

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

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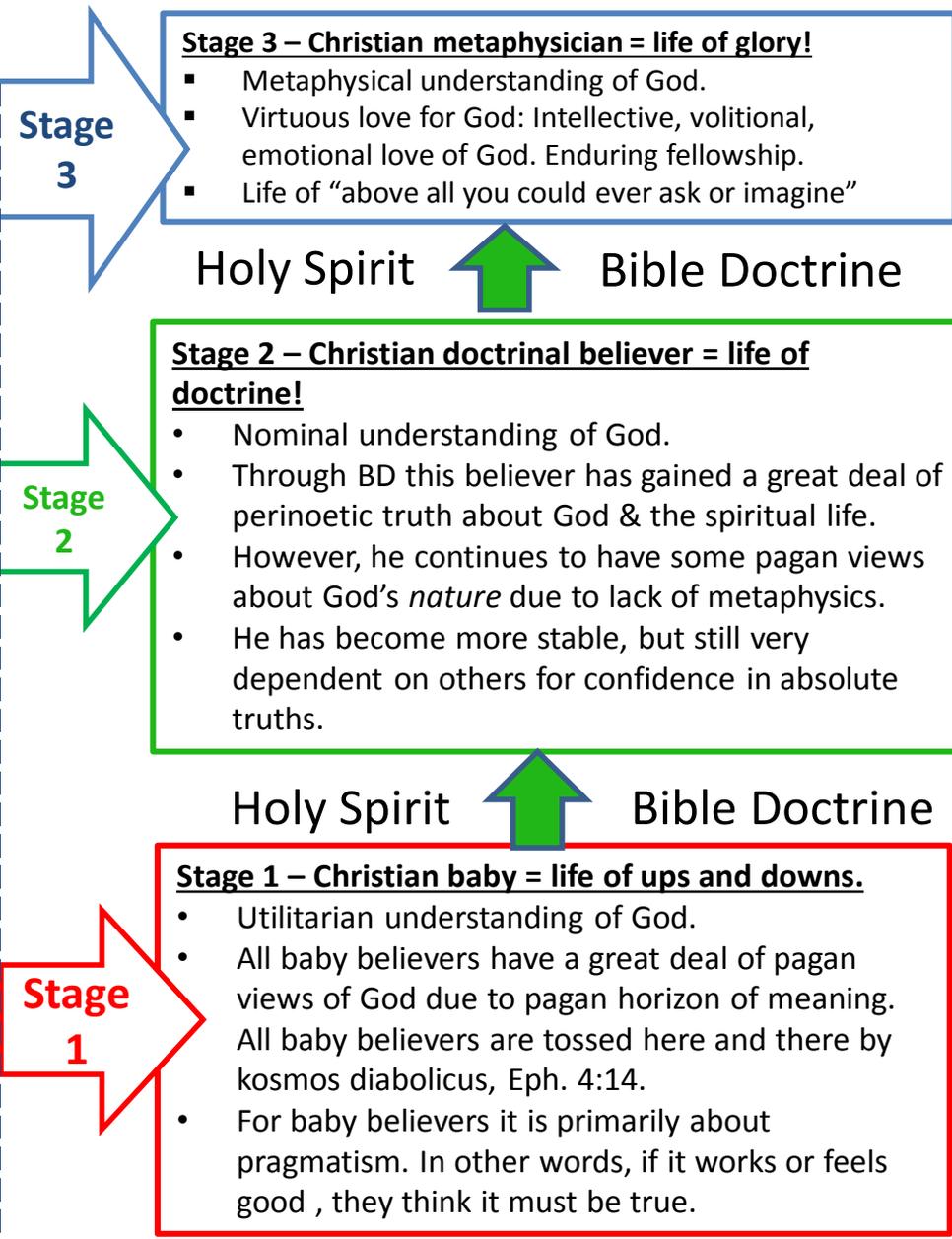
Hermeneutics
Linguistics
Epistemology 1-3
Metaphysics -32 Trans. 50
Reality –Logic 32, Truth 32

8/23/2013

1. Introduction: 1 Thessalonians 5:21
But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good;

2. FBC offers unique opportunity for every believer to enter the world of Prime Reality & Whole Truth (PR+SFL/BD = 20+50 min). Grasping Prime Reality is far more applicable than other studies, e.g., archaeological corroboration of the Bible. If you stick with it, you will be able to see more clearly the reality of God all around you, the truths of the WOG in a whole new light, but be able to stay in fellowship for most if not all of each day, which is extremely difficult with the false views of man and virtue. Epistemology will open up a new world of why people believe what they do.

3. The spiritual life. The most critical ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s spiritual life is His sanctifying ministry on our wills/hearts. Remember, the issue is not when or where you were born or die, but what you do in between with, in, by God.



Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 1 – The nature of the journey from metaphysics to epistemology.

- Meaning of epistemology: "the science of knowledge."
- Christianity defeated skepticism when it dominated philosophy. Look at the mess we are in our bollixed up cultural milieu of skepticism.
- Modern erosion of Christianity due to anti-intellectualism has led to
 - ✓ Harm to the name of Jesus Christ and Christianity.
 - ✓ Harm to our children and grandchildren. The psychological pain can be devastating—and it is all so unnecessary.
 - ✓ Harm to Christians' faith. Growing skepticism among Christians as irrational skeptical concepts creep into their presuppositions.
 - ✓ Harm to understanding Christian worldview and the SL. Breaks my heart that so many Christians are both clueless and reflect the same skeptical attitudes of Hume and unbelievers about metaphysics, 'Ehyeh, PP, and the VCA (Vertical cosmological argument) for God.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 2

- Rene Descartes (1596-1650).
- He shifted the paradigm to demand mathematical certainty vs. epistemological certainty.
- Types of skepticism.
 - ✓ Iterative skeptic (from Pseudepigrapha to philosophical psychology).
 - ✓ Global skeptic (I do not believe anything in reality or the Word of God).
 - ✓ Local skeptic (I only believe this part of reality). Very difficult position to maintain.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- The need for every person to have epistemological justification. Consider the “doctrine of emotions” I sent out months ago which said, “the soul resides in the non-thinking part of the brain called the thalamus.”
- Modern skeptics have no epistemic justification and should be made aware of this fact. Let’s illustrate the lack of epistemological justification with Richard Dawkins. This is a great illustration of how his broken cognitive apparatus.

First, the ironclad logical argument for God based on morality.

1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.
2. Objective moral values and duties do exist.
3. Therefore, God exists.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- Note the lack of epistemic justification of Dawkins, who says about creation: *There is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, but pitiless indifference. We are machines for propagating DNA. It is every living objects sole reason for being.*
 - ✓ However, he then turns around and declares himself mortified that an Enron executive regards Dawkin's book, *The Selfish Gene*, as his favorite book because of its perceived social Darwinism.
 - ✓ He calls compassion and generosity noble emotions.
 - ✓ He denounces the doctrine of original sin as morally obnoxious.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- *There is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, but pitiless indifference. We are machines for propagating DNA. It is every living objects sole reason for being.*
 - ✓ He vigorously condemns such things as harassment and abuse of homosexuals, the religious indoctrination of children, and the Inca's practice of human sacrifice.
 - ✓ He even offers his own revised version of the ten commandments as a guide for moral behavior.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- *There is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, but pitiless indifference. We are machines for propagating DNA. It is every living objects sole reason for being.*
 - ✓ Considering all of his heated denunciation, it is breathtaking just how marvelously oblivious and ignorant he is to the contradiction of his own stated moral subjectivism.
 - ✓ His affirmation of moral objective values is incompatible with his atheism. For according to atheism we are just animals, and animals are not moral agents. When a lion kills a zebra, it does not murder the zebra. When a great white shark forcibly copulates with the female, he does not rape her—for there is no moral dimension to the animal kingdom.

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- Examples of non-believers who are more epistemologically honest, even though they do not like the consequences.
 - ✓ Robert Jastrow, self-proclaimed agnostic (astronomer, physicist and cosmologist), "*...that there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact.*",
 - ✓ Arthur Eddington (atheist, astrophysicist), "*The beginning seems to present insuperable difficulties unless we agree to look on it as frankly supernatural.*

Epistemology 1-3 (Review)

Epistemology 3

- No person has a right to skepticism of any sort unless he has good reasons for that skepticism: *you have to know something before you can be skeptical.*
- Every intellectual being has a responsibility to self and God for their epistemic justification.
- Your epistemic duty is to hold on to the true and get rid of the false. You can be harmed every bit by not believing something that is true than believing something that is false. Being an enlightened skeptic is an oxymoron.
- The goal is to maximize our holding of true beliefs while at the same time, minimizing our holdings of false beliefs. How do we go about doing this? This is the job of epistemology.

Biblical-Philosophical Psychology – 48

1. Discussion of the biblical testimony on the nature of man's mind and heart/will and the biblical concepts of sanctifying and hardening, Exod 8:15, 32; 9:12; Isa. 6:8-10; Matt. 13:12-15; Rom. 9:17-18; Heb. 3:15; 4:7; Eph. 4:17-24.
 - a. Sin and carnality adversely affect man's mind and will/heart just as a tumor on the brain would adversely effect the cognitive and affective functions of his mind and will regarding belief mechanisms.
 - b. God's sanctifying and hardening of man's heart are but two sides of the same coin. In each case God is granting more freedom to the person.
 - In sanctification God brings the believer's 1st order will and volition in line with 2nd order volition, thus granting the believer *more freedom to do* what he really desires
 - In hardening, God brings the believer's 1st order will and volition in line with 2nd order volition, thus granting the person *more freedom to do* what he really desires (Pharaoh, Goebbels)

2. Description of cognitive effects of sin on the mind.

It is a sort of blindness that is characterized by imperceptiveness, dullness, disbelief, agnosticism, skepticism and mental lethargy and stupidity about God.

Cognitive blindness prevents a person from seeing God in all of His goodness. It renders a mind incapable of seeing God as glorious Esse and His handwork in all essences.

3. Description of affective effects of sin on the heart/will

Affective disorders prevents a person from desiring God as worthy of all love and obedience.

It prevents someone from really having powerful affections towards God. It distorts the will, which is designed to seek the good, by keeping it from seeing what is worth hating and what is worth loving.

4. Both in regeneration and sanctification the cognitive and affective faculties in man are restored to proper function. It is in regeneration that man's thinking and affections begin working properly.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Peter 1:23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.

Psalm 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Psalm 63:1 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah .
O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.

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.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

5. However, post-salvation sinning and carnality damage the believer's proper cognitive and affective capacities to see and desire God.

2 Samuel 12:9 'Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 10 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.'

The Corinthians.

Demas.

The Laodecian believers.

6. The importance of fellowship, walking with the Lord, can be seen in the Holy Spirit's ministry in producing right knowledge in the believer (Rom. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6; Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5) and also the right affections (Gal. 5:22-23). This knowledge is a firm and certain knowledge of God's goodness and grace. This is why it is so dangerous to live out of fellowship, by grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit. This area of epistemology we will deal with separate under Christian epistemology or Christian warrant.

- ✓ It is the Holy Spirit who gives us capacity for spiritual affections.
- ✓ Chief among these right affections is love of God—desire for God, desire to know Him, to have a personal relationship with Him, desire to achieve a certain kind of unity with Him, as well as delight in Him, relishing His beauty, greatness, righteousness, and love.
- ✓ There is also trust, approval, gratitude, desire to please, expecting good things, and much more.
- ✓ It is the Holy Spirit who gives us capacity to be lovers of God.

7. At salvation we all start out with restored minds and wills. However, apart from spiritual growth, sanctification, the will/heart can become very hard. Hardness of the heart is primarily about the will. It breaks my heart to see believers grow harder to God, His plan, and the things of God.

8. The hard-hearted person fails to love the right things; he lacks the virtuous affections of love for the Lord, fellow believers, and the truths of the gospel. He also lacks hatred and sorrow for sin and gratitude for salvation. He loses confidence, joy, peace and all the rest that flow from a proper love of God.

9. How does a believer's heart become hardened?

- Sometime after his rebirth, the believer redirects his 2nd order will away from love of God above all to placing his affections on other things.
- When God hardens the heart all He does is establish the person's true wishes regarding his 2nd order will, what he really wants.
- The results in the hardening of the heart is cognitive and appetitive disorders as the believer returns to his previous state, 2 Pet. 2:20-22.

10. Characteristics of a believer's hardened heart.

- He becomes dismissive and resentful towards God, which is reflected by lack of love for all of God's plan and Word.
- He is no longer able to see the qualities of God. In the state of carnality and reversionism, he is indisposed to God, the people of God, and the things of God. This all has to do with the will.
- His lifestyle is one of complaining that refuses correction. Complaining is a sure sign of a heart that has been hardened to the plan of God. Such a believer becomes increasingly stiff-necked.
- Persistent carnality skews his affections, he begins loving the wrong things and hating the good things. He loses his first love for God, which causes him to sublimate in other areas.

11. The single greatest issue in any believer's life is the will, otherwise known in the Bible as the "heart." It is the principal defect in man that leads to the corruption of the mind. This defect leads to failure to trust God, love God, and live for God.

12. By far, the most damaging effects of sin are in the will. We see this with Adam and Satan, as well as the entire period of human history. Consider also the brothers and sisters of Jesus. When the will is damaged, the person is unable to desire God as Good. Instead, He is often viewed with distrust, indifference, fear, or as malignant, not wishing your best.

13. Man is totally unable to repair the broken image of God in him, which consists of the mind and its attribute of the will. He can no more fix this by a sheer act of the will than he could change his other belief forming epistemic faculties through his senses.

- We are totally unable to extricate ourselves from the quagmire of a dysfunctional mind and will. Before the Fall, man had extensive and intimate knowledge of God.
- Man had great knowledge and great affections, love; he was filled with gratitude and reverence.
- Before the Fall man loved and hated what was loveable and what should be hated. Above all, man knew and loved God. However, with the Fall man became cognitively and affectively damaged.

14. God, in His matchless grace, has provided the remedy for man's brokenness in the incarnation, regeneration, the ministry of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God.

15. As the believer lives in fellowship with God, the Holy Spirit continues His work to repair man cognitive and affective disorders, Gal 5:22-24. He allows us to see the truth and repairs the madness of our wills. This is why grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit is very serious.

16. The distinction between a person's mind and will can be illustrated by noting the minds and wills of demons, James 2:19. Healthy believers know God and love God. Demons and reversionistic believers know God with their minds and resist and hate Him with their wills.

17. The difference between believers and demons, and believers who love the Lord and believers who do not love the Lord, primarily lies in the area of affections: of love and hate, attraction and repulsion, desire, and detestation. The difference lies in orientation of the will.

18. A healthy believer not only believes the doctrines of the Christian faith, he finds the whole scheme of salvation and sanctification enormously attractive, delightful, and amazing, even in the most trying times, 1 Pet 1:6-9. This is indicative of healthy affections.

19. The function of the will is that of making decisions regarding the good: seeking and avoiding, loving and hating, finding attractive or repellent, approving and disapproving.

20. The root, core, and deepest evil in man's will is his pride. We see it in Satan, the Fall in the Garden, the history of mankind, and in carnal and reversionistic believers.

- ✓ Pride distorts cognitive and appetitive functions in man, 1 Tim. 6:3-19; 2 Tim. 3:1-9.
- ✓ Pride rejects absolute good of God and grace resources. Consider how dull the mind and how hard the will is that is not to be drawn to the goodness of God and His plan regardless of the circumstances of life, Philip. 4:4.
- ✓ Pride disorients a person to reality (cf. words for pride). This is often characterized by habitual complaining. It is one thing to complain at some inconvenience and recovery. When the person no longer desires to stop complaining, it is indicative of a hardening of the heart.

- ✓ Pride rejects need for continuous fellowship with God, Rev. 3.
- ✓ Pride destroys capacity to see God as truly Good.
- ✓ Pride destroys capacity to love the Word of God as such.

- ✓ Pride destroys capacity for life, love, and happiness (due to view of self).
- ✓ Pride destroys capacity to truly love others due to exaggerated views of self characterized by sins of jealousy, vindictiveness, and slander.

- ✓ Pride renders a person unteachable and thus moves believer into ignorance, heresy, and apostasy, 2 Tim. 4:3-4.
- ✓ Pride is the antithesis of grace, Js. 4:6.
- ✓ Pride prevents believers from growing in grace, which is what he needs more than anything else, 2 Pet. 3:16.

- ✓ Pride is the source of man's indifference to God, which is just another form of disrespect, contempt, and even hatred of God.
- ✓ In pride man suppresses the idea that God is the Source of his very being and upon whom he depends for ever breath, and to whom he owes absolute allegiance, Acts 17:28. It irks man that he would have to obey God in all things. This leads to distrust of God.

- ✓ In pride man turns his heart to love self, mammon, and even country, all the while bypasses love for God, Matt. 6:19-24.