
A Christian Philosophy Of Learning: Application to History

March - May 2002
CRPC Adult Sunday School
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Class #10

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

Our Goal

P Articulate a Christian philosophy of learning,
which we defined as

A biblically sound,
comprehensive way of
thinking about
acquiring and applying
truth

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.

- P V^2_{12} : All legitimate scientific inquiry operates within the framework and constraints established by God's revelation in Scripture.

- P V^2_{13} : Most truth claims in literature (and all truth claims in non-verbal arts) are made through exemplification, not through explicit stating of the propositions that are affirmed.

What is History?

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P Two of the OED entries:

- ▶ “The aggregate of past events in general....” (or, all that has happened in the past).
- ▶ “... past events as recorded or otherwise ascertained.” (or, all that has happened in the past that we know about today).

P To recognize the difference between the two, consider whether the following are part of history:

- ▶ What Mary & Joseph had for dinner on the day that Jesus was born.
- ▶ The name of the Roman general who led the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

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- P To recognize the difference between the two, consider whether the following are part of history:
- ▶ **Speaking loosely, these are the same for God** What Mary & Joseph had for dinner on the day that Jesus was born.
 - ▶ **Speaking loosely, these are the same for us, too.** The name of the Roman general who led the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

What God Says About History

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P He is in complete control of all that happens.

- ▶ Genesis 50:20
- ▶ Jeremiah 1:5
- ▶ Ephesians 1:11

P His purposes will be fulfilled.

- ▶ Isaiah 55:11
- ▶ Romans 9:10-12

P We can learn much from a careful study of history.

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

Valuable Verity (V^2_{14})

**God is in control of all things,
and He is continually
accomplishing His purposes
in history.**

With Which Do You Most Agree?

P Augustine completed *The City of God* in

- ▶ A.D. 220 after working on it for nearly 30 years.
- ▶ A.D. 655 after working on it for nearly 22 years.
- ▶ A.D. 426 after working on it for nearly 14 years.
- ▶ A.D. 345 after working on it for less than a year.
- ▶ A.D. 505 after working on it for nearly 7 years.
- ▶ your imagination, because he didn't write it.

With Which Do You Most Agree?₂

- P At the time of the drafting of the Constitution most men in positions of political power were
- ▶ Christians who generally held a biblical worldview.
 - ▶ Christians who generally held a non-biblical worldview.
 - ▶ non-Christians who generally held a biblical worldview (even if they didn't acknowledge it).
 - ▶ non-Christians who generally held a non-biblical worldview.

With Which Do You Most Agree?₃

P In passing an ordinance of secession from the Union after the election of Lincoln, the state of South Carolina was

- ▶ exercising its rights under the terms in which it ratified the Constitution.
- ▶ engaging in an act of revolt against the current government, just as the colonists had done some 80+ years earlier.
- ▶ engaging in an attempt to circumvent the political process through an illegal act.

With Which Do You Most Agree?₄

P The main reason that New England, which was once a center of biblical orthodoxy, degenerated into a center of liberal heresy was

- ▶ most of the true Christians moved elsewhere.
- ▶ loose standards for church membership promoted loose thinking and loose living.
- ▶ belief in the guaranteed regeneration of covenant children led to inadequate attention to the spiritual state of these children.
- ▶ too many people were concerned with intellectual matters of theology instead of issues of practical Christian living.
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P The standard of proof that can be met

- ▶ Statements about particular events and about morality may reach to level 5 (beyond any doubt).
- ▶ Statements about long-term causality and general culture rarely, if ever, reach above level 3 (much more likely than not).

Some Closing Suggestions

- P Spend the majority of your time studying the history of “the city of God” not of “the city of man.”
- P To the extent possible, let primary sources be your primary sources.
- P Use the study of history to help you discover some of your blind spots.

Next Week: Current Events

P W_{10}^2 : none

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?”
- ▶ Seven wrong guesses so far: Teddy Roosevelt, Woody Allen, David Holloway, Gordon Clark, C.S. Lewis, Yogi Berra, and J.R.R. Tolkien