

Biblical-Philosophical Psychology 173-Spiritual virtues 113 (Beatitude #6: Purity of Heart and Love.6)

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

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| 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 |
| - History 28 |
| 2:Metaphysics 32 |
| - Trans. 50 |
| 1: Reality |
| - Logic 32, |
| - Truth 32 |

Opening: The greatest issue in life is living with God by knowledge and by love: John 8:32, 17:17; Luke 10:27; Matt. 6:24; Rom. 12:1-2.

2 Parts to Bible class: Union with God by knowledge and love is not easy. It has taken me 30+ years to break through the modern Baconian-Reidian mindset in contemporary Christianity.

- (1) 15 minutes on spiritual & philosophical foundations required for a Christian worldview.
- (2) 1 hour on virtue, testing, and love.

***The spiritual life:** the Christian life was never designed to be a static, superstitious, or gnostic life. The Christian life is to be a life of growing in virtue, a transformation of our character for this life and in preparation for the next life. Only through growth in virtue can we find happiness and fulfillment in God's plan for our lives. Apart from growth in virtue all knowledge, doctrinal or otherwise is fruitless. Growth in virtue guarantees that one will never stumble in the plan of God. What a magnificence promise!*

The eight virtues of 2 Peter 1:4-11

- Neither doctrine, nor knowledge, nor virtue are final ends in themselves. God is!
- It is prudence that understands that God is man's end.

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



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



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

(Epistemology: History-29 - Anti-intellectualism in the Bible Movement)

1. It took 1300 years for Christians to achieve a perfectly consistent philosophy/metaphysics of creation, God, and man based on “I AM,” ’Ehyeh. However, Satan through 5 men has undermined and destroyed modern man’s intellectual and metaphysical ability to properly see and understand the nature of Ultimate Truth in regard to God, science, man, the Bible, and the Christian life:
 - (1) Rene Descartes (1596-1650)—by making Objective Truth mental.
 - (2) Francis Bacon (1561-1626)—by making Objective Truth inductive.
 - (3) Thomas Reid (1710-1796)—by making Objective Truth instinctive.
 - (4) Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)—by making Objective Truth subjective.
 - (5) Auguste Comte (1798-1857)—by making Objective Truth positivistic.

What is the one thing that all of these men share in common that makes it impossible for modern man to enter into and discover the metaphysics of God, creation, and man?

- (a) __ They were all unbelievers
- (b) __ They all excluded the principle of causation in the world.

2. Perhaps the best way to illustrate how effective Satan has been throughout the Bible-movement in destroying Christians' grasp and love for Total Truth is to note the anti-intellectual animus in contemporary Baconian-Reidian Bible churches:
- (1) Truth – what are most Christians in churches interested in and have confidence in? pragmatic truth, coherence truth, or correspondence truth (CT)? Could any believer hope to gain the virtue of truth-seeking apart from CT? Is the animus in local churches against CT and logic from God or Satan?
 - (2) Metaphysics— given that metaphysics formally deals with being and causation and includes everything that is beyond the physical: God, the human soul, love, virtue, ethics, righteousness. Is the ignorance of and animus against metaphysics in local Bible churches inspired by God or Satan?
 - (3) Epistemology- given that epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge and truth, who do you think is responsible for the ignorance and animus against epistemology in local churches?
 - (4) Linguistics—given that linguistics is a tool we use in grasping reality, who do you think profits from destroying our understanding of how language works? God or Satan?
 - (5) Hermeneutics—given that hermeneutics deals with the method we use to interpret the Word of God, who do you think seeks to destroy that understanding? God or Satan? Moreover, hermeneutics also deals with science—think of the harm done to millions of Christians due to lack of understanding of concurrence.

Baconian-Reidian hermeneutic is basically an anti-intellectual method used by every Bible church that does not teach the above principles of philosophical realism (CT, TT):

- (a) __ True
- (b) __ False

3. The “common sense” in Thomas Reid’s Common Sense Philosophy is
- a. common in the sense of being practical like horse sense.
 - b. common in the sense of being commonly/universally believed by man
4. Reidianism (Scottish Common Sense Realism)
- a. was a significant break from the Reformation
 - b. was a continuation of the Reformation
5. Baconian induction, the preferred method in Bible churches
- a. is basically a positivistic and shallow approach to Scripture
 - b. brings depth, accuracy, and objective in understanding God and the Bible

Love 6 (Virtue-building and testing for advancement in love for God)

1. Spiritual progress in life is all about growing/perfecting of virtue, which enables us to know and love God and everything that He loves and further prepare us to be with Him in the next life, 2 Pet. 1:4-11; Col. 3:1-17. God is our first cause, continuous cause, and last end. All of life is to enable us to be in union with Him by knowledge and by love.
2. All trials or tests we face in this life are designed to reveal, challenge, and develop the virtue and love for the Lord (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν), James 1:2-4, 12.

3. With every test there comes the temptation to resent the test and thus refuse to allow God to do the virtue-building work He desires to accomplish in us. Every test is all about our true values and commitments in life. Tests are always designed to move us closer to the Lord!
4. The issue in every test is to submit lovingly to God's mighty hand. This means submission to His Word, John 14:21-24. Mature love for God is always about total surrender to God as a way of life.
5. If a Christian does not love God, a wrong attitude toward testing will be manifested toward the test, God, others, and true values of life. The point of the test is to break us from bad values and focus.

6. The trials of life reveal, more than anything else, the presence or absence of our love for God. It is in the tests of life that we discover just how much we love the Lord and the things of God.

7. Note the various virtues and vices in James along with their corresponding effects on our relationship with God.
 - a. Virtues and vices related to responding to tests properly, chapter 1.
 - b. Virtues and vices related to loving others and God, 2.
 - a. Virtues and vices related to controlling the tongue, 3.
 - b. Virtues and vices related to materialism, 4-5.
 - c. The call for perseverance in trials to the end, 5:11. Consider the development of virtue and love in Job possible through the proper response to testing.

8. Faith in and love for Jesus Christ in the midst of trials, 1 Peter 1:6-7.
- a. The essential need for the refining of faith, 1:7. Tests always bring the opportunity to enhance the intellect and will regarding God.
 - b. Supernatural joy in suffering is always related to love of the Lord, 1:6. Supernatural love creates supernatural joy.
 - c. Rewards are all related to virtues, virtues related to man (honor), God (glory), and Christ (praise), 1:7.
 - d. Faith and love in Christ. The stronger and clearer the faith, the more capacity to love Christ, 1:8.

9. 1 Cor. 13:1-3: Apart from the love of God we are simply wasting our time, which means wasting our lives. Even what appears as the most virtuous of activities are worthless apart from love for God and love for what God loves. Moreover, all of the virtues in verses 4-13 are but different modes and manifestations of love.

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

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."

Romans 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. 9 For this, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

Romans 14:15 For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another. 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

1 John 2:3 And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

1 John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 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? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

10. Love for God and for what God loves is the hinge and summit of all Christian virtues:

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1 John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

11. Since love is all about the will as the appetite of the intellect, improper love will adversely affect the believer's will, intellect, judgment, values and attitude to God and the plan of God.

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.

11. Since love is all about the will, improper love will adversely affects the believer's will, intellect, judgment, values and attitude to God and the plan of God.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. 11 But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.

11. Since love is all about the will, improper love will adversely affects the believer's will, intellect, judgment, values and attitude to God and the plan of God.

2 Timothy 3:1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these. 6 For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, 7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

12. Basic characteristics of love, metaphysically and biblical.

- a. We love what we consider good and we hate what threatens that good. Moreover, the extent of our love for something determines what sacrifices we will make for that object of love. This means before any believer can love God, fellow man, his neighbor, and believers, he will have to see them as good.
- b. 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.
- c. Love for God includes willingness to surrender to God and to engage in right action. This surrender is total and absolute as illustrated by Abraham, David, Christ, and the Apostle Paul. The right action is loving all that God loves on account of God. This requires virtue.
- d. Christ greatest love, sacrificial friendship love, John 15:13.

13. The various virtues listed in 1 Cor. 13:4ff are the different manifestations or modes of love.
- a. Love is longsuffering (μακροθυμεῖ), 1 Cor. 13:4. We have enormous patience for those we really love. We have very little patience for those we dislike or hate. The power of love in perfecting virtue is in its ability to bring about right thinking, right willing, and right affections and right emotions. This avoids many of the sins and evils of anger, sadness, and bitterness.
 - b. Love is kind/merciful (χρηστεύεται), 13:4. When we really love someone we are kind and merciful to them. When we do not love someone, we have bad thoughts about them. Consider the kindness of Christ, Matt. 5:43-48; 12:15-21; John 4:16-24. Christ was very kind to the weak but very confrontational with those in society who aggressively opposed and distorted the Word of God.

- c. Love does not envy (οὐ ζηλοῖ), 13:4. When we love someone, we do not envy what they possess. We are glad they have blessings to enjoy. Christ never envied the wealth of others, but the religious leaders envied Christ (Matt. 27:15-18). Consider the envy of politics as the poor are set against the rich, employees against employers, women against men. Envy is a breeding ground great evil. In love, the believer is perfectly satisfied with what God has provided.

- d. Love does not brag (οὐ περπερεύεται), 13:4. A person who loves is a person who is not occupied with himself. He is thinking of others. This is true humility as per Philip. 2:5-11. We all need the humility of Job as per Job 42:1-6. The vice of pride is manifested in the Pharisees in Matt. 23:1-8.
- e. Love is not arrogant (οὐ φυσιοῦται), 13:4. This is our greatest flaw. We all think more of ourselves than we ought. The only way to break that vice is by loving others.

- f. Love does not act unbecomingly (οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ), 13:5. Why? Because love actually thinks of others. A loving person is always polite instead of pushy, selfish, or coarse in our speech, 1 Pet. 3:8-9

- g. Love does not seek its own (οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς), 13:5. When you love another person, it really is all about them. There is nothing wrong with seeking one's own, but there is everything wrong with only seeking one's own. See Christ's example in Philip. 2:5-11.

- h. Love is not provoked (οὐ παροξύνεται), 13:5. While anger in and of itself is not sinful (cf., Eph. 4:26-27; Jn 2:13-17), an angry or bitter disposition which has ill will is not love.
- i. Love does not think evil (οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν), 13:5. In love you assume the best instead of thinking others have evil motives.
- j. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness (οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ), 13:6. One cannot love God and rejoice in evil since evil opposes God. Unrighteousness always leads to hostility to God, Rom. 1:28-32.

- k. Love rejoices in the truth (συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), 13:6.
- Love for God and the things of God cannot be separated from love of Truth. No one can love God apart from loving Truth.
 - God is not only the ground of love, He is the ground of Truth. We cannot love God and at the same time not love truth.
 - Jesus Christ came to bear witness to Truth, John 18:33-38. It was Christ's own commitment to Truth that motivated Him to fulfill all righteousness.
 - Christ loved truth because He loved His Father, Who is the Author of all truth.
 - Remember, Satan is the Father of lies who does everything he can to distort, twist, or conceal the truth.
 - The greatest problem in the human race is suppression of truth, Rom. 1:18-25.
 - The greatest problem in Christianity is suppression of Truth.

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

- Love endures afflictions and suffering without complaining or whining.
- 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.

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

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

- n. 1 Corinthians 13:13 *But now **abide** faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.* 13:13. The coupling of the three nouns with a verb (abide) in the singular demonstrate that in their depth and essence they are but one thing. They all work together.