

Class 4
Class 4 Logic, Proof, and Bias

Overview and Scope: Tonight's lecture and topic deals with the issues of evidence, proof, and bias. Logic demands a logical approach to information and assertions, but we face some real personal problems when implementing logic. We must face these things, and we must be committed to the truth. Thus, it is important for Christians to know what evidence and proof are, and we need to value and be committed to the truth as indicated by evidence and proof. Furthermore, the fact of bias will be discussed in this lecture. The nature of bias and the problem bias can be will also be discussed.

1. Logic and Evidence, Proof, Bias, and Supposition

a. What is evidence?

Evidence is evidential observation and consideration of any relevant idea or material to help us to think logically about an issue. Although evidence might be intentionally deceptive, such as in tampering, but the concept of evidence seeks factuality without human prejudice.

b. What serves as proof?

Proof is settled certainty based on the preponderance of evidence (evidence that is of such a nature to such a degree) to affirm and assert the factuality and truthfulness of an idea or assertion. Enough evidence leading toward a deduction increases the certainty of proof. Proof implies that objective analysis has occurred without tampering or bias, and the condition of proof has a high level or degree of certainty, unless new information (previously unknown) is discovered to contradict the settled state of proof.

When attempting to come logically to a place of certainty of proof, one must ask:

- 1) Do I know all that I need to know to come to a place where I can make a certain pronouncement?
- 2) If someone disagrees with me, do I know more than he knows, or does he know more than I know. In addition, do either of us know enough of that which is pertinent that we might make a judgment or pronouncement on any topic or issue?
- 3) Am I unwilling to consider an idea because of my predisposition against it?
- 4) Am I insistent upon an idea because I have a predisposition toward it?

c. What meaning does sourcing have?

Everything in the time and space context has a source ("nothing comes from nothing"). All physical matters have a source, a cause and effect, because this is the nature of reality in time and space. This is not true for ultimate reality; God has no source, because God is eternal.

The nature of the source adds credibility of the assertion. Questions must be posed to determine the nature of the source. These questions include:

- 1) Who makes the assertion or claim?
- 2) What kind of claim is being made?
- 3) What is the nature of the source making the claim?
- 4) To what degree of probability is attached to the claim itself?
- 5) Does the claim have assumptions associated with it?

- 6) What are these assumptions, and should they be considered credible?
- 7) Is the devil and his servants ever a source for information?
- 8) If so, in what sense do they operate to subvert truth?
- 9) How can a Christian protect himself from devilish deception?

d. How facts relate to core?

- i. The determination of truthful facts
- ii. The relationship of truthful facts to each other, especially facts that contrast with each other
- iii. The relationship of facts to the core of reality

e. Finding the edge of certainty / Leaving room for questions

- i. The fact of human mental and understandable limitation
 1. Limitation by human capacity
 2. Limitation by human context
 3. Limitation by sinful obstinacy
- ii. The various categories of certainty:
 1. Probably uncertain
 2. Maybe certain
 3. Probably certain
 4. Absolutely certain
- iii. Applying certainty (or lack thereof) to ideas and life
 1. Need more information
 2. Need to certify present information
 3. Need to clarify source
 4. Need clarification about the nature of function and application

2. The Psychology of Bias

- a. Bias and personal preference
- b. Bias and wishful thinking
- c. Bias and familial upbringing
- d. Bias and rebellion against authority
- e. Bias and hateful anger
- f. Bias and systemic cultural presumption and standards
- g. Bias and sinfulness
 - i. Sin and self-idolatry
 - ii. Sin and selfishness
 - iii. Sin and hatred of the light / loving of darkness

3. Supposition and Logic (our assumptive analysis applied logically)

- a. Supposition and bias
 - i. Am I naturally against something?
 - ii. Am I naturally for something?
 - iii. Am I willing to consider all relevant facts and arguments?

- b. Supposition and hypothesis
 - i. Does my hypothesis reflect all known facts and truths?
 - ii. Am I overbalanced in one direction or another?
 - iii. Am I applying facts and truth in a reasonable way that conforms to true truth?
 - c. Supposition and honest teachability
 - i. The necessity of a teachable heart
 - ii. The application of a teachable heart
 - iii. The challenges associated with a teachable heart
4. Verbalizing Uncertainty in the Context of Certainty (appropriate expressions of uncertainty)
- a. "I think I may be right, but I am not sure"
 - b. "I think that I may need to think more on this topic"
 - c. "I think I may need to reserve judgment"
 - d. "I think I need to give room for disagreement"
 - e. "I think that I can certainly say the following..."
 - f. Preaching, Teaching, and Verbalizing Certainty
 - g. Christian Fellowship and Certainty
 - h. Christian Fellowship and Uncertainty
 - i. Certainty, Uncertainty, and Christian Love
5. Logic and Binary Thinking
- a. Binary teaching in the Scripture
 - i. Some biblical teaching is clearly binary
 - ii. How do we determine this type of teaching?
 - b. Binary thinking about binary teaching in the Scripture
 - i. Don't add to what God has said.
 - ii. Don't re-think what God has made clear.
 - c. Non-binary thinking and expression
 - i. Uncertainty and ideas
 - 1. Expansiveness of ideas (extent, horizontal)
 - 2. Vertical and depth of ideas (all there is to know about what we know)
 - ii. Uncertainty and behavior
 - 1. Binding the human conscience
 - 2. Leaving room for freedom in uncertainty
 - iii. Uncertainty and social rules
 - 1. Social rules and God's commandments
 - 2. Social rules and individual obedience
 - 3. Social rules and love
 - iv. The necessity of nuance
 - 1. The precision of nuance
 - 2. The uncertainty found in nuance

6. Logic and the Meaning of Words

- a. The meaning of words
 - i. Words mean what they mean
 - ii. Words can mean what we mean for them to mean
 - iii. Words can mean what others think they mean
 - iv. Words, meaning, and a social contract
 1. We need a common dictionary
 2. We need common usage
 3. The problem of ideological movements abducting words
- b. The use of words (context and culture)
 - i. Words conveying essential meaning
 - ii. Words conveying shading of meaning
 - iii. Words conveying emotion
 - iv. Words conveying uncertainty
 - v. Words conveying love
- c. The value of words
 - i. Words and bridges of idea clarification
 - ii. Words and categorical consideration
 - iii. Words and determinative postulation
- d. The strategy of deception and the misuse of words
 - i. Words wrongly chosen
 - ii. Implied falsehood
 - iii. Use of words as a bridge to falsehood

7. Logic and Social Interaction

- a. Logic and close friends and family
- b. Logic and education
- c. Logic and culture
- d. Logic and business
- e. Logic and government (living under governmental authority)

8. Analyzing for Bias

- a. Analysis of false presuppositions – Where does the idea come from and where will the idea lead? Am I able to dissect the idea in both of these areas?
- b. Analysis of false baselines and foundations – What must I assume to be true to believe this idea to be true?
- c. Analysis of false reasoning based on bias - How is the idea applied to life and further thinking?

9. Self-Analysis for Bias

- a. What does self-deception look like?
 - i. Refusal to reconsider
 - ii. Refusal to look at facts and certainties
 - iii. Fear of change

- b. What qualities are required for discernment for self-deception?
 - i. Commitment to the truth
 - ii. Commitment to the source of truth
 - iii. Commitment to the methodology of validating the truth
 - iv. Commitment to hard work of thinking
- c. Why does it matter if we are self-deceived?
 - i. We disregard God.
 - ii. We deceive ourselves.
 - iii. We deceive others.
- d. Can Christians think without bias?
 - i. Christians should be aware of personal bias.
 - ii. Christians should seek to throw the light of Scripture on personal bias.
 - iii. Christians should seek to live without being driven by personal bias.
 - iv. Christians should be able to make the distinction between personal bias and biblical certainty.
- e. What impact does personal bias have on Christian relationships and friendships?
 - i. Bias and demanded coercion from relationships
 - ii. Bias and building relationships on personal bias
 - iii. Bias and disrespect for others
 - iv. Be willing to love sincere and authentic people who are not “there” yet.
 - v. Never make yourself the “model” for others to follow.

10. Christians living in a Culture of Bias

- a. Culture is biased; the question is the nature of the bias.
- b. Bias of sinful sub-culture in a dominant culture of morality and religion (sin has little power)
- c. Bias of dominant ungodly culture (when sin is in cultural and societal power)
- d. Christians living in a coercive ungodly culture
 - i. Christians working and living in societal structures dominated by ungodly culture
 - ii. Christians doing church in an antagonistic culture
- e. False solutions Christians sometimes choose in such a culture
 - i. Disengage
 - ii. Turn inward
 - iii. Give up
 - iv. Turning family into the kingdom of God
- f. Suggestions for consideration, logically considered
 - i. Maintain tension between two kingdoms
 - ii. Solidify the core, and maintain dialogue at the edges
 - iii. Center the church around worship, preaching, and teaching
 - iv. Decentralize ministry to individual expression
 - v. Be willing to shift Christian organizations and structure when these things begin to shift toward the world.
 - vi. Make big changes slowly, prayerfully, humbly, and looking to the Lord.

11. Final Encouragement for Faithful Christians (in the context of living in a broken, illogical world)
 - a. Individual Christians will always live with personal struggle and brokenness.
 - b. Individual Christians will never have all the answers.
 - c. We should never add answers to questions for which God did not give answers.
 - d. Our focus should never shift from Christ, His gospel, and His kingdom.
 - e. We must never fall for the “kingdom on earth in our time” trap.
 - f. It is always right to love.
 - g. It is always right to honor Christ.
 - h. It is always right to be humble.