

# Heaven-37 (Eternal Perspective: free choices and the 100% goodness of God, 100% of the time)

## 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. Note the connection between the virtues in this life & attitude to the next, Mt. 5:1-13.**

**Preparation for Bible Class—the wonderful promise of 1 John 1:7 and its relation to 1:9.**

### **The 3 parts to Bible class.**

1. Spiritual foundations: The three philosophical frameworks (2 slides)
2. Philosophical Realism: The two semantic triangles—non-realism vs. Realism (1 slide)
3. Development of Bible doctrine: Heaven—free choices and & the 100% goodness of God.

### **Spiritual foundations: The need to liberate Christianity and the Bible from cultural captivity.**

1. We must veracious about the Total Truth of BD. Anyone who truly is passionate about Total Truth will always love and resonate with realistic philosophy. Think of philosophy as the bringing together all of the data in a unified cogent manner. It is unfortunate that pagans like Socrates loved truth & made it his life’s goal more than many Christians who opt for pragmatism/religion.
2. Every rational person, without exception, has a philosophical framework. It is how we make sense of life. Our philosophy will determine our views on the SL, the local church, marriage, family, government and everything else. American culture seems to be winning against Christendom.
3. Though there have been those who attempt to deny universal laws of logic, like the basic law of contradiction, it is impossible to live with such denial for very long.
4. There are three major philosophical systems that we need to understand.
  - a. Platonism. He had by far the greatest impact on Christian thinkers through the Middle Ages.
  - b. Aristotleanism. He was reintroduced into Europe in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.
  - c. Americanism (Reidian Common Sense coupled with Baconian inductivism).
    - i. Thomas Reid’s Common Sense: “it just makes sense!” By common sense Reid meant those truths known by universal experience. We see this common sense enshrined in the Declaration of Independence “we hold these truth to be self-evident.”
    - ii. Francis Bacon is all about the inductive method. Note popular inductive Bible study.
    - iii. The Reidian/Baconian methodology was embraced by American culture and the Bible movement. The first step was to free minds from historical theological formulations. Second step was to confront biblical text as a collection of facts that speak for themselves by “common sense.” Third step was to create mechanics. 1

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-42

3: Epistemology 32  
- Existence 50  
- History 50

2:Metaphysics 32  
- Trans. 50

1: Reality  
- Logic 32,  
- Truth 32

## Non-relativistic systems



### Platonic Philosophy

- Christianized Platonism through Middle Ages
- Augustine
- Dualistic
- Rationalistic
- Cartesian

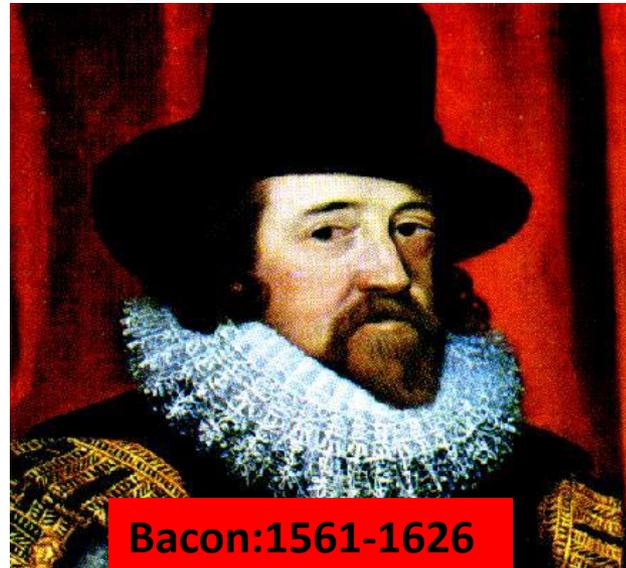
### Aristotelian Philosophy

- Discovered logic as the organon of science
- Metaphysics of being.
- Revived in Christianity in 1200s
- Reorientation to world of senses.
- Renewal of science
- Empirical/metaphysical/deductive

## Very relativistic systems

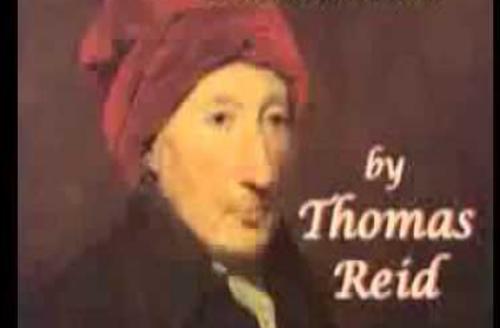
### American philosophy

- 1700-present
- Reid= Instinctive,
- Bacon= inductive
- Easily absorbs culture
- Anti-philosophical
- Anti-metaphysical
- Anti-intellectual
- Bible movement
- Nominalistic



Bacon:1561-1626

*An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*



by  
*Thomas Reid*

Reid: 1710-1796

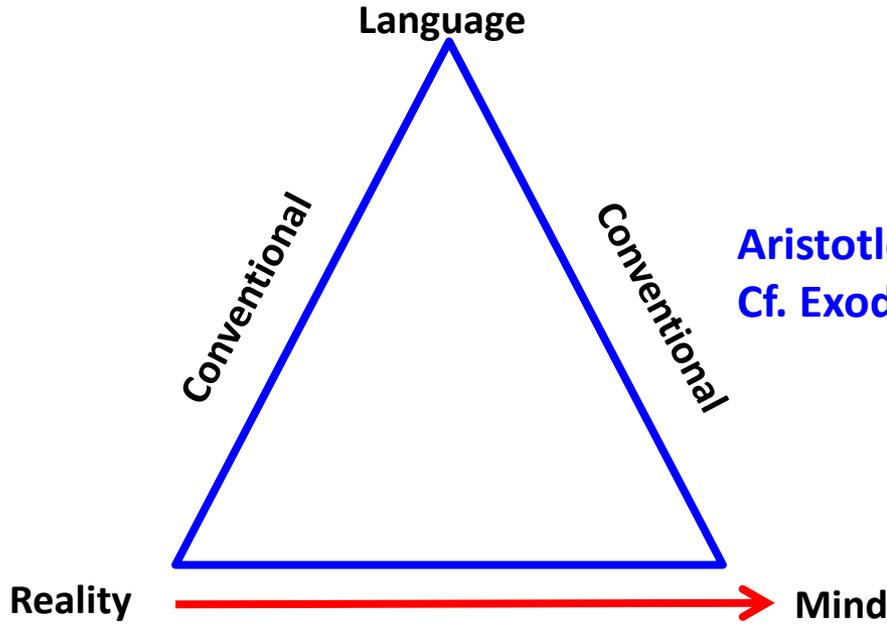
Outline

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

- Modern theories of meaning
- 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.

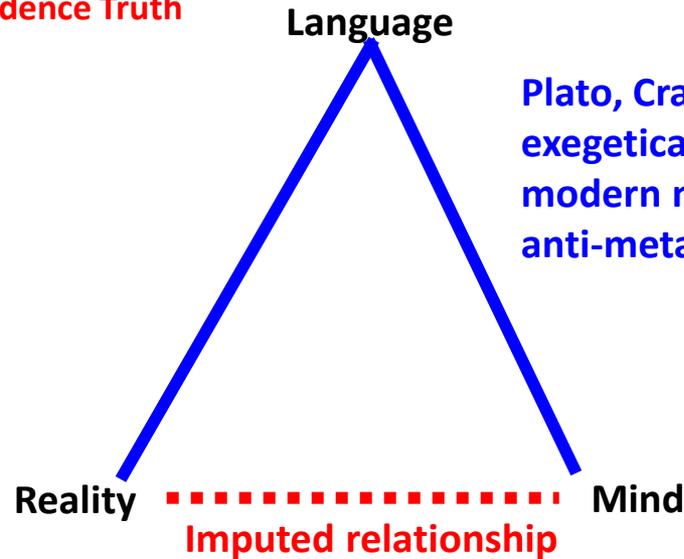
# Philosophy of Language-42 Aristotle

## Language



**Reality informs the mind**  
**Correspondence Truth**

**Aristotle, Aquinas, Adler**  
**Cf. Exodus and Jesus's generation**



**Plato, Cratylus, Fundamentalists,**  
**exegetical/ICE-Bible movements,**  
**modern materialistic linguistics,**  
**anti-metaphysical approach.**

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



**Temporary Heaven**

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

**Eternal Heaven/Earth**  
**Rev. 21-22**

**Christ and the fate of unbelievers and believers:**

**Matthew 13:41** "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, <sup>42</sup> and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.



**Temporary Hell**  
**Luke 16:19-31**



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

**IMPORTANCE OF THE EP.**

Consider the consequences in every area of life if believer does not develop the EP? Did Christ mean what He said about darkness of soul and idolatry for those who reject the EP? Can you think of any evil or malady that is not in some way related to lack of EP? Remember the Bible is explicit about the EP:

1. Philip. 1:21-23
2. Matt. 5:1-16
3. Hebrews 11-12:2
4. Col. 3:1-5.
5. Philip 3:18-31.
6. Heb. 2:14-15.
7. Rom. 8:18.
8. Matt. 6:19-34

**John Sanders vs. Adams**  
**Osteen vs. the Apostle Paul**

**Heaven 37: (Eternal Perspective: free choices and the  
100% goodness of God, 100% of the time)**

1. There is no greater issue before you and me for our lives than our “free choices.” What we choose will determine both our temporal lives as well as our lives throughout all of eternity. We must never lose sight of the fact that God is working on us for the betterment of our eternal lives.

2. Our ability to make free choices must be understood as capacities within limits and always in light of two interrelated facts:
  - a. Every person is made in the image of God. This is where we find man's capacities to freely plan, think, and choose.
  - b. Every person can only choose according to his nature. This is where we find man's limits to his freedom. All men are slaves to sin. A slave has metaphysical capacities because he is in the image of God. However, his freedom is circumscribed to the prison. E.g., a prisoner can be honest or dishonest, eat or refused to eat, kind or unkind, pray or not pray, and determine the kind of literature he reads. However, he is not free to visit the local donut shop.

3. Nomenclature: It is more accurate to think of our volition in terms of “free choices” rather than the popular and misleading term “free will.”

- Given the biblical teaching about bondage to sin, free will should be more accurately thought of as “meaningful and consequential human choices within inherent predilections and options.”
- In other words, it is a deliberative choosing on the basis of desires and values. It is the ability to choose as one desires,

**Hebrews 11:24** By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin;

- No man ever wills anything contrary to his desires, or desires anything contrary to his will. For example, the person who is addicted to porn will not stop unless he has a good reason to.

4. Note the Scriptural problem with the idea of a totally free will to do what one wants. We must be careful not to attribute more freedom than the Bible allows.
- **John 8:34** Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.
  - **Romans 6:16** Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone *as* slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey . . .you were slaves of sin. . . For just as you presented your members *as* slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in *further* lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. <sup>20</sup> For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>22</sup> But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

5. Historical overview of the two viewpoints that provide us with a broad framework for the discussion of free will.
  - a. Desiderius Erasmus authored *On Free Will* (1524). He believed that God gives the unbeliever free choice that does not require further divine empowerment.
  - b. Martin Luther responded with *On the Bondage of the Will*. Luther noted that free choice is allowed to man only with respect to what is beneath him and not what is above him.” Moreover, he wrote that “all the passages in the Holy Scriptures that mention assistance are they that do away with ‘free-will,’ and these are countless . . . For grace is needed, and the help of grace is given, because ‘free-will’ can do nothing.

6. An unbeliever has free choices, but only within his natural fallen nature. He has no desire for God or the EP.

**Jeremiah 17:9** "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?"

**Jeremiah 13:23** "Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? *Then* you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil.

7. Scripture calls man to make free choices for God and the plan of God and continually describes him as having the power to make meaningful choices.

**Deuteronomy 30:11** "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. <sup>12</sup> "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' <sup>13</sup> "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' <sup>14</sup> "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

**Deuteronomy 30:19** "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, <sup>20</sup> by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

**Ezekiel 33:11** "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord God, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'

**Proverbs 4:13** Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life. <sup>14</sup> Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not proceed in the way of evil men. <sup>15</sup> Avoid it, do not pass by it; Turn away from it and pass on.

**Joshua 24:15** "And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

**James 4:4** You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

**1 Peter 4:3** For the time already past is sufficient *for you* to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

**Hebrews 11:24** By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; <sup>26</sup> considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

## MORE ON THE 100% GOODNESS OF GOD, 100% OF THE TIME

1. The modern loss of eternal perspective coupled with an attempt to provide some cover for God for suffering on this earth has resulted in a modern downgrading of the sovereignty, the power, the knowledge, and the love of God in contemporary “theology” (process theology). However, this is no solution. It actually makes things worse. For it means that God cannot be 100% good in all of His attributes. The whole point of suffering is to bring about Hope, which is the eternal perspective.

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

2. Limiting God's attributes is no solution! Consider the Word of God. Note the absoluteness of all of the classical attributes of God, which enables God the ability to be 100% good, 100% of the time.

**Isaiah 46:9** "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; *I am* God, and there is no one like Me, <sup>10</sup> Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; <sup>11</sup> Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned *it, surely* I will do it.

- Note the sovereignty and omniscience of God and the goodness of God in times of enormous suffering.

**Luke 1:37** "For nothing will be impossible with God."

- The words of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

**Genesis 18:14** "Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

- God speaking to Abraham.

**Ephesians 3:20** Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

- Promise for all church age believers.

**Matthew 28:18** And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

- The one who died for us has all authority in Heaven and Earth.

**Revelation 1:8** "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

- Revelation to suffering John who is exiled on the island of Patmos.

**Psalms 103:13** Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

- God has real affections for believers that are analogous to a human father's compassion.

**Isaiah 49:15** "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. <sup>16</sup> "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms *of My hands*; Your walls are continually before Me.

- God has affections that are analogous to those of a mother.
- God is omniscient.

**Jeremiah 32:16** . I prayed to the Lord 'Ah Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee, <sup>18</sup> who showest lovingkindness to thousands, but repayest the iniquity of fathers into the bosom of their children after them, O great and mighty God. The LORD of hosts is His name; <sup>19</sup> great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, giving to everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his deeds;

- This was prayed at a time when the armies of Babylon were advancing against God's people.

**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.

**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.

- God’s goodness extends to all people. This includes good things to humanity at large, manifested in both nature and culture, in such good things as families, animals, forests, rivers, music, art, and sports.

**Job 1:21** And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." <sup>22</sup> Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

- Consider the devastating loss of Job. The entire universe was observing Job and observes us.

**Psalms 116:15** Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His godly ones.

- Death for the believer from God's perspective.

**Jeremiah 33:11** the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who say, "Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, For the LORD is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting"; *and of those* who bring a thank offering into the house of the LORD. For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were at first,' says the LORD.

**Nahum 1:7** The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him,

**Psalms 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.

- Note how God's goodness is tied to His loyal love.

**2 Cor 12:7-10:** Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

- The goodness of transcendent humility, joy, and strength in suffering.

**Romans 8:18** 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.

- The goodness of the transcendent vertical perspective.

**2Co 4:17** For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

- The blessed, transcendent, eternal perspective.

**1Pe 4:13** but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.

- The goodness of sharing and being conformed to the image of Christ with transcendent joy.

**Nehemiah 9:17** "And they refused to listen, And did not remember Thy wondrous deeds which Thou hadst performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But Thou art a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness; And Thou didst not forsake them.

**Nehemiah 9:32** "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who dost keep covenant and lovingkindness, Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before Thee,

- God love, especially His loyal love abounds throughout the Word of God. It proliferates. It's overflowing, even excessive—something all sufferers need to hear and believe.

**1 John 3:1** See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**Ephesians 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

**Romans 5:5** and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

**1 John 4:9** By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

- The love of God must never be separated from His holiness. Technically, His nature is one. This is called the aseity of God.

3. To affirm the Goodness of God is not to say that God will always appear to be good, that when He is good the believer will always like Him for it. There are times when God's acts of goodness may appear harsh or even cruel—as noted in many of the previous passages. Kindness, or feeling good, is not the same as love and goodness.
4. We need more help at *being good* than *feeling good*. God's goodness is far greater than ours. It is only through the eternal perspective and faith can we live with absolute assurance of the goodness of God even in painful and horribly difficult times.
5. The bottom line: we can use the trials of life to draw closer to the lover of our souls and gain virtue like Tada or we can become victims and lose our faith like Bart Ehrman.

## More on Suffering

1. God uses suffering for His glory. It is imperative that we understand that the universe is all about God and His glory. Moreover, whatever exalts God's glory also works for the ultimate good of believers. In other words, His glory accrues to the believer's eternal benefit.

**Isaiah 48:10-11** "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction, 11 for my own sake, for my own sake I do this.

2. God uses suffering to refine and mature us. It really is difficult to grow spiritually when all is going well.

**Hebrews 5:8** Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

**Romans 8:29** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

### 3. God uses suffering for the good of displaying His work:

**John 9:1** And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" <sup>3</sup> 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.

4. God uses suffering for the good of motivating believers to trust Him,

**1 Peter 5:6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.

**2 Corinthians 1:8** For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came *to us* in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; <sup>9</sup> indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves in order that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;

5. God uses suffering for the good of cultivating humility, 2 Cor. 12:7-10.
6. God uses suffering for the good of exposing idols in our lives, Mat. 6:24; 1 Cor. 10:7-14; Col. 3:5.
7. God uses suffering for the good of reminding us that we are not in control.
8. God uses suffering for the good of breaking our independence and arrogance so we will trust Christ. Suffering shows us who we are so we can see what we need.

9. God uses suffering for the good of building Christlikeness,

**Philippians 3:10** that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

10. God uses suffering for the good of motivating us to live in His holiness. God is far more interested in holiness than health.

**Hebrews 12:10** For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us for our* good, that we may share His holiness. <sup>11</sup> All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

11. God uses suffering for the good of bringing us into an intimacy with Him that would be otherwise impossible.
12. While it seems counterintuitive to thank God for the good of sufferings, the fact is that the Bible commands it and countless people have been transcendentally blessed by it.

**Ephesians 5:20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

**Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

13. The existence of evil does not contradict God's goodness since God can use evil to bring about a greater good.
  
14. 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. For example, He could have killed Adam and Eve after they sinned, but then there would be no human race. He could have prevented Joni Tada from breaking her neck, but it would have been a less good from the eternal perspective.