

## 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 7

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.* How? 1 Thess 5:27, *I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren.*

**2. FBC and PR.** The 20/50 plan is my attempt as pastor-teacher to help believers remove a deep rooted faith in false philosophical systems that gravely undermine their views of God, the Bible, and the CWL —e.g., fideism to skepticism due to ignorance of the metaphysical principles of reality. This ignorance creates a vacuum which is filled by physicalism and superstition. The end result is that the God, the Bible, and Christianity are reduced to existential, religious, and pragmatic functions (neo-evangelicalism).

**3. FBC and the SL and virtue.** There are two justifications and two salvations in Scripture, forensic (cf., Romans) and experiential (James). The former deals with becoming a Christian and the latter deals with salvation over the power of sin, namely sanctification.

Stage 3

### 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

### 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

### 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.

## **EPISTEMOLOGY: #7: From Cartesian causation and interaction problems to causation and interaction problems throughout creation**

1. The dualism of Descartes not only introduced problems with mind-body interaction and causation problems in man, he brought great angst to science and philosophy. How can different kinds of things interact? What is causation?
2. Descartes' need for God to bridge the gap between the spirit stuff of mind and the physical stuff of the body translated into discussion of how the spirit stuff of God moved the physical things of the universe.

3. It was Descartes' paradigm that eventually led to the complete secularization of all causation (cf., Hume). As his system collapsed, so did the need for God to move things around.
4. If God is in control of everything, then how do we account for causation between all things? This was a real problem in an era of theism. It is no longer recognized a problem because most do not see a need for God doing anything in creation. He is just some Big Man in the sky; hence, deism.

5. If God is the sole or real cause of natural changes, then understanding nature becomes more difficult and controlling nature becomes impossible. If the causal nature is all mechanical, like a watch with springs and gears, which can be controlled and adjusted how it that God is control of all things?

6. Even consummate philosophical realists, like Aquinas, notes the problem:

“If God produces the whole natural effect, nothing of the effect is left for the natural agent to produce. Therefore, it seems impossible that God produce the same effects as natural things. Some find it difficult to understand how the effects of nature are described to God and to the natural agent. For it would be impossible that one action should proceed from two agents. Hence if the action productive of a natural effect proceeds from a natural body, it does not proceed from God. Besides if God produces the whole natural effect, nothing of the effect is left for the natural agent to produce. Therefore, it seems impossible that God produces the same effects as natural things.

His answer

The whole effect proceeds from each yet in different ways just as the whole of one and the same effect is ascribed to the instrument, and again while is ascribed to the principle agent.

7. Results of the causation problems led to three major views.
  - a. Deism: God's involvement in the world is minimal.
  - b. Occasionalism: God's will is the immediate cause of creation and everything which happens thereafter, so the distinction between God and secondary causes is metaphysically unimportant. God is the only cause or force, but admits he does not know how God does this.
  - c. Concurrentism. God continually gives existence to all things along with their properties. God is the first and sustaining cause. He gives being to all things.

8. Descartes finally ended up with concurrentism, though he went kicking and screaming due to rejection of metaphysics, PR's causes. This shows that apart from PR, one loses understanding of reality as such.

“The same power and action are needed to preserve anything at each individual moment of its duration as would be required to create that thing anew if it were not yet in existence. Hence the distinction between preservation and creation is only a conceptual one.”

9. Aquinas on causation.

“The cause of a thing must needs be the same as the cause of its preservation, because preservation is nothing else than its continued being.”

10. The solution to the causation issue is in 'Ehyeh/esse metaphysics. This requires one to understand the difference between existence and essence. Knowledge of this would have saved untold misery among countless, theists, Christians, and scientists.
  
11. Even the highest metaphysical concepts among the Greeks never developed a distinction between essence and existence. This is because they believed that the universe has always existed. If the universe just always was then you do not have a radical problem with contingency. The closest Greek philosopher-scientists got was act-potency with Aristotle.

12. For there to be any essence, there has to be an act of existence given to it outside of itself. A thing cannot give it its own act of existence. Every created being has only limited existence. Limited existence must be received in something else.
  
13. If any entity is created, then it receives its existence from another. But that which receives existence from another is in potency to such existence, and hence cannot be identified with it.

14. Essence is the act of existence. Essence and esse compose all things, except God. Difficulty conceiving this is due to deep faith commitments to naturalism.

15. 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.

16. 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).
  
17. 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

LOVE



1. We have been noting the crucial nature of forensic salvation of Romans 1-11 and now are noting the sanctification salvation (spiritual virtues) of Romans 12-16.
2. The 37 virtues of Romans 12 vividly illustrate the dynamics of spiritual virtue—their connection with God, humility, love, as well as affections, and passions.

Mental states,  
Affections  
&  
Passions

“Emotions” is a  
Cartesian and  
Darwinian  
concept.

## Structure of Romans 12

- **Virtues 1-4: Spiritual virtues of the God-centered life** (present bodies to God, lack of conformity to the world, transformed by the renewing of the mind, discerning/approving/enjoying the will of God). Relationship with God must precede relationship with people. All spiritual virtue is developed in, with, and by God.
- **Virtues 5-7: Spiritual virtues of genuine humility** (don't think too highly of yourself, have sober judgment about self, serve others with your spiritual gift).
- **Virtues 8-37: Spiritual virtues of supernatural love** (love without hypocrisy, abhorring evil, clinging to good, devoted to God, preferring believers, spiritual diligence, fervency, service, rejoicing, persevering, prayerful, contributing to the needy, hospitality, blessings, no cursings, rejoicing, weeping, same mind, not haughty, associating with lowly, wise, never repay evil, respect, peace, not-vengeful, trusting God, returning good to enemies, not being overcome by evil, and overcoming all evil).

## Spiritual virtue: dedication to God—its depiction

**Virtue #1: Present your bodies to God** (παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν . . . τῷ Θεῷ). Unless and until the believer sees God as the greatest good, he will never really be able to present himself to God. This is the secret to true blessedness in life. This is living for the Lord. This is loving the Lord with all of your heart, soul, mind, and might. This is the CCL the only solution to the problem of the SCL. Throughout the word of God, believers are warned against dedicating their lives to mammon.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

1 Timothy 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

## Spiritual virtue: Demand of dedication

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

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Consider the Roman age and our age in contrast to divine directives for Christians regarding being a husband, wife, child, parent, employee, employer, language, free time (redeeming the time), and ultimate goals in life. What I want you to consider is not just activities, but whole attitude toward what good says in these areas: do you view divine standards as good, pleasing, and perfect leading to a good, pleasing and complete life?

## Spiritual virtue: Transformation of dedication

**Virtue #3: Be 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.

- The mind here refers to the mind, will, and affections. It is viewed as the faculty that the soul discerns and perceives the true, pleasing, and perfect.
- The nature and need of virtue for this transformation. What is really in the mind always moves into the affections and passions.

## **Spiritual virtue: the effect of dedication**

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

- It is impossible for a believer who is conformed to the world to understand, enjoy, and see God's will as good, pleasing/beautiful, and perfect.
- Note the will of God in the 37 virtues of Romans 12.

## Spiritual virtue: call to humility

**Virtue #5: avoid 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.
- Your relationship with God always plays out in relationship with others.

1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

## Spiritual virtue: nature of humility

Virtue #6, “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 should.

## Spiritual virtue: expression of humility

Virtue #7, **use of 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.

## Spiritual virtue: supernatural love

**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.

## Moral love

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

## Love for true good

**#10: clinging to the good [goodness of love]** (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?

## Special love for the royal family of God

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

## Preferential love and honor for fellow believers

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

## Faithfulness of love

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

## Earnestness of love

**#14: being fervent in spirit** (τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες), 11 [earnestness of love]. 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.

## Genuineness of 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?

## The joy of love

**#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.

## The endurance of love

**#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.

## The devotion of love

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

## The unselfishness of love

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

## The large-heartedness of love

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

## **Virtue: Love that blesses persecutors.**

#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.

## **Virtue: love that empathizes**

#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.

## **Spiritual Virtue: a love that seeks common ground**

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

## **Spiritual virtue: spurning pride and arrogance.**

#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.

## **Spiritual virtue: love that avoids conceit**

#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.

## **Spiritual virtue: love that refuses to take revenge**

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

## **Spiritual virtue: love that respects the true, good, and beautiful**

#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.

## **Spiritual virtue: a love that seeks peace**

#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.

## **Spiritual virtue: love that entrusts its cause to God.**

#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.

## **Spiritual virtue: love that returns good for evil.**

#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.

## Spiritual virtue: love that overcomes evil with good

#36: do not be overcome with evil (Μὴ νικῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ). True Christian love is not overcome with evil. Paul's crowing 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.