

Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 171-Spiritual virtues 111 (Beatitude #6: Purity of Heart and Love.4)

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

Opening: Two greatest issues in life: Knowledge and Love: John 8:32; Luke 10:27. The believer who is only into pragmatic/experiential truth is going to have great difficulty growing up and loving God with all of his mind for many reasons.

2 Parts to Bible class:

- (1) 10-15 minutes on spiritual & philosophical foundations required for a Christian worldview.
- (2) 45-50 minutes on virtue & love in 2 Pet. 1:2-11.

Spiritual foundations: the concurrent ministry of the Holy Spirit on the intellect, will, and affections .

Psa. 51:10-12; 143:10.
 Isa. 11:2
 Acts 16:14
 Gal. 5:22-25.
 Eph. 5:15-18.
 1 Thess. 5:16-23.
 Philip. 2:13-15.

Review of our chart on philosophical foundations for a Christian worldview: We will finish epistemology after 50 classes (causation), where I will be bringing in more of the nature anti-intellectualism that saturates American Christianity (and how it damages Christian minds for Whole Truth and witness to world). I will also cover the objective epistemological first principles of being and laws of thought (PR). Then on to 4: linguistics.

5: Hermeneutics
4: Linguistics
3: Epistemology 32 - Existence 50 - Causation 27
2:Metaphysics 32 - Trans. 50
1: Reality - Logic 32, - Truth 32

P.R. - 32

Stage 3 – Christian metaphysician = life of glory!

- Metaphysical understanding of God, creation, the spiritual life, man, and Bible doctrine.
- Transcendent relationship with God rather than nominal relationship with God.

Stage 3

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

Stage 2 – Christian doctrinal believer = life of doctrine!

- Still Nominal understanding of God. Increase in perinoetic truth about God & the spiritual life. However, still plagued with pagan philosophy in view of God’s nature due to lack of metaphysics, which is due to modernism’s philosophical assumptions. He has become more stable, but still very dependent on others for confidence in absolute truths.
- Orientation still more about words than the reality.

Stage 2

Holy Spirit  Bible Doctrine

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.

Stage 1

Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview

(Causation-27: Discarding of causes in metaphysics)

The anti-intellectualism of Common Sense Realism

1. Thomas Reid, in an effort to solve the Cartesian and Humean problems, created a “philosophy” called Common Sense Realism. This Common Sense Realism became the preferred, practical “philosophy” of virtually all Americans from evangelicals to those who rejected Christianity. Thomas Paine, for example, said that “The Christian system is an outrage on common sense.” Thomas Jefferson rejected the miracles of Christ, the deity of Christ, and the Trinity because of “common sense.” Yet, Common Sense Realism is the dominant “philosophy” of virtually all contemporary fundamentalists, Bible churches, Evangelicals, Reformed (Plantinga) and even the ICE movement.

Technically, Common Sense is

- a. **__ unjustifiable and unjustified instinct, and thus irrational (epistemologically), and therefore not even a valid philosophy**
- b. **__ a valid, but false philosophical system**

2. It cannot be denied that most of us grew up in an anti-intellectual wing of Protestant Christianity. However, Thieme has done a great job of overcoming a significant amounts of anti-intellectualism in Christianity by making teaching the issue in the local church. However, due to the fact that he was not given the metaphysical tools (epistemology, metaphysics, linguistics) to get to the metaphysical structure of Reality, he had no means of escaping the circular, instinctive Baconian-Reidian hermeneutics.

However, with PR, doctrinal believers

- a. ___ can ground the ICE hermeneutic in objective reality and Total Truth and remove vestiges of anti-intellectualism
- b. ___ need to construct a whole new system

3. For the most part, the hermeneutic principles of conservative Bible churches that teach the Bible verse-by-verse are the same as those in virtually all other denominations, including charismatic and WOF movements.
- a. true
 - b. false
4. Anti-intellectualism is characterized by
- a. a low IQ
 - b. a certain mindset of Christians, deists, agnostics, skeptics, and atheists regarding the intellect's lack of ability to get to ultimate reality, *Esse*.
5. One of my goals in creating these questions for believers of FBC is to
- a. make you smarter than all of the pagan-thinking Christians of our age
 - b. militate against vestiges of anti-intellectualism that we all possess and which harm our spiritual lives by skewing our appreciation of Total Truth

Love-4 (and virtue)

2 Peter 1:4-11: Fellowship and our Final End.

1. We have all been called by the glory and virtue of God and given all that we need to develop Christian virtue. Recall that virtue is excellence, be it an acorn or a human being, and that God activates all things according to their natures.
2. The efficient means of developing virtue is by participating in the life of God. As we share in the life of God, we received infused virtues, which enable us to escape the corruption of the flesh. Again, the two dominant issues in our lives are knowledge and love—the intellect and the will.
3. There is great need for and power in diligence in context of concurrentism. Advance in the Christian life is not easy, especially in our era.

James 1:2-5

4. We all must go through difficulties before we can develop Christian virtue.
James 1:2-5.
5. The virtue of fortitude is one of the most difficult to develop, James 1:4. Yet, it is required before one can advance to maturity, which is all about the development of virtue—not just knowledge. This endurance of patience (ὑπομονή) is very difficult. It is especially difficult when the suffering is protracted and unfair.
6. Note that the endurance is active “work” (ἔργον). This is not passive endurance. This is enduring difficulties without complaint—instead consenting to the will of God in pains, sorrows, losses, and troubles or disappointments, and even losing friends. This work is done by trusting and loving God—by knowledge and by love.

7. The *work* of endurance must be done in love—love for God and love for others. In spite of all of the distractions and disappointments, there must be a determination to love God no matter what, which requires fellowship with God and making Him the End, not just taking in doctrine to feel better. But using the difficulties as stepping stones to get closer to the Lord.

8. Consider Christ's endurance as the Cross was ever before Him and He continued to move forward without hesitation. Endurance is all about the will—bowing before the sovereign will of God.

Luke 9:51 And it came about, when the days were approaching for His ascension, that He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem;

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.

1 Pet 2:18-25.

9. The *work* of endurance is required lest we become self-absorbed and move into self-pity. It is easy to be selfish in times of sorrow. Instead we are to turn to God in trust and love.
10. The work of endurance requires the virtue of devotion to God above all else. Again, apart from seeking God and devotion to God during difficulties, one will likely feel sorry for himself and/or become bitter and hard hearted.
11. The work of endurance includes focusing on Christ's sufferings. There is nothing like turning our attention to Christ and looking at Him and identifying with Him in a hostile world—hostile to Christ and the things of God.

Hebrews 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

12. The virtue of counting it all joy, James 1:2. How can a man be glad when he has trouble? There is only one way: to understand that the intention of our whole lives is for God to make us into what He would have us be. Only then can there be joy in sorrow. Only when the believer measures things by God's standards and cherishes being like Jesus Christ. We have the privilege of extracting meaning out of sorrow! There is no joy where there is no value.

13. Life is designed to build character. The light afflictions here not only have a purpose for the here and now, they produce an eternal weight of glory,

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

14. Note the emphasis on “perfect” and “complete” (τέλειοι καὶ ὀλόκληροι). Perfect refers to perfecting the virtue. The completeness refers to completion of other virtues. This is the ideal for our lives.

15. Keeping your resolve on devotion to God through all of the heartaches and difficulties is far more effective than emotional quick fixes or passivity. There is no quick fix and no shortcuts to virtue. Even Christ developed virtue through the things He suffered. No man grows in virtue apart endurance in the things of God.

Hebrews 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

1 Peter 1:5-7 – The Testing and purifying of your faith.

16. Our Christian faith is more precious than anything you possess. This is why our faith must be based on what God has said. Faith is the tap root of our spiritual life. We cannot grow without faith in the things of God. Loss of faith is disaster for the life. With PR, we can leave contemporary curses of irrational skepticism.
17. Our whole character is tested by the experiences of daily life. The good and evil are revealed in testing. We grow most in times of difficulties. Thus, the joy, which is always a characteristic of the spiritual life.
18. Praise, honor, and glory from God Himself. Praise from Christ. Honor speaks of a man's true virtue in relation to others. Glory speaks of a man's relationship with God Himself.
19. Note the love in verse 8. Love longs for the presence of the Beloved. Note the joy and in trusting in God. Takes real virtue to love God in such a pure manner in trying times.

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.