

**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**

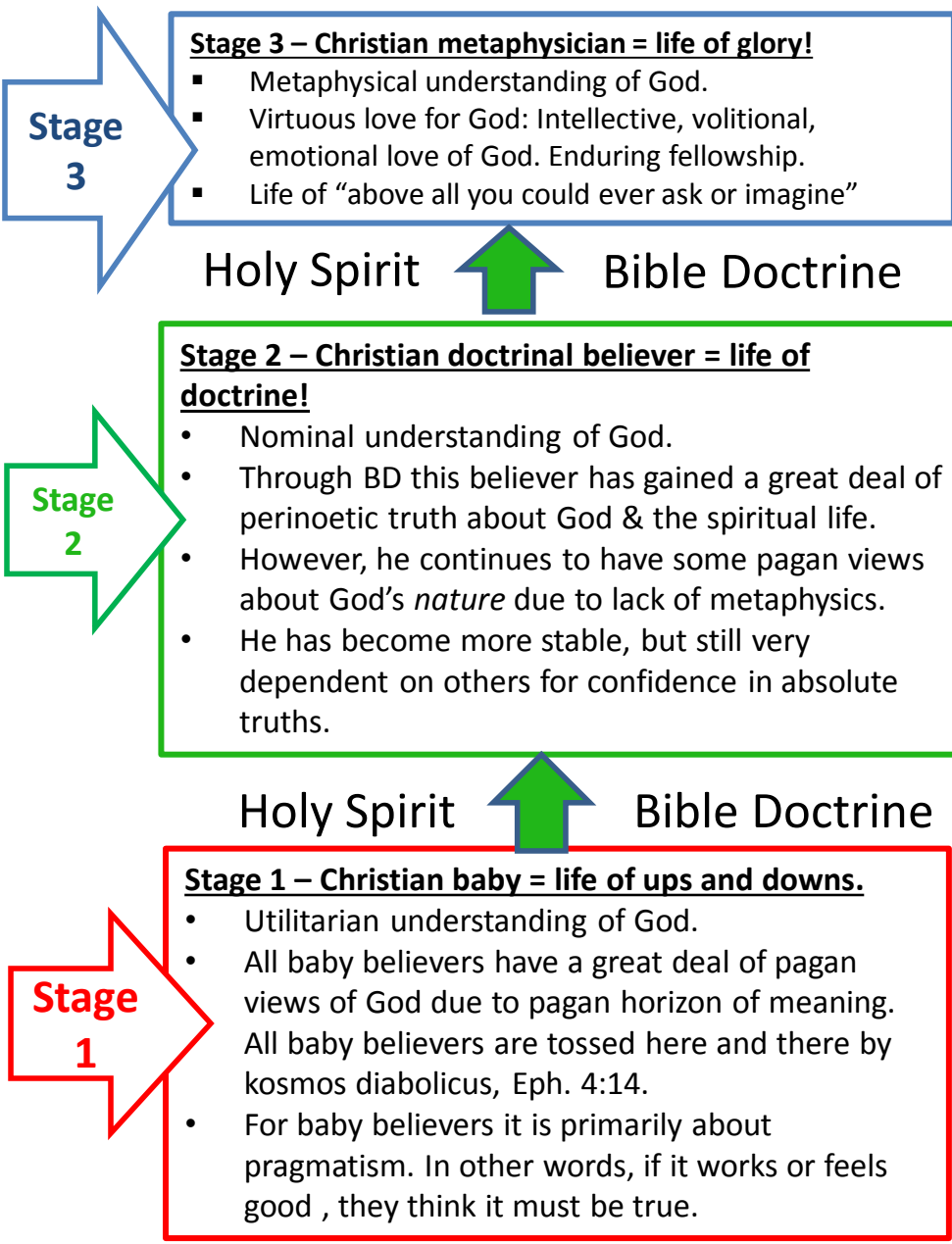
Hermeneutics
Linguistics
<b>Epistemology 7</b>
Metaphysics -32 Trans. 50
Reality –Logic 32, Truth 32

**Any questions?**

**1. FBC and the Bible:** 1 Thessalonians 5:21, *But examine everything; hold to that which is the good.* Illustrations of the importance of believers reading their Bibles (then and now).

**2. FBC and PR.** The 20/50 plan is my attempt to address serious and very deep problems in modern Christian thinking. It grieves me greatly to see God’s people infected with so many atheistic, naturalistic, pagan, cultic, and superstitious worldviews mixed in with their Christian doctrines (spirit stuff; naturalism; little to no recognition of beings in light of their existences, substances, accidents; a Platonic type of SL; love). It is no wonder so many have trouble with fideism & skepticism

**3. FBC and the SL.** The SL is not primarily a life of mechanics. It is a dedicated life of walking in fellowship with God as the highest good. It is a life of walking with, before, and after God. SL requires nothing short of life in and with the Transcendent One who gives existence and reveals Himself.



## **EPISTEMOLOGY: #7: From Cartesian dualism to Causation**

1. Epistemology emerges from two things: the philosophy of man and metaphysics of extra-mental world.
2. In our study of philosophy of man, we have been noting the false Cartesian model (dualistic, Platonic) that is so prevalent in contemporary Christianity. This causes many problems not only in epistemology, but in the spiritual life.
3. In the Cartesianism model, the mind and the body are two separate entities. The mind is in the body like a captain is in the ship. The captain is separate from the ship and steers the ship. He is not part of the ship, just in it.

4. In Cartesianism, the person is the mind with a body tacked on, an appendage of sorts. In this model, knowledge and truth come from rational intellect and error from the senses. In a quest for certainty, man should be suspicious about the senses. This begins a 300 year project about how to justify our knowledge of the real extra-mental world.
  
5. In Cartesianism, the mind is an unextended immaterial thing and the body is an extended material thing. The mind is an immaterial substance (spirit stuff) and the body is material extended substance (physical stuff). This creates the interaction problem between the immaterial and the material.

6. However, in the Bible (and PR and Thomism), man is a unified whole with the intellect and senses working together.
  - a. The intellect does not know, and the senses do not know.
  - b. Rather, the man knows by means of his intellect (abstract universal concepts) and his senses (individual, particular, material objects) simultaneously.
  - c. The intellect, by itself, only knows concepts as expressing essences abstracted from their actual existence in things.

- d. The existence of things is not evident to mere sensation.
- e. The senses cannot judge or affirm anything; they just sense.
- f. There is no such thing as “raw sense data” or “sense knowledge.”
- g. Man, taken as he is—body and soul together—knows what he senses and senses what he knows.
- h. What is true of human knowing is that sense and intellect are not at war with each other. They are powers of a single knowing subject, and through their mutual interpenetration the intellect “sees” the universal in the particular.

7. Contrary to Cartesian dualism we are not a separate thinking things that require God to bridge the certitude gap between the mind and the senses or reality. In dualism, because the soul and the body are not essentially united, there is no essential connection between what the soul knows and what the body knows.
8. The interaction problem between spirit stuff and material stuff moved from body-soul problem into the science of causation and interaction between God and all beings of the universe.

9. At first, God was posited as the one who brings about causation throughout the universe (parallelism, concordism, idealism).
10. However, as Cartesianism began to break down, naturalism emerged and there was nothing left for God to do. It was all natural: things can exist by themselves. If you believe that inanimate things can exist by themselves, then you have the mindset of an atheist instead of a Christian theist (cf. Heb. 1:3). Ask yourself: what is there left for God to do? Just keep your spirit-stuff going?

11. The solution to God and the causation problem is found in the existence-essence distinction. Essence and existence must be separated to allow for the contingency of all things. This concept of reality was a breakthrough only because of the biblical account of creation.
  
12. The bottom line is that modern science cannot even do what they do without using the building blocks of biblical metaphysics (PR) of contingency and natures. Many modern scientists are making the same error as Aristotle but only inverted. Instead of biologizing everything (Aristotle), modern science mathematizing all things.



13. The bottom line is that for there to be anything in existence, God must exist. Pure Act must exist to actualize all acts and potencies (power to be).
  
14. Unless and until someone understands the essence-existence distinction, he cannot understand the nature of causation in creation, much less the interaction of divine sovereignty over all beings.

# Man – from salvation to sanctification

MIND



WILL

Romans 12 -16 = Spiritual Virtues

1. We have been noting the crucial nature of salvation (forensic justification) and human sanctification (spiritual virtue).
2. The 37 virtues of Romans 12 illustrate the connection of virtue with such things as affections and passions, aka emotions.
3. We will spend a little more time on the 37 spiritual virtues of Romans 12, and then in Romans 13 we will develop man's nature and natural law theory so we can understand man, society, and government.

LOVE



Mental states,  
Affections  
&  
Passions

“Emotions” is a  
Cartesian and  
Darwinian  
concept.

Review of the 3 levels of understanding of the Word of God – PR is responsible for this development!

- 1. Conceptual understanding.** Read Romans 12:1-2. On this level, you intuitively already grasp some metaphysics. Probably takes about 10-15 times of reading a book of the Bible before you start seeing new things for yourself.
- 2. Exegetical understanding.** Romans 12:1-2 Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν· 2 καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον.
- 3. Metaphysical understanding:** body, mind, will, rational service, good, well-pleasing, perfect, virtue, happiness, thriving, and the “mercies of God.”
- 4. The critical need to advance in each area of the 3 understandings to see and really love the uniqueness truth Christianity.**

## The 37 virtues of Romans 12

**Virtue #1: Dedication to God** (“present your bodies, παραστήσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν” - the aorist infinitive for dedication to God).

- ✓ The blessings of giving yourself to God and its connection to submission in general, 1 Pet 5:5-7.
- ✓ Life before God (fellowship) is requisite to spiritual virtue. God must come before anything and everything else, Matt. 6:24; 22:37. Life with God must always precede life to man.
- ✓ Review of the nature of hylemorphism and virtue as the body receives impressions and possesses tendencies from mental attitudes and affections to passions. Consider how “emotions” enable us to connect for capacity for love (sympathy). Consider the ways the body can move us into sin and evil.
- ✓ If body is inherently evil, then why would God ask for it?

**Virtue #2: Not being conformed to this age, καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι  
τούτῳ**

- ✓ The world/age will always be the greatest single threat to the Christian life, Gal. 1:4; 2 Cor. 4:4. Consider the pressures to be “normal.”
- ✓ The world has always and will always suppress knowledge of God. The age is always into gratification of self rather than doing the will of God, Rom. 1.
- ✓ We must avoid at all cost taking on the shape of this world. We are not to be shaped and fashioned by this age.
- ✓ Christians are to be the ultimate non-conformists.

**Virtue #3: Being transformed by the renewing of the mind** (μεταμορφοῦσθε,” present imperative). The method of being able to really give yourself to the Lord, to live the CCL.

- ✓ This is the only way to prevent from being molded to this age.
- ✓ The only way to change evil desires is to change how you think is good.
- ✓ The will and affections always follow the mind—without exception.
- ✓ We are what we think, not ontologically, but in our minds, wills, mental states , affections and passions.
- ✓ Transformation means change, not just growth.
- ✓ There is no moral virtue without intellectual virtue; the good man is no fool.

**Virtue #4: Ability to discern, enjoy, and see the will of God as perfect**  
(δοκιμάζειν) – the present infinitive.

- ✓ This is the effect of consecration: to be able to prove, approve, test, and attest.
- ✓ One cannot know, let alone approve of the will of God if conformed with the age and not transformed by the mind.
- ✓ God cannot be considered the highest good if one is conformed by this age and not transformed by the mind.
- ✓ This can only be done with a healthy mind in contrast to a depraved mind (Rom. 1).
- ✓ Only the renewed mind can enjoy the will of God as good, acceptable, and perfect.

**Virtue #5, Avoidance of arrogant thinking** - “not to think more highly, μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ’ ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν”. This infinitive has imperatival force of duty. The infinitive appeals to conscience.

- ✓ Transition from right relation to God to right relation to fellow believers.
- ✓ Humility is the direct effect of consecration, because right relation to God is the only way to take care of the problem of pride. Only with God is there true grace orientation.
- ✓ We are what we are only because of the grace of God.
- ✓ The 7 gifts listed are ways to express humility by serving others. All gifts are to be used in humility.



Virtue #6, **Possessing sound judgment/thinking** “think so as to have sound judgment, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν”. Significance of the infinitive used as imperative. This governs the following clauses through verse 4.

- ✓ This attitude is in opposition to thinking more highly of self than one ought.

Virtue #7, **Using spiritual gift(s) in humility**, “let each exercise them accordingly”

- Prophecy (εἶτε προφητείαν), temporary gift given to the church.
- Server (εἶτε διακονίαν), loves to serve others.
- Teacher (εἶτε ὁ διδάσκων), loves to research and teach.
- Exhorter (ὁ παρακαλῶν), loves to encourage others in the spiritual life.
- Giver (μεταδιδούς), loves to give time, talent, energy, to benefit others.
- Leads/administrator (προϊστάμενος), loves to organize, lead, and direct.
- Mercy (ὁ ἐλεῶν), one who loves to show compassion and care for those in need.

**5 attributive participles** above used imperatively to illustrate mode and direction concerning spiritual gifts.

**Virtue #8<sup>th</sup> virtue: Authentic love** (Ἡ ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος) in verse 9 governs the virtues 9-20 in verses 9-13. Paul goes from God to humility to love. Note the mix of **adjectives** (emphasizing Being) & **participles** (emphasizing doing or modes), all used imperatively and all expressions of true love.

**TRUE LOVE REQUIRES A CHANGE IN ONE VIEW'S OF GOOD. Christian love is not a Platonic concept. There is no love apart from a change of thinking, the rest (affections and passions) will follow, cf. fruit of the Spirit.**

Verses 9-13 are spiritual virtues as manifestations of true love.

**#9: hating evil** (Ἀποστυγοῦντες τὸ πονηρόν), 9. True Christian love hates evil. Unless there is hatred for evil, there is no true love of what is good.

**#10: clinging to the good** (κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ), 9. True Christian love loves true good. Our love will necessarily show itself in our determination to hold fast to the good. What is your good?

**#11: devotion to fellow believers in brotherly love** (φιλόστοργοι τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ), 10. True Christian love loves fellow believers (1 John 3:14; Gal. 6:10).

Verses 9-13 are spiritual virtues as manifestations of true love.

**#12: in honor preferring fellow believers** (προηγούμενοι τῇ τιμῇ), 10. True Christian love honors fellow believers. This is an expression of love in humility—a “leading the way” in honor fellow believers.

**#13: not indolent, not lagging behind in diligence** (τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί), 11. True Christian love is not lazy or indolent about the things of God. Sloth is perhaps the most deadly sin today.

**#14: being fervent in spirit** (τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες), 11. True Christian love is always fervent. Avoidance of Laodecianism like the plague. Christ predicted that the love of many would grow cold in the last times, Matt. 24:12. Our lives are to ones of fervency regarding God and the things of God.

Verses 9-13 are spiritual virtues as manifestations of true love.

**#15: serving the Lord** (τῷ κυρίῳ **δουλεύοντες**), 11. True Christian love serves the Lord, the CCL. The genuineness of love. How can anyone say they really love the Lord if they are not serving Him?

**#16: rejoicing in hope** (τῇ ἐλπίδι **χαίροντες**), 12. True Christian love is filled with the joy of hope: the power of love for God in the presence of suffering and tribulation.

**#17: persevering in tribulation** (τῇ θλίψει **ὑπομένοντες**), 12. True Christian love will not give up during the trials of life. The endurance of love: only with true love for God and the things of God is this possible.

Verses 9-13 are spiritual virtues as manifestations of true love.

**#18: devoted to prayer** (τῇ προσευχῇ **προσκατεροῦντες**), 12. True Christian love spends time with God in prayer.

**#19: contributing to the needs of the saints** (ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων **κοινωνοῦντες**), 13. True Christian love is unselfish.

**#20: practicing hospitality** (τὴν φιλοξενίαν **διώκοντες**), 13. True Christian love is large-hearted.

The 3 present active imperatives in verse 14 give us virtues. The spirit of love that is present in the previous section is now to be extended to “them that are without”

#21: bless them which persecute you (εὐλογεῖτε). True Christian love loves enemies. This is straight from the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:10-11.

#22: do not curse (μὴ καταρᾶσθε). True Christian love does not curse enemies. Loving our enemies instead of running them down.

Two infinitives in verse 15 give us virtues

#23: rejoice with those who rejoice (χαίρειν μετὰ χαιρόντων). True Christian love is happy for others; it is not envious. Love is always glad when others are blessed. Love is never envious.

#24: weep with those who weep (κλαίειν μετὰ κλαιόντων). True Christian love is compassionate.



#25: be of the same mind toward one another (τὸ αὐτὸ εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονοῦντες). True Christian love seeks to find points of agreement.

#26: do not be haughty (μὴ τὰ ὑψηλὰ φρονοῦντες). True Christian love is not interested in pre-eminence.

#27-associate with the lowly (ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι). True Christian love cares for those of lower states, those others do not care about.

Then we have main imperative introduced at the end of verse 16:

#28: "Do not be wise in your own estimation" (μὴ γίνεσθε φρόνιμοι παρ' ἑαυτοῖς.) which is connected to following clauses in verse 17-19. True Christian love avoids occupation with self-importance.

#29: never pay back evil (μηδενὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἀποδιδόντες). True Christian love does not desire revenge.

#30: respect what is right/beautiful in the sight of all men (προνοούμενοι καλὰ ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων). True Christian love loves the true, good, and beautiful.

#31: living at peace with all men (μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες). True Christian love always seeks peace.

#32: never take revenge (μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες). True Christian love is not vengeful.

#33: leave room for [God's' wrath (δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ)]. True Christian love is able to trust God to take care of the situation. Our character is far more important than the details.

#34: if your enemy is hungry feed him (ψώμιζε). True Christian love returns good for evil.

#35: if he is thirsty give him drink (πότιζε). True Christian love always seeks the benefit of others.

## Verse 21

#36: do not be overcome with evil (Μὴ νικῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ). True Christian love is not overcome with evil. Paul's crowning point. This cannot be done apart from true love, which only comes from God. You cannot overcome evil apart from love. Love with its affections, and yes passions do enable us to see better in certain circumstances.

#37: overcome evil with good (νίκα ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν). True Christian love overcomes evil with good. The good is all traced back to God and Christianity. This is the secret to life and to Christianity. There is nothing like this to be found anywhere among the nations before Christ.

The thought of overcoming evil with good only became possible through the redemptive love of God in Christ.

The theme of true love runs from verses 9-21. But what is this thing called love? What is the philosophical and metaphysical dimensions?