

Introduction:

- ❖ Last week we began to introduce the idea of Logic and its relation to the faith as a necessary practice if the Christian is to rightly understand and think about God, his word, his works and proper doctrine besides all the other practical uses in daily life. We will briefly review this idea before jumping into our topic of the week.
- ❖ This week, we want to begin by looking at the 3 fundamental laws of logic that govern the life of the mind. We will also look at some examples where, not following these rules leads to doctrinal issues.

Review:

- ❖ Is it possible to arrive at true conclusions with faulty reasoning? Is that how we ought to think? Is it good?
 - “Emily’s” math errors.
 - Darwin’s Black box – Can I trust my thoughts to be accurate rather than deficient?
 - Calvinistic determinism – If God determines my thoughts are all of them actually true?
- ❖ 2 Tim 2:15-21
 - vs 20-21 – notice how there is this discussion of vessels and compare that to the Calvinistic understanding of Romans 9 “vessels of wrath”.
 - Purge himself from “these” – what “these”?
 - Vs 16 – skeptical beliefs
 - Vs 19 – sinful behaviors
 - Those who do this will become useful prepared for good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17
- ❖ 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
 - We are in a war, period.

- Strong holds – Castles, fortresses.
 - Does God just hate castles and when we see them we should lay siege to them?
- Tear down all things that prevent the knowledge of God. Bring ALL thoughts captive to obeying Christ.

3 Laws of Logic.

- ❖ Underneath all rational thought are 3 major Laws which are also called first principles.¹ This means that for any rational/logical/reasonable thoughts to be possible, they must be grounded in these laws. These Laws make it so that any meaningful discourse can be possible.
- ❖ Similar to empirical science needing something to observe I.E. the physical universe, we are studying a mind E.I. rational agents like God and man. The Natural universe has 4 fundamental forces that govern physical relationships and Logic has 3 fundamental laws to govern our thoughts. Although these laws may seem somewhat obvious they are crucial to all rational thought and unfortunately often overlooked or denied by people today. This is especially true of theological, moral and ethical conversations.
- ❖ Some People attempt to deny these truths because they do not like the conclusions. Often we find out we are wrong about something when we study logic. When the thing we are wrong about is extremely important, it becomes very hard to accept, but for those seeking to deny these laws they will have to use them in order to deny them.
- ❖ How do we tell the difference between the truth claims of propositions or conclusions?

1. All men are mortal
2. Socrates is a man

¹ "In philosophy a first principle is a basic, foundational proposition or group of propositions that cannot be deduced from any other proposition. First principles are self-evident truths that form the starting point for a particular branch of philosophy." Mark Foreman, *Prelude to Philosophy*, pg 122 fn#1

3. Therefore, Socrates is mortal

❖ This one seems to be true and obviously so, but what about...

1. All that exist is God
2. Nate exists
3. Therefore, Nate is God.

❖ What kind of Theology is this? How can we prove it wrong?

Law of Non-contradiction $\sim(P \bullet \sim P)$

❖ The first Law is the Law of Non-contradiction. Cannot be both P and Non P. This law states that something cannot be and not be at the same time and in the same sense. "It is not the case that there can be both P and non-P."² In other words it is not possible for a statement to be both true and false at the same time.

- God exists. This statement cannot be both true and false simultaneously. It cannot be true for one person while false for someone else.
- This is probably the most fundamental and important of the Laws to learn. Many doctrines break this law by positing two contradictory statements in their system. Take for example the definitions of sovereignty and freewill on Calvinism.
- On Calvinism God's sovereignty means that he decrees everything that comes to pass including all our actions and even our thoughts, intentions, and wills. Free will is also affirmed, saying our actions, thoughts, intentions, and wills are freely determined by us. But can our choices be both pre-determined by God and freely determined by us?

² Ibid pg 122

Would not this be forced freedom? As Geisler and Brooks state “Forced Freedom is a contradiction, but God determinately choosing that I make a free choice is not.”³

- $2+2=4$ and $2+2=-1$. This breaks the math rule of two positive integers being added equal a positive integer. Both answers cannot be true.

Law of Excluded Middle $P \vee \sim P$

- ❖ The second Law is the Law of Excluded middle. Either P or not P. This law shows us that “any statement is either true or false”⁴, there is no middle ground.
 - God exists – This is either true or else it is false. There are no other options. He either does exist or he does not in fact exist. He cannot exist in reality for one person while not existing for another. Nor can he partially exist and partially not exist.

Law of Identity $P = P$

- ❖ The third Law of Logic then is the Law of Identity. P is P. Something is what it is, or a thing is itself. If a statement is true, then it is true. This may seem really silly but it makes sense when you consider something like, Clark Kent and Superman. These are not the same words, but do they describe the same person? Or “The current sitting President of the United States” and Donald J. Trump.
 - A thing is only itself if it has all the same attributes and properties with no differences.
 - God exists – If God exists then He Exists. We may however ask, “God” who?
 - A theological example is the Mystery verses prophecy

³ Norm Geisler and Ronald Brooks, *Come Let us Reason: An Introduction to Logical Thinking*, Baker Books 1990 - pg 20

⁴ James Nance, *Introductory Logic*. Pg 3

- Luke 1:70, Acts 2, and Romans 16:25

Bonus use in evangelism.

- ❖ These 3 Laws can be used to set up the so-called Kalam Cosmological argument. Once a person agrees with these laws you can begin to assess the statement God exists. You can start by asking if the individual accepts certain facts.
 - Does the universe exist?
 - Did it have a beginning?
 - Was that beginning caused?
 - Was it personal?

Works Cited

Foreman, Mark. *Prelude to Philosophy: An Introduction for Christians*. IVP Academic, 2014

Geisler, Norman and Ronald Brooks. *Come Let Us Reason: An Introduction to Logical Thinking*. Baker Academic, 1990.

Nance, James and Douglas Wilson. *Introductory Logic: The Fundamentals of Thinking Well*. Canon Press, 4th Edition, 2006