

FAITH BIBLE CHURCH

Christmas 2015 (part 1)

-Esse

-The Simplicity of God

-The Incarnation



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

Psalm 73:23-28. God is our beginning, end, and everything in between, Rev. 22:13; 1 Cor 16:22.

Prayer: The Holy Spirit is required to lift us up to God above our bane world Gal. 5:22-23, Eph. 6:6; 2 Cor 5:9.

3 Parts to Bible Class:

Part I: Love for God, the root, hinge, form, and fruit of the spiritual life and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Part II: Philosophical foundations. The key figures between Plato and Saussure on knowledge and language.

Part III: Doctrinal development: Christmas Special 1- Esse, the simplicity of God, and incarnation.

Part I: Spiritual foundations: from love (1 Cor 13) to the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

1. Love for God is the root, hinge, form, and fruit of all spiritual virtue
 - a. 1 Corinthians 13:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.
 - b. Also note in 1 Cor 13:4ff that love for God is patient, kind, not jealous, not arrogant, not vindictive, takes no joy in unrighteousness, rejoices with truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, never fails, and is the culmination of the triad of faith hope and love.
 - c. Note the similarities in the fruit of the Spirit of Gal. 5:22, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, humility, self-control.
 - d. Note that love for God fulfills the whole Law, Gal. 5:14, “the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
 - e. Note how love is related to our freedom, Gal. 5:13, “You were called to freedom, brethren, only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”
 - f. Note the alternative to loving Christ, 1 Cor. 16:22,
2. It is a modern error to think of the Holy Spirit’s ministry in conduit terms as if He turns on the virtues mentioned in Gal. 5:22-23. The idea of turning on virtues in a person “artificially” is very problematic.
3. It is also a modern error to think in Cartesian noetic terms, which tend to depreciate the affective qualities and virtues listed in Gal. 5:22-23, reducing them to mere thoughts and thinking.
4. The supernatural virtues listed in Galatians 5 and 1 Cor. 13 are final products of the Holy Spirit’s activity in the Christian’s nature.
5. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is the supernatural actuation of human powers for his supernatural end.
6. These fruits describe a manifold of virtues in the intellect, will, and their affective states.
7. These virtues perfect the human mind, will, and affections. They are not ad-ons nor do they run through an individual because he is in some state. They become part of who the believer is.

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-74

3: Epistemology 32
 - Existence 50
 - History 50

2:Metaphysics 32
 - Trans. 50

1: Reality
 - Logic 32,
 - Truth 32

Part 2: Philosophy of Language (74)

Review of Key Players

Review of major players in philosophy of language

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ *Cratylus*
 - Hermogenes
 - Cratylus
 - Socrates
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- ✓ Transition to modern philosophy of language

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)

Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.



Plato
428-348 B. C.



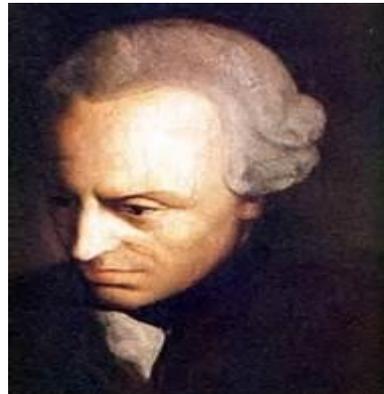
Aristotle
384-322 B.C.



Augustine of Hippo
354-430



Rene Descartes
1596-1650



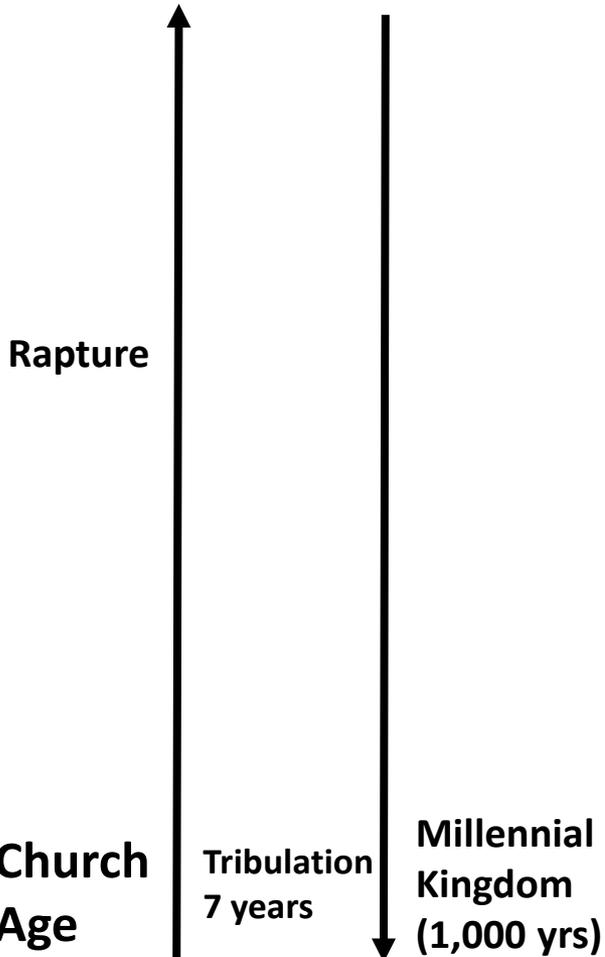
Immanuel Kant
1724-1804



Ferdinand de Saussure
1857-1913

Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ:

(Rom 14:10–12; 1 Cor 3:12–15; 4:4–5;
2 Cor 5:9–10)



Eternal perspective and the believer:

- 1. Writer of Hebrews repeatedly warns believers about neglecting their salvation.**
 - Hebrews 2:3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?
 - Hebrews 10:30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."
 - Hebrews 12:29 "For our God is a consuming fire."
- 2. Jesus Christ warned believers about making this temporal life the top priority:**
 - Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 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.
 - The dark, frustrated, enslaved, cursed mammon-driven life.
- 3. The cursed carnal life**
 - 1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed.
- 4. The blessed Christ-centered life,**
 - 2 Corinthians 5:9 Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.
 - Colossians 3:23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.
- 5. Eternal perspective on security and rewards:**

2 Timothy 2:11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.

Hebrews 2:5-18.

1. Several things have come together for us to pause our study of the EP and Heaven and take a few classes on *Esse*, the simplicity of God, and the incarnation for this Christmas season.
 - a. Our studies of the eternal perspective in relation to the salvation warning passages in Hebrews has led us to an incarnational passage in Hebrews 2:5-18.
 - b. Our studies in the dialogues of Pastor Don and Richard Dawkins have brought us to the point where *Esse* and His absolute goodness needs to be developed in addressing all of the problems of evil.
 - c. Our modern neo-theism (theistic personalism) not only robs the believer of the grandeur of the incarnation that we celebrate this time of year, it causes a host of problems in contemporary Christianity (making God into a giant man, problem of evil, deism and atheism).

2. Review of the blessings of the incarnation outlined in Hebrews 2:5-18.
3. In order to really appreciate the incarnation of the One “for whom are all things, and through whom are all things” (2:10) to “partake of flesh and blood” (2:14) necessitates understanding the simplicity of God.
4. The doctrine of divine simplicity denies any and all composition in God whether it is physical, metaphysical, or logical. Divine simplicity means that God is uncomposed. There is no absolutely no distinction or polarity in God.
5. The fundamental principles on the simplicity of God.
 - a. Every composite being must have potentiality and actuality.
 - b. God is Pure Act—He is entirely actual.
 - c. God is not composite and is therefore simple.

6. The simplicity of God means that all of the attributes of God are identical. The distinctions we read off as attributes are due to distinctions of human reason. We note the various attributes from the different effects of God. The simple unity of God is presented to us in creaturely multiplicity.
7. Objection #1: the logical objection to the simplicity of God is that it violates the rule of identity and non-contradiction:
 - a. If $A = B$, and if $A = C$, then $B = C$. This would mean that if A (simplicity) = B (righteousness) = C (mercy). However, it goes against our experience think that simplicity, righteousness, and mercy are the same things.
 - b. So, on the surface it appears that we have a violation of the rule of non-contradiction because they do not seem equal.

8. Response to objection #1: the logical argument against simplicity.
 - a. The objection begs the question by assuming that there are actual distinct attributes in God.
 - b. Simplicity teaches that there are no separate and distinct attributes in God.
 - c. There is nothing irrational about God being a single simple being who is revealed in a multitude of ways—ways in which human beings think and talk when referring to various aspects of the one simple God.
 - d. In other words, there is nothing contradictory with man speaking of multiple attributes as concepts of human reasoning all the while realizing that God is simple.

9. Objection #2 to the simplicity of God is the metaphysical argument against the simplicity of God.
 - a. This objection says that since God is a concrete person with abstract properties (attributes), then to make Him equal to His properties is to make God abstract and destroy God as a concrete person.
 - b. In other words, God cannot be simple because He would be a *simple unity* of abstract properties and thus not a person.

10. Response to objection #2: the metaphysical argument against simplicity.
 - a. It is important to note that God in His essence is not a Person.
 - b. If He were a person, then the doctrine of the Trinity would be incoherent because we would have one person and three persons, which is an obvious contradiction.
 - c. This objection begs the question of simplicity by viewing God with properties as things that God has. This is akin to Greek polytheism where separate attributes qualifies, identifies, and are someone platonic independent realities.
 - d. Moreover, God has intellect and will and thus is a person.

11. Objection #3 to the simplicity of God: it makes God too impersonal.
 - a. It makes God less relatable or personal if He is not essentially a Person.
 - b. One cannot even know what God is when one speaks in terms of God as existence. The whole idea of His essence being existence is incoherent.

12. Responses to objection #3:

- a. God in His essence is not a Person. Though each member of the Trinity has an intellect and will and therefore qualify as Persons.
- b. God should not be anthropomorphized by starting with the nature of man and then adding unlimited power, knowledge, and presence. He is not a humanoid, a parent-like being, or a superman. He does not worry or change His mind—ever!
- c. The modern redefinition of God brings a host of *modern* problems that never existed when the simplicity of God was recognized in Christendom.
- d. The New Atheists have seized upon this modern view of God and by placing God under moral and human psychological categories are destroying society's confidence in the absolute goodness of God.
- e. The Paleyan God has replaced 'Ehyeh.
- f. Personal theism (neo-theism) has replaced 'Ehyeh.
- g. It does no good to pretend God is like us and His will is like our own in respect to what humans think would be a good God.
- h. This doctrine of simplicity has a long and orthodox history, upheld by Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Aquinas, Maimonides, Avicenna, and Averroes.

13. God Himself describes Himself in terms of absolute existence: 'Ehyeh, *Esse*, the I AM, the YHWH of Exodus 3:14.
- a. God by nature is *Ipsum Esse Subsistence*.
 - b. 'Ehyeh is absolutely Good and understanding His goodness defeats any and all problems of evil—even the most horrendous evils, in which it appears that there is absolutely no point to life.
 - c. 'Ehyeh is far above the Paleyan designer God or the modern god of deism, or the god of personal theism (neo-theism).
 - d. The simplicity of God rests on the metaphysics of Pure Act, pure existence without any potential.
 - e. 'Ehyeh is absolute existence.

- f. The simplicity of God means that God is identical to His existence. He is His existence which is His essence which is His power which is His knowledge which is His goodness.
- g. Nothing that less than what is absolutely simple could be divine, because nothing less than simple would have the metaphysical ultimate that God is suppose to have
- h. Anything which is in any way composed of parts would be metaphysically less fundamental than those parts and would depend upon those parts. God does not depend on parts or attributes.
- i. For the classical theist, to deny simplicity is to deny God as Ultimate.

- j. Unless God is identical with all that is in Him, one cannot designate Him as “most absolute,” “IS.”
- k. If God were composed of parts then whatever absoluteness He exhibited would have to be correlative to those parts and thus weakened by relativity, contingency, and dependency.
- l. Without an absolutely simple God who is identical with all that is in Him one can offer no account for God or for anything else.
- m. If God is not the ontological sufficient reason for Himself and all other things, then He is not God at all.