

Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 170-Spiritual virtues 110 (Beatitude #6: Purity of Heart and Love.3)

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
5: Hermeneutics
4: Linguistics
3: Epistemology 32
- Existence 50
- Causation 26
2:Metaphysics 32
- Trans. 50
1: Reality
- Logic 32,
- Truth 32

Opening: John 8:32; Luke 10:27; Rom. 8:14.

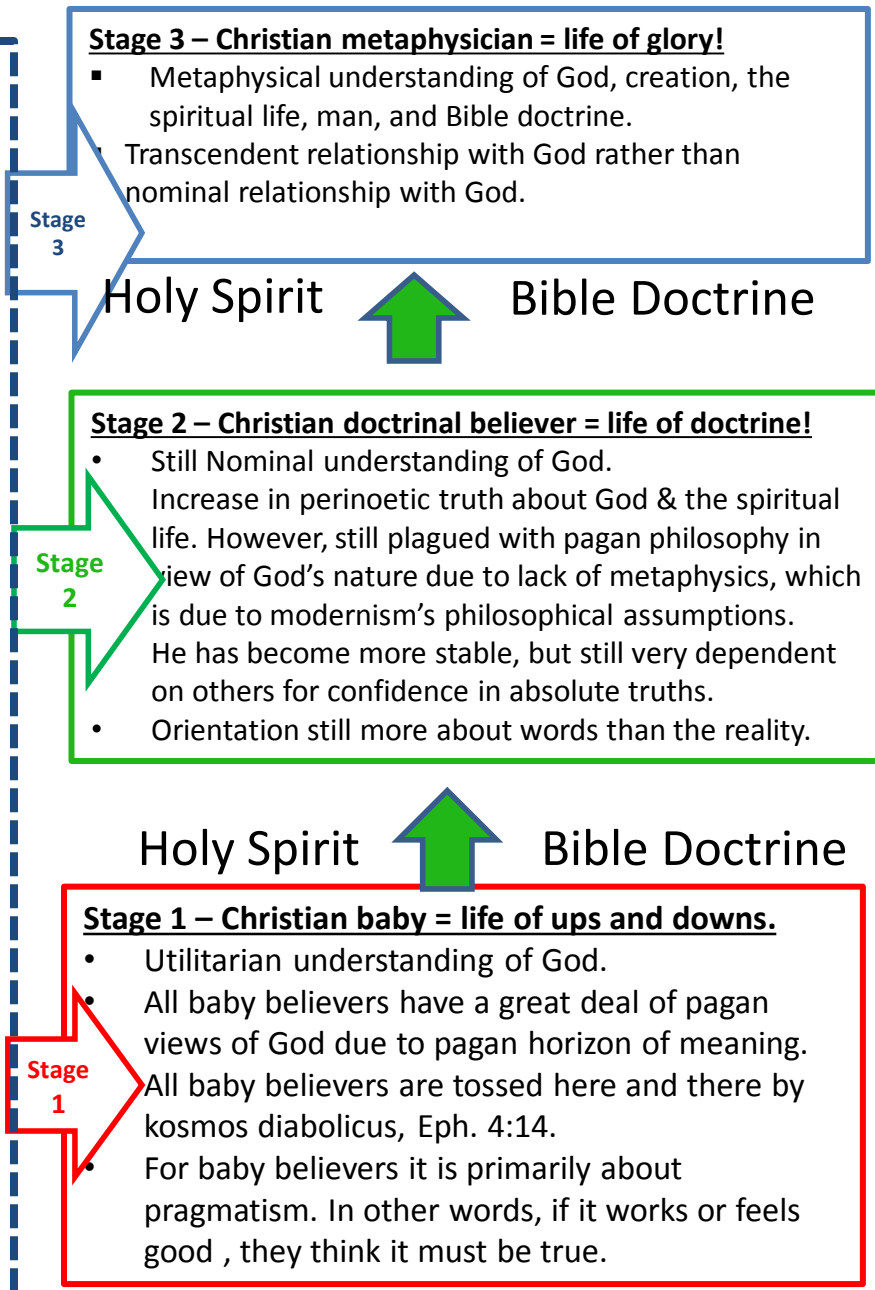
2 Parts to Bible class:

(1) 15-20 minutes on spiritual & philosophical foundations required for a Christian worldview.

(2) 55-60 minutes on virtue & love in 2 Pet. 1:2-11.

Spiritual foundations

- While it is commonly believed that seeking and finding correspondence truth, the Whole Truth, is easy, this is patently false—especially in our anti-intellectual age. It is not only difficult to seek Truth as such, it is even more difficult to recognize it and bow before it in absolute humility. We are not adverse to distorting God’s Word due to our preferences.
- Considering the ontology of man’s intellect and will, it is obvious that something is terribly wrong. Man should be able to guide his will with ease. He has this immaterial intellect, the highest faculty of his being As such, it ought to logically dominate and control fully and perfectly every lower faculty of his being. It ought to do so with as much ease as a bird flies or builds its nest. But as everyone of us knows all too well, it does not.
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit on the intellect and will in the metaphysics of Realism is much different than the Baconian-Reidian inductive, mechanical model. Illustration of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the intellect and will in the things of God on a metaphysical level (Rom. 8:14; Psa. 50:13, 143:10; Philip. 2:13).



Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview

(Causation-26: Discarding of causes in metaphysics: From Descartes to Anti-intellectual Evangelicalism

1. We have been noting some of the results of rejection of classical/biblical metaphysics by Descartes. Among other things, he made it far easier for virtually all Christians to believe in false teachings because
 - ___ a. he made the mind and its contents the standard of truth
 - ___ b. of his Catholic influence

2. From the Reformation came two branches of evangelicalism : the scholarly branch (Charles Hodge, B.B. Warfield, Jonathan Edwards) and the populist/anti-intellectual branch (Billy Sunday, Dwight Moody, Billy Graham). The scholarly wing considered themselves missionaries to the American intellect and established some 49 universities and brought a positive influence to the American intellectual life. However, the populists generally disparaged the human mind. Which group more eagerly adopted the new Baconian inductive “scientific” method for biblical hermeneutics?

___ a. The scholarly branch.

___ b. The populist branch.

3. The anti-intellectual evangelical branch of Christianity embraced the hermeneutics of contemporary American culture, namely the induction of Francis Bacon and Common Sense Realism of Thomas Reid. This Baconian-Reidian, ICE, “scientific” hermeneutic is a rejection of philosophical realism

a. True

b. False

4. With a Baconian-Reidian hermeneutic there is no anchor into metaphysical reality of Esse-esse, which means the believer has no way of objectively dealing with such biblical teachings as God repenting (Gen. 6:6) or that man's wisdom is in his entrails, Job 38:36.

a. True

b. False

5. Much has been written regarding the culture anti-intellectualism in American Evangelicalism (which afflicts of tens of millions of Bible-believing evangelicals and fundamentalism and dates back to the 19th century) and its disasters in (1) the local church, (2) ethics, (3) politics, (4) culture, (5) higher education/scholarship, (6) theology, and (7) the spiritual life. All of these problems can be traced back to a rejection of classical metaphysics (Esse-esse). For America, the rejection of classical metaphysics resulted in a widespread embracing of

___ a. pragmatic Baconian-Reidian inductive, commonsensical, easy to understand, simplistic, superficial, “plain” way of thinking

___ b. a deep, developed, and comprehensive way of thinking about Reality (God, Truth, man, creation, the Bible, and the spiritual life) based on the first principles of being, laws of thought, and sufficient causation

Love-3 (and virtue)

2 Peter 1:4-11: Note of the importance of life with God to develop the virtues in a rich philosophical manner instead of in an inductive Baconian method.

1. Virtue”(ἀρετή) refers to excellence according to what something is, cf. vs. 3. Therefore, one needs to understanding metaphysics and PP because one needs to know what something is before one can determine its excellence.
 - a. No person is born with virtue.
 - b. Every human being has the responsibility and freedom to develop virtue.
 - c. Every human being is to develop virtue with reference to God, to self, and to others. There is no such thing as too much virtue.
 - d. Virtue for a human being is right thinking, right willing, and right desires.
 - e. The greatest attribute of man is his intellectualive soul.
 - f. The highest virtue in man’s intellectualive soul is prudence.

2. Overview of the eight virtues. None of the standard lexicons provide the metaphysical structure of man on any of these virtues. Original languages only tell us how people used words.
- #1: Faith (πίστις): the first of the 3 most important theological virtues. They are all impossible apart from God's grace.
 - To believe means to participate in the knowledge of the knower. If no one knows, then there can be no one who believes. Power of the Word of God comes from participating in the knowledge of God—this is where power is, not from the words of Scripture *by themselves*. Through faith, hope, and love we share in God's own knowledge and love.
 - Faith is a free act and always related to love. Refusal to believe God is always related to lack of love for God.
 - With the Holy Spirit's enlightening of our intellect, we have a greater clarity to our faith with regard to all scriptural truths, e.g., the reality of God, His plan, His love, the JSJC, our eternal home, etc.

- #2: Excellence/virtue (ἀρετή): This is excellence of a human being in the development of the intellect, will, and affections.
 - Every person is either growing in virtue or vice with regard to his intellect, will, and affections.
 - Growing in excellence is extremely difficult due to our fallenness. For example, man's love for sensible goods (like food, drink, sex, wealth, honor, fame, power, pleasure) is far powerful than his intellectual love for God and the plan of God.
 - We are not expected to grow in natural virtue, we are expected to also grow in supernatural virtue.

- #3: Knowledge (γνῶσις): virtue of being able to apprehend and comprehend: prudence. It is by rightly ordered thinking (truth) that we can have rightly order decisions for rightly ordered life in God and the plan of God. Philosophical realism
- Philosophical science (Realism) deals with absolute certainty whereas natural science and Baconian induction can never provide certainty.
 - Philosophy realism is all about the undeniable first principles of thought and being (identity, noncontradiction, excluded middle, causality): the absolute principles of every being: being is what it is, and cannot be and not be at the same time in the same respect, it must have a sufficient reason for being, if it is not its own reason it needs something else. These govern all reality, even virtue. Everything reduces to metaphysics.
 - Knowledge is a metaphysical act between the knower and the known. Knowledge is not mere information. You do not really know something unless you know it cannot be otherwise.

- Knowledge is not primarily about information. It is about knowing what you know and why it cannot be otherwise.

- The great sin and evil of anti-intellectualism is its pernicious effects on the whole person as it diminishes man's capacity
 - as a rational being
 - for developing natural virtues
 - for receiving supernatural virtue
 - for correspondence and Total Truth
 - for the true, good, and beautiful
 - for wisdom and righteousness
 - for love of God, man, and self
 - for accurately understanding God, the Bible, and the SL
 - for metaphysics (philosophical psychology, epistemology, etc)
 - for gaining absolute certainty regarding the Big Questions
 - for the virtue of prudence

- #4: Self-control (ἐγκράτεια).
 - The distinction between natural and supernatural virtue.
 - The virtue of temperance is the ability to keep in check and to control passions that are contrary to reason and God's plan.
 - Every time we sin it is due to lack of temperance either on a natural or supernatural level.

- #5: Perseverance (ὑπομονή): the virtue that enables the believer to press forward in the Christian life to his final end in God in the face of difficulties, fears, and opposing pressures. This is the strength and courage to stand up for what is right, yet with prudence. There must be a love for correspondence truth to persevere in the SL.
- #6: Godliness (εὐσέβεια): the virtue of devotion and worship of God in full philosophical-theological richness. Grasping *Esse-esse* metaphysics really enhances one's capacity to appreciate the closeness of God. Moreover, the one who knows that every bit of his being is God's will desire for every part of his being to be God's (Rom. 12:1-2).

- #7: Brotherly affection (φιλαδελφία). To share in the life of God is to share in His affections for fellow believers.

John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

- #8: Love (ἀγάπη). This is the crown of all virtues. This is a love that flows from God Himself as the believer partakes of the nature of God, Eph. 3:19. Consider the contrast between David and Saul in their love for God and others, or Paul and the Corinthians. After we get a good handle on virtue, we will add more content to this love from 1 Cor. 13.

3. We have three responsibilities with regard to virtue, 1 Pet. 2:11-17.
- a. To God: We are to progressively live and grow in God by knowledge (intellect) and love (will).
 - b. To ourselves: “do good and avoid evil.” This means to grow in virtues and avoid vices in three areas: in the intellect, will, and affections. Failure to grow in virtue leads to badly ordered thinking, wishing and affections, which then brings weaknesses due to sin and evil (cf., anxiety).
 - c. To others: we are social beings and as such have obligations to fellow man and thus to government.

1 Corinthians 13:1-7.

1. The theological virtue of love is the most important spiritual virtue apart from which other virtues are not possible, cf., Gal. 5:22-23. How could any believer do anything for God that would be good if not done out of love, which sees Him as Good? Isn't duty without love what legalism is all about?
2. Rejection of God's mandate to love others results in not being able to love God, 1 John 3:16-18; 4:20; 5:1.

3. The basic metaphysics of love.
 - a. What causes love? Ultimately the good. We all love what we consider good. We are all drawn to what we love. It is our appetite for good. This means to love God and fellow believers is going to require seeing them as good .
 - b. No one ever loves evil except if that evil is considered good.
 - c. Love is in the will but it is informed by the intellect. One has to know someone to love them, but love can exceed knowledge.
 - d. Love also has a powerful influence on the ability to know the object of love. We cannot know someone unless we love them, for it is in love that we transcend ourselves to see life from the other viewpoint and good.
 - e. Characteristics of love: desire for the beloved's good; desire for union with the beloved appropriate to the office; opposition to everything that opposes the beloved's good. Love always hates what destroys good.

4. Recall the 4 steps to developing virtue:
 - a. Model: Jesus Christ.
 - b. List: e.g., 2 Pet 1:5-11.
 - c. Means: Holy Spirit on the intellect and will, Gal. 5:16.
 - d. Habitual living and growing in the categories of virtue, Titus 2:11-15.

5. A look at the virtue and love of Christ, the Perfect Model, 1 Pet. 2:18-25; Matt. 27:27-50; 1 John 3:16-18; Philip 2:1-12. Note the emphasis on God, self, and then others.

6. Love is longsuffering (μακροθυμεῖ), 13:4.

- a. The distinction between longsuffering as a natural virtue and supernatural virtue.
- b. On a natural level, when one loves someone he is able to endure great difficulties and irritations of that person. On a supernatural level, one will endure great difficulty, including martyrdom for the Lord.
- c. The virtue of longsuffering is strength of soul to overcome the difficulties, irritations, and undeserved suffering. It takes strength of soul to control one's affections and emotions and keep one from living in anger, sadness, and bitterness.
- d. Christ is our Model of longsuffering.

7. Love is kind/merciful (χρηστεύεται), 13:4.

- a. This would be an application of the Golden Rule. To be kind to others is merely doing to them what we would like them to do to us.
- b. Mercy is an act of kindness or tenderness.
- c. The vice of being kind and charitable to all would be in being mean spirited who takes pleasure in harming or insulting people.
- d. Consider the kindness of Jesus Christ, Matt. 12:15-21; Lk. 7:36-50; John 4:16-24.
- e. Christ was very kind to the weak, but very confrontational with the very powerful who were aggressively opposing and distorting God, His Word, His plan, and *promoting* evil.
- f. The command to follow our Model, Eph. 4:32-5:9; Matt. 5:43-48.

8. Love does not envy (οὐ ζηλοῖ), 13:4.

- a. Envy is coveting and a violation of the tenth commandment.
- b. Envy is the root of theft, slander, and even murder as well as a host of other sins and crimes against others.
- c. Envy and love are incompatible.
- d. Envy and hate go together, cf. Cain, Joseph (Gen 37:3-11), and Jesus Christ (Matt. 27:15-18).
- e. Consider the evil in our politics of envy, where politicians for their own interests stir up strife among people to create class warfare. The poor are set against the rich, employees against employers, women against men. Envy is a breeding ground for strife and even warfare.
- f. Christ was able to love others because He did not make “stuff” an object of love.

9. Love does not brag (οὐ περπερεύεται), 13:4.
- a. The axiom of our pagan culture is to make sure others know about one's assets and talents.
 - b. We see this in the Pharisees in Matt. 23:1-8.
 - c. True love is found in humility, especially humility before God, Job 42:1-6.
 - d. Humility runs counter to our culture
 - e. Consider the humility of our Lord, our Example, Philip. 2:5-11.

10. Love is not arrogant (οὐ φυσιοῦται), 13:4.

- a. We all come into this world with arrogance, it is our greatest flaw. We all think of ourselves more than we ought and God and others less than we should.
- b. True love is found in humility, especially humility before God, Job 42:1-6.
- c. Humility runs counter to our culture
- d. Consider the humility of our Lord, our Example, Philip. 2:5-11.

11. Love does not act unbecomingly (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ), 13:5.
 - a. A loving person is polite.
 - b. This means that in love we are not pushy, selfish, or coarse in our speech.
 - c. Love never expresses itself in gross language or in coarse speech.
 - d. See 1 Peter. 3:8-9 and note the attending virtues. Also note Paul's politeness in Acts 26:24-29.

12. Love does not seek its own (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς), 13:5.
 - a. Love is not selfish.
 - b. We all like to do it our own way.
 - c. An example of love not seeking its own in 1 King 3:16-27; Philip. 2:5-11.
 - d. There is nothing wrong with seeking our own. There is everything wrong with only seeking one's own.
 - e. Consider the example of Jesus Christ.

13. Love is not provoked (οὐ παροξύνεται), 13:5.
- a. Anger in itself is not sinful, Eph. 4:26-27.
 - b. Christ manifested anger or wrath in John 2:13-17.
 - c. Anger may be an appropriate manifestation of love when the issue is God and His truth.
 - d. However, an angry or bitter disposition which has ill will and seeks vengeance is not one of love. Sinful anger is anger which has no godly purpose.

14. Love does not think evil (οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν), 13:5.

- a. Love does not assume others have evil motives (projection?)
- b. Love thinks the best of others.
- c. Love is not quick to think evil of others.

15. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ), 13:6.
- a. One cannot love God or others and rejoice in evil because evil opposes God.
 - b. Unrighteousness always leads to hostility to God, Rom. 1:28-32.

16. Love rejoices in the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), 13:6.
- a. Note the inseparable link between love and truth.
 - b. God is not only the ground of love but the ground of truth.
 - c. We cannot love God and at the same time not love truth.
 - d. Jesus Christ came to bear witness to Truth, John 18:33-38.
 - e. It was Christ's own commitment to Truth that motivated Him to fulfill all righteousness.
 - f. Christ loved truth because He loved His Father, Who is the Author of all truth.
 - g. Remember, Satan is the Father of lies who does everything he can to distort, twist, or conceal the truth.
 - h. The greatest problem in the human race is suppression of truth, Rom. 1:18-25.

17. Love bears all things (πάντα στέγει), 13:7.

- a. Love endures afflictions and suffering without complaining or whining.
- b. Only in love can one be blessed in persecution, Matt. 5:10-12. In such love God pours out His sanctifying grace on suffering believers.

18. Love believes all things, hopes all things (πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει), 13:7.

- a. This refers to all things spoken by God. In love we embrace all that God says.
- b. Note the connection between faith, hope, and love. They are mutually dependent.
- c. Without love for God one is not inclined to believe or hope in God.

19. 'Faith, hope, and love and the greatest is love,' 13:13. A few words on the Greek grammar.
20. Love is the preeminent virtue in the Word of God: 1 Corinthians 13; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:35; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14; 1 John 3:10-18; 4:7-21.
21. Since we all love and seek what we love, the issue comes down to the object of love, cf., Jn. 3:19: There is good love and bad love, love for the light of God and love for darkness. Moreover, the only way to remove bad love is to cultivate good love for God. We all seek what we think is good, we just need to make sure it is really the Good.

22. Bad love like good love always sees some beauty in object.

(1) Love for money and things of this world is a bad love because it is a love for the wrong object, 1 Tim 6:10. God is to be the object, not mammon. Love for money not only destroys love for God, it destroys love for people.

(2) Pride is bad love of self, 2 Tim. 3:2. This is loving yourself as a god rather than loving yourself as God loves you. Prideful love of self destroys capacity to love others, as well.

23. True love loves the right object the right way in the right proportion to the right office.

24. By fellowshiping with God, the believer is able partake of God's virtue, the chief of which is God's own love in divine concurrence.