrow due to not getting the desires of the heart. The will is not designed to be violated or live without the good it desires.

- e. The only way to defeat suffering due to loss of a good is the gaining of a greater good, where the greater good or benefit outweighs the loss of good in suffering (2 Cor. 12:7-10).
- f. As long the suffering exceeds the benefit, there is no victory over suffering.
- g. Our “good” is all about what we care about very much. No one is going to have victory over suffering without caring much about the corresponding good/benefit.
- h. We all start out very deceived about the true desires of our hearts. We all start out alienated from ourselves are given to suppress and lie about who we really are.

9. The crucial issue in the desires of our hearts/wills is love. Love is what we really care about. All suffering is related to love one way or another. All suffering is related to being deprived of some good that we love.

10. The ultimate goal of all suffering in the providence of God is to remove impediments to loving God. All suffering comes from the love of God to make us better (virtue) and draw us to Him (love). God's allowance of suffering is always about loving Him. It is all about union with God.

11. Love for God, and others, must be understood in terms of offices, not competition. There must also be a healthy love of self before there can be virtue. Love is desire for good (virtue) and intimacy (integrity, honesty).
12. Before one can love God, the will must be integrated around the Good. This not only demands integration of 1st and 2nd order wills, but intellectual as well as affective/appetitive virtue.

13. Only in volitional integration is there whole heartedness, freedom, and happiness. Double-mindedness is lack of integration manifested in first and 2nd order wills. Lack of integration is characterized by a disordered mind. It is impossible to be integrated around evil because of the moral nature of man.

- Your 1st order will is what you like along with your reasons for liking it.
- 2nd order will is the will you want, after all things are considered. This is the real issue in life. This 2nd order can be for good or evil that is viewed as good. A person can bring the first order in line with 2nd but not vice-versa.
- Only when we live in accordance with our higher order are we integrated and free.
- Both sanctification as well as hardening take place toward the second order will: it is bringing the first in line with 2nd.

14. Supernatural virtue brings total integration of the will around the Good and in so doing bestows capacity to see the value of true Good and thus a power of supernatural love for the Good of God and His plan that offsets all temporal privations, sufferings, and goods, Psa. 16:11; Matt. 5:3-12; Rom. 15:13; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Eph. 5:20; Philip 4:4, 11-13; Heb. 11:6; James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:6-8; 4:13-14.

15. This is no victory over suffering until and unless the believer sees the offsetting benefits/goods greater than the privations. Mechanics alone can never do this. The only way to defeat suffering is to have a will that has the virtue of seeing the smallness of one's temporal life on earth in comparison with the everlasting portion in God and in the afterlife, Job; Col. 3:1-3; 2 Pet 1:4-11.

16. The supernatural virtues cannot operate in context that lacks basic moral 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 *volitional/appetitive* virtues in an immoral context (choosing, indulging and activating wrong desires, darkening the heart).
 - Consider the impossibility of cultivating supernatural *emotional/affections* virtues in an immoral context (indulging in wrong emotions; failure to mature emotions).

17. With a virtuous will, the believer cares more about (= loves) God and the plan of God than temporal life issues. We see this with Job. This is not a stoic view, but seeing God as coextensive with Good.
18. Throughout the Bible the point is made again and again: life is all a matter of relationship with God. Only with that relationship is it possible to understand, wish and enjoy Him as God, even in the midst of real pain and sorrow in this world, 1 Pet. 1:8. Furthermore, through God we can bring eternal value to temporal goods and blessings.
19. Unless the believer grows in virtue, he will be a failure. Unless his appetite changes, he will never see God or the plan of God with love, desire, or joy. He may follow God out of duty, hedonism, or pragmatism, but he will never have victory over suffering apart from a total transformation of the will by virtue.

Pride: The destroyer of a good will

1. God fights against the proud will, 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.

2. Pride always corrupts the will and 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, by an act of the will, 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. For further study of pride, see 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.