
A Christian Philosophy Of Learning: Application to Current Events

March - May 2002
CRPC Adult Sunday School
C. Michael Holloway
Class #11

<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.

Verities So Far (continued 3)

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.

P V^2_{14} : God is in control of all things, and He is continually accomplishing His purposes in history.

About Current Events

P In a strict sense, it is impossible to talk about current events.

- ▶ Before we can make an utterance, the event about which we are speaking is a part of the past, not the present.
- ▶ All we can really talk about is history.

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P In a practical sense, we usually consider the recent past as part of the present; so talking about current events does make sense.

- ▶ The division between current events and history is not a sharp one.
- ▶ Different people make the division at different points.
- ▶ The division isn't strictly chronological for most people.

Current Events or No?

- P Today's Sunday School class
- P Class 4: *The Starting Point for Truth (part 2)*
- P The war against terrorists
- P The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon
- P Jimmy Carter's visit to Cuba
- P Jimmy Carter's Presidency
- P The Presidency of George W. Bush
- P The 2000 election

Current Events or No?

P Today's Sunday School class

P Class 4: *The Starting Point for Truth (part 2)*

P

P Everything that we discussed about history
P also applies to current events.

P

P Jimmy Carter's Presidency

P The Presidency of George W. Bush

P The 2000 election

Valuable Verity (V^2_{15})

**God is accomplishing
His purposes today,
but He rarely reveals clearly
exactly how He is doing it,
or exactly why He does
what He does.**

Q²₅: Pink

**“A ‘god’ whose will is resisted,
whose designs are frustrated,
whose purpose is checkmated,
possesses no title to Deity,
and so far from being
a fit object of worship,
merits nought but contempt.”**

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Some Implications of V_{15}^2

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- P We should take comfort in the knowledge that God is in control, no matter what may be happening in the world.
 - ▶ He will bring about what is best for His children.
 - ▶ He knows what is best far better than we do.

- P We ought not speculate too much about God's purposes for specific current events.

- P Knowing about current culture is more important than knowing about specific current events.
 - ▶ We need to know many current events in order to know about current culture.
 - ▶ We need to understand current culture, so that we can proclaim God's truth faithfully by recognizing and denying the prevailing errors of our day.

Basic Framework

{ affirmed, but unstated premises }

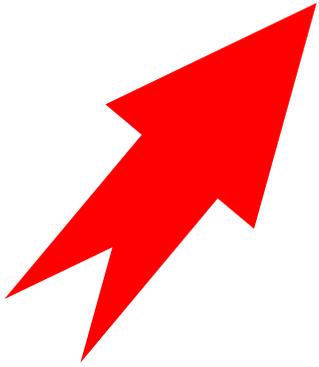
Stated Premise 1

Stated Premise 2

...

Stated Premise n

Conclusion



U.S. Today: Shared Premises

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- P Discrimination is bad, in nearly every form, and in nearly every situation.
- ▶ Everyone is entitled to the same privileges.
 - ▶ Everyone's opinion is equally valid — except for someone who claims that everyone's opinion isn't equally valid.

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P Feelings are more important than thoughts.

- ▶ Shows up in common language: “What do you *feel* about campaign finance reform?”
- ▶ Greater concern about not hurting someone's feelings than about not letting someone think falsehoods.

Church Today: Shared Premises

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P Appearance is more important than substance.

P Feelings are more important than thoughts.

- ▶ Shows up in common language: “What do you *feel* about homeschooling your children?”
- ▶ Greater concern about not hurting someone's feelings than about not letting someone think falsehoods.

Some Closing Suggestions

- P Recognize that we are deeply affected by the prevailing attitudes of our time.
 - ▶ The effect can be lessened by studying “the old books”.
 - ▶ The effect can be lessened the most by studying the Book.

- P Strive to evaluate these attitudes according to the Scripture, and not the other way around.

- P Seek the truth “with the same diligence and labor with which men are wont to dig in mines of silver and gold.”

Next Week: New Classes

P Quote ID challenge #2 continues until someone gives the correct answer.

- ▶ Who said, “If a picture is worth a thousand words, then why did God give us His Word, instead of His drawings?”
- ▶ Nine wrong guesses so far: Teddy Roosevelt, Woody Allen, David Holloway, Gordon Clark, C.S. Lewis, Yogi Berra, J.R.R. Tolkien, R. C. Sproul, Gene Veith
- ▶ Some people seem to have forgotten one of the hints I gave a while back: The person is, at least at the time of this writing, alive today.