
A Christian Philosophy Of Learning: Application to Science

March - May 2002
CRPC Adult Sunday School
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Class #8

<http://www.logicteacher.com/pol/>

Verities So Far

- P V^2_1 : A wise person will continually seek to acquire and apply truth for the glory of God. An unwise person will not.
- P V^2_2 : Truth consists of all the propositions that God affirms.
- P V^2_3 : A truth is still a truth, even if you do not believe it is true, or if you do not know whether it is true, or if God has not chosen to reveal that it is true.
- P V^2_4 : The starting point for acquiring and applying truth is regeneration.
- P V^2_5 : No person ever reaches a point where he should stop acquiring and applying truth.

Verities So Far (continued)

- P V^2_6 : All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
— 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- P V^2_7 : God does not need to reason from known truth to new truth, because He knows everything all at once.
- P V^2_8 : Humans must reason from known truth to new truth, because we do not know everything all at once.
- P V^2_9 : Human reasoning may be divided into two main types: deductive reasoning, which is evaluated as to validity and soundness; and inductive reasoning, which is evaluated as to strength, burden of proof, and standards of proof.

Verities So Far (continued 2)

- P V^2_{10} : Proponents of a particular theory rarely give accurate descriptions of opposing theories, no matter how hard they try to be accurate.
- P V^2_{11} : All legitimate apologetic methods affirm these two propositions: (1) Unbelief in the Gospel stems from sin, not from intellectual problems with the message; (2) Only God, by his grace, saves anyone.

Summary of 5 Apologetic Methods

- P E: Christianity has worked wonders in my life. ...
- P J: The historical record confirms much of what the Bible says. ...
- P R: There exist valid deductive arguments for the existence of God, and the historical record strongly suggests that this God has revealed Himself in the Bible. ...
- P C: Assuming Christianity is true is necessary for proving anything at all. ...
- P G: The Bible says it is true, and we can show by valid deductive argument that no other belief system can be true. ...

W^2_7 : Think about these questions

P What is science?

P To what extent is science concerned with truth?

P Are there currently some subjects studied by scientists that would not be studied if all scientists had a Christian philosophy of learning?

Attitudes About Science

- P Prevailing modern view approaches or reaches idolotary.
- ▶ “Scientists are the high priests of modern society. Their mastery of arcane formulae and esoteric machinery commands respect and fear. ... They traffic in miracles that are subtle and real. They trace the lines of force from invisible fields, deduce the existence of particles that can never be seen, detect the residual glow of the early universe, and decipher the chemistry of life itself.” — D. H. Kaye, *Science in Evidence*
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- P A common view among Christians holds science in disdain.
 - ▶ It is a tool of the infidels to deny the Creator, promote promiscuity, and do all other manner of evil.
 - ▶ Science should be studied only enough to show it is all wrong.

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- ▶ If it can't be seen, heard, felt, tasted, or smelled then it isn't a subject for science.

Inquisitive Interlude (I^2_1)

P What does the extreme empirical view (the only reality is what I perceive with my senses) do to the following ideas?

- ▶ History
- ▶ Cause and Effect
- ▶ Ideas

It renders them all meaningless.

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One View of Scientific Method

P Scientist wonders why something happens.

- ▶ Develops an hypothesis about the reason.
- ▶ Develops experiments and the expected results that will occur if the hypothesis is correct.

P Scientist conducts experiments and observes the results.

- ▶ If the expected results happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is right.
- ▶ If the expected results do not happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is wrong.

Bad View of Scientific Method

P Scientist works

- ▶ Develops an hypothesis about the reason.
- ▶ Develops experiments and the expected results that will occur if the hypothesis is correct.

Fallacy of Affirming the Consequent:

If H then R; R; therefore H.

If John is a Presbyterian, then John is a Christian.
John is a Christian;
therefore, John is a Presbyterian.

P Scientist concludes
the results.

- ▶ If the expected results happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is right.
- ▶ If the expected results do not happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is wrong.

Better View of Scientific Method

P Scientist wonders why something happens.

- ▶ Develops an hypothesis about the reason.
- ▶ Develops experiments and the expected results that will occur if the hypothesis is correct.

P Scientist conducts experiments and observes the results.

- ▶ If the expected results happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis may not be wrong.
- ▶ If the expected results do not happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is wrong.

Better View of Scientific Method

P Scientist wonders why something happens.

- ▶ Develops an hypothesis about the reason.
- ▶ Develops experiments and the expected results that will occur if the hypothesis is correct.

P Scientist Developing hypotheses is the area that is most directly affected by the worldview of the scientist.

- ▶ If the expected results happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis may not be wrong.
- ▶ If the expected results do not happen, then the scientist concludes his hypothesis is wrong.

What Standard of Proof Can Science Meet?

- P 1: affirming conclusion has more practical benefits than denying the conclusion
- P 2: conclusion is more likely true than false
- P 3: conclusion is much more likely to be true than false
- P 4: conclusion is true beyond a reasonable doubt
- P 5: conclusion is true beyond any conceivable doubt

Valuable Verity (V^2_{12})

**All legitimate scientific inquiry
operates within the
framework and constraints
established by God's revelation
in Scripture.**

Some Closing Suggestions

- P Be neither in awe or afraid of science (or scientists).
- P When reading or hearing about science (or any other subject) in the common media (whether secular or Christian), recognize that almost any report will be wrong in important ways.
- P Thank God for the blessings that He has brought to us through the work of scientists (and engineers), including those who refuse to acknowledge that He is the source of all truth.

Next Week: Learning Literature

P W₈²

- ▶ Pick a short passage from a favorite literary work, and list some of the propositions affirmed in that passage.
- ▶ You may also do the same for a painting, or some other work of art, if you like.

P Quote ID challenge #2 continues

- ▶ Who said, “If a picture is worth a thousand words, then why did God give us His Word, instead of His drawings?”
- ▶ Four wrong guesses so far.