

Lesson 65

Tonight we're going to do a little special. We're going to stop the forward progress in Deuteronomy just for tonight to go back and cover some detailed material. Some of this I'm sure for some of you will see ponderous and difficult to follow; but my justification for doing this is because we've had questions in the Q&A's over the months that we've had Deuteronomy particularly from George and David where I have made claims in the class and they have raised legitimate questions that they feel they need answers to in order to deal with their work environment because these guys are with people who do think and who are representing probably well-educated atheists and agnostics. So this is not something that is far out. This is something that we need to know and though it is difficult at points to follow; if you'll stick with me as we go through this, maybe you'll see that the Word of God is so important because it is the only answer.

I can introduce this by using two different words. The Word of God can be sufficient for solving life's problems. But, that's a weak condition in the sense that you could also have another set of beliefs that would also solve life's problems. So merely saying that the Bible is sufficient isn't sufficient enough.

You need another condition in there. That condition is the one that separates the men from the boys. That is the claim that the Word of God is necessary for answering these kinds of questions. Once we add the condition the Word of God is necessary, we have automatically said there are no other answers than the Bible. In order to get any answer to these questions the Bible is necessary.

So what tonight represents is a defense of the idea that the Scriptures are both necessary as well as being sufficient. With this we of course argue against our entire secular culture that thinks that you can answer these questions in a careless fashion - you can just wade your way through. You don't need "religion." You don't need God in order to deal with these questions.

So what I'm going to do is I'm going to work through each of these 3 questions. Because it's only one hour we won't go into the total aspects of each question. We can't do that. What I want to do is I want to concentrate on the areas of these questions that have been asked in class.

So let's look to the Lord and ask Him to clarify our minds so we can follow basically His revelation.

(Opening prayer)

Because I will work with a little bit of the text; but we've gone through the text pretty thoroughly so as I work this through hopefully passages will come to mind. But, I'm going to primarily follow - you've got by way of a handout tonight I'm going to follow that almost exclusively because tonight your handout is in one-to-one correspondence with my notes. Usually your handout is just an abbreviated version; but tonight it's not an abbreviated version; it's the whole thing.

So let me point out under item 1, Roman numeral 1 on the introduction to this. Again I mention that George and David have been the ones who have asked the key questions in Q&A. I happened to know from talking with both of them that they are dealing with well-educated people in the workplace. We're going to come into contact with these folks so this is sort of an exercise in an appreciation of what we have in the Word of God.

So I point out that the 3 great life questions that everyone, and it is important to think about this, everyone answers these questions - in a careless way, in an unconscious fashion. But in some way, shape, or form people act as though they have the answers to these questions. If we were to observe any man, woman or child in a day in the life they are going around. They breathe; they eat; they move; they make decisions as though they have answers to these 3 questions. Now the Word of God says that unbelief leads to blindness and sometimes maybe we're too hasty to casually dismiss what that means - that the blindness - "Well that's just kind of a poetic expression in the Scriptures." But I hope, as we go through this you'll see that there is a very real blindness on the part of unbelief.

When the Bible says that unbelievers are blinded; it means exactly what it says. So blind people while they have heightened senses of other things - they can sense sounds; they can sense touch better than we can; there are simply some things the blind person can never understand. They never for example experience the beauty of color, the beauty of God's epolgence (?). It's missing for them. It's just not there. You can sit down with a blind person and explain what color red is or green and after you get through talking to them - even if it's hours. It's very difficult if not impossible for them to ever understand what red and green are because they're blind. So that's the nature, the very serious nature of the Bible's claim that there are unregenerate people in the world who are blind spiritually and simply cannot see as well as they do not see.

So everyone has to deal with God's presence. I list there where every 24 hours people bang up against God's presence. The first one is in the conscience. Everyone has a conscience. Every person deals every day with conscience in some way, shape or form.

Secondly in the designs of nature - the designs of nature are all around us - the beauty of the autumn with the colors of the leaves. People who look in detail... The tragedy however is that very few folks today because of the pace of living and the noise in the environment and the constant distractions; we don't pause and really appreciate the design that is all around us in nature. That's number 2.

We deal with His presence in our conscience, in the design of nature, in His providential controls of circumstances. Everyone is aware things happen. Even the most dedicated atheist is aware that circumstances happen.

They'll ask questions ("Why did this happen?") as though there is a purpose behind it after all. That's the third thing.

Conscience, designs of nature, providential control of circumstances and depending on one's exposure to the Bible are special revelation, biblical

claims. Maybe the person has been witnessed to. Maybe he knows enough or she knows enough about the gospel so that they have to deal with that. They have to come to some terms with what they've heard.

So we have these 3 questions. And again you've seen this before; but I want to bring it up again.

1. The first one is the metaphysical one. What is reality? What is the true state of affairs? That's the question. Is there an ultimate purpose in existence and therefore in my life? Notice the "therefore." If there's not a purpose in the cosmos at large, in the universe at large, there simply can't be a purpose to your individual life - objective purpose. I don't mean a conjured up purpose. Our lives cannot have a purpose if the whole universe doesn't have a purpose.

2. Then secondly, the epistemological question - how do I recognize truth? How can I be sure that your assertions or anyone's assertions are true? We presume; we kind of understand that. But when we get into the details of how do we know that we know, then things get a little greasy. That is the second big question.

3. The third one is the one that people are probably clearest about. That's the ethical question. What is just? What is right? What is your moral authority to justify imposing your ethics upon me and others? That's the ethical question. Everybody has to deal with that.

All of those questions - all of those 3 that we've alluded to as we've gone through the book Deuteronomy - Deuteronomy is so central because Deuteronomy is that very important book in the Bible that records for us God's intrusion into fallen civilization to set up a society run by His policies. Those policies encompass all of life and therefore they encompass these questions. Okay, those are the 3 questions.

Now we're going to proceed to the rest tonight under Roman II - the 3 great questions in the Bible. The first thing we need to do before we get into the biblical issues and the anti-biblical position, we need to look at the 3 questions themselves. So that's why item A is the interrelationship of the 3 great questions. These questions are not independent of each other. They've been studied over the years so nothing so far is new. I'm not inventing this. You can read for yourself any treatment of these kinds of questions.

Under point 1 under A, questions A and B are indissolubly wedded together. I'll show you why in a minute. You can't answer one without answering the other. That's why these questions A and B cannot be answered in some sort of sequence. They have to be answered together as a lump sum. That has powerful implications for us, which you'll see in a moment.

Under item 1 look at first where I say question A (which is the metaphysical question -what is reality) requires that you are sure you are able to know reality. That is, you have already answered question B in order to be confident to know the state of affairs is. So you can't answer question A without first answering question B.

The problem is when you come to question B it requires that you know the answer to question A. Otherwise how do you could you tell that you know the true state of affairs? So questions A and B are intertwined.

This creates a tremendous dilemma. That's point 2. The union of questions A and B creates a dilemma for those who reject biblical revelation. This is related to the central sin mentioned again and again in Deuteronomy, which is not morality per se, but idolatry.

Idolatry I keep saying that it's the reengineering of reality because sinful man does this. He has to do it. He has to answers questions A and B. Idolatry is involved in trying to get these two answers. So, either we submit to the authority of Scripture or we have to have some other surrogate source for generating an answer to A and B. That surrogate always involves idolatry.

So Item 2 under A is since there is no higher standard - this is why this is so dilemma. If you'll follow me, this is an important point. Since there is no higher standard no way to get beyond these questions to verify them because they control how any verification proceeds; Bible rejecters must start out their attempts to build a worldview with an arbitrary guess, a leap in order to answer questions A and B. That's why this is so important.

If you reject God's help - that is His words, His information, Him telling us the answers to these questions; you are left on your own. If you are left on your own, the problem is when you go to answer A you have to know the answer to B. But, you can't answer B without answering question A. And, you can't get above those questions to deal with them. There is no higher area because if you go up to a higher area, you are still encountering A and B. So you never can get beyond A and B. So that means that apart from the Bible and the information contained in the Bible, you have to guess and you have to put forward an answer with utterly no reason for it.

We know this has happened historically so this again not an assertion that I've just made up and I feel like doing this. You can verify this because two men in history that saw this very clearly in their day. After the pre-Socratics in early Greece worked these problems - you had Hereclitus (?), you had other people. You had these Greek thinkers right after the Diaspora thinking about reasoning things through and all the rest of it.

They kept arguing about... Some would say the source of everything was fire. Others would say the source of all things was water. The source of all things was air. That's why by the way in Colossians 2:8 Paul uses the Greek word stoikia - which he says don't start with the elements. Start with the incarnation of Jesus Christ. That's the argument in Colossians 1 and 2. It's also the argument in 1st and 2nd chapters of 1 Corinthians. So Paul is dealing with that because Paul's a well-educated man. He's going out into the Greek culture; and he knows how Greeks think. He studied that as a student so he knows the Greek philosophers.

The problem was along came a guy named Socrates. Socrates is considered by liberals and by unbelievers to be next to Jesus or better than Jesus.

Socrates is the unbeliever's hero because Socrates finally said that you have to start with a leap.

Socrates pointed out, "It is impossible to intellectually penetrate the relationships necessary to answer these questions. The answers must simply be postulated."

This is hard stuff to swallow by a lot of folks because everybody wants to think they can rationally answer these questions.

Unfortunately since these questions are super basic questions, the only way to answer them is, "I guess the universe is reasonable. I guess that we human beings can see reality. I guess there is a purpose in living. So now having guessed all that, I can get started now and build by belief system and my worldview."

But it starts out as a guess. We'll see a little bit how that works.

But it wasn't only Socrates. It was also Immanuel Kant. Centuries and centuries later in the times of the enlightenment Kant after he interacted with Descartes, Hume, and others; Immanuel Kant came to the conclusion similarly. European rationalists ran into the same problem when Kant argued that man can only act as if he had the answers to these questions.

Kant had an expression. He called it a limiting concept. That is you have to go on. You have to assume that there's a purpose there. You have to assume that there are ethical reasons for this.

So both Socrates in the ancient world and Kant in what we call the modern enlightenment world both came to the same conclusions. You've got to start out with a leap. You've got to start out with a guess because you've got to get started. You can't get your engine started without starting it. So how do you start out? You start out assuming that you have the answers to these. Both Socrates and Kant insisted that man should not give up in total skepticism.

Now there have been men who've argued, "Because I understand now that I have to start with a leap, I give up. I have to admit that I don't know for sure. I don't know anything for sure."

That is total skepticism. And some men have been driven to total skepticism just because of this. But Kant and Socrates realized that no society can do this. This is why on that chart that you've seen me show this again and again - remember the one with the 4-layer cake? I showed the metaphysics, the epistemology, the ethics and up above the politics. If you noticed on the side of that chart, there is an arrow going down as well as one coming up. The arrow that comes up is the logic in the sense that I get an answer to these basic questions. Now I have an ethic. Now I can deal politically with my society.

But going down what that is - that's the pressure of having to live in a community. Plato and these other men had to live in real societies. I mean Kant was a Lutheran guy who lived in Germany. Socrates was a Greek and he lived in Athens. So they had to live. They all had to realize decisions had to be made. Political leaders had to do things. They

can't sit there and contemplate their navel everyday. So we've got to get on with life.

So neither Socrates nor Kant said, "I give up. I'm going to be a skeptic."

That doesn't work either. We are forced by everyday life in a society to move on with things whether we're sure moving on the right way or not. So that's why they did not give into total skepticism because society and the social-political are dependent on maintaining order of some sort.

Now on the next page I deal with the background for this. That is this dilemma. And, it's important you understand what's going on here. What is causing all this difficulty? The dilemma comes about because finite man lacks omniscience that is necessary to answer questions A & B. I mean how are you going to answer the question about the meaning of reality when reality involves an infinite number of details? You have to have omniscience in order to do that.

Then the second problem is not only is man finite, but what else after Adam and Eve? We're fallen. So now we have a sin nature that's affecting our minds. We know that sin is affecting minds. Sin affects how we think because Adam and Eve, within minutes after the fall what are they doing? They're hiding in the bushes thinking they really can hide from an omnipresent God.

What does that tell you about their theology? It tells you that within minutes of the fall (I presume it was minutes when they head to the bushes) that they had already changed their theology, which meant they changed their fundamental way of thinking - the idea that I can escape God. So as fallen finite man he rejects revelatory information from God's omniscient mind preserved in the Bible and thus cuts himself off from the only source of answers.

So that's the dilemma of the unbeliever. It is not a casual thing to reject the Bible in spite of what our society says.

Now point 3, question C turns out to be the key in all this. We said that question A and question B are related and interrelated. You can't separate them. But because the way we are question C turns out to be very critical. Because fallen man rejects God's Word as his ultimate authority, he has replaced that Word with his own subjective ideas and has become his own moral authority. In doing so, he follows the example of Adam and Eve. It thus turns out that the answer to question C determines the answers to questions A and B.

And as I quote Craig Bonson on his book on presuppositional apologetics:

We must recognize that most philosophers do not want intellectual matters to reduce to a question of morality - that is obedience or rebellion to God's Word. They want to hold the intellect or reason to be above matters of moral volition. They hold that truth is obtainable and testable no matter what ethical condition the thinker is in.

You have never had a philosophy course; I guarantee it, which has ever said that the philosophical ideas in this class are a product of your ethical condition. But that is precisely what the Bible says.

So you begin to see there are momentous things going on here. The separation between unbelieving thought and believing thought is profound. It reaches down to our socks and the soles of our feet.

Scripture assuredly tells us that the way a man uses his intellect is an ethical matter. Example, rebellion against God leads to a darkened mind. Irrespective of the way in which men respond to it, God's clear revelation that is in nature man's constitution of Scripture is the only escape we have from the skepticism that would otherwise result from the necessity of coordinating metaphysics and epistemology.

See what he's saying? He's saying that ethically there's a decision every man and woman has to make. Am I going to submit to the God who made me and the environment, His revelation in the environment, and as that revelation comes to me here? Or, am I going to turn against it and basically reinterpret reality?

But if I do that and I say, "Okay, I have reinterpreted things. How am I going to answer questions A and B now?"

That's the problem. So when we cut ourselves off from God's Word, we are in spiritual death because we don't have the answers that we desperately need every day of our lives.

So now let's go. We're going to go through each of the 3 questions; but I can't deal with the totality of each question. I can only take an aspect of each of these 3 questions. The aspect that I'm going to pick is the aspect that has been asked in class. Discussion of one aspect of question A raised by David in section 62 the uniformity of natural law or how can you be sure that natural processes observed today will work tomorrow?

Everybody has to assume an answer to that. You can't make plans to go to the grocery store without assuming that uniformity is going to be there. You can't plan your business without assuming this. You can't do science without assuming this. You can't do anything without assuming this. This is basic. So the aspect of uniformity of nature is part of question A, the nature of reality.

So now let's look at Deuteronomy's philosophy of history. What have we learned in the book of Deuteronomy that is pertinent to this issue?

Now here's where I've had an argument with people at seminary levels for the last ten years. Guys go to seminary and they learn - the good seminaries. They learn Greek exegesis, they learn Hebrew and they learn systematic theology; but because too often it's learned in an academic environment they are taught that when you teach the Bible you stick with the text. Well, yes and no. Yes, you stick with the text as the text is your authority. But if you're going to teach the Bible just looking at the text without connecting it to everything else, what you do if that's a steady diet for the people you're teaching, is you create a ghetto

mentality where we have our little Christian ghetto and we talk about what this verse and that verse means but when we deal with economics or philosophy we don't know what we're doing out there. That's a product of the way the Bible is taught too often.

This is why we've looked at Deuteronomy. We've looked at the text.

Now what we're going to do is say, "What are some of those big ideas Deuteronomic text that pertain to question A?"

So that's why often you'll see me when I teach a passage of Scripture I teach it against pagan view. You've heard me again and again.

I'll say, "This is the unbelieving view. This is the Word of God view."

Why? Because we live in an unbelieving world. It's precisely that unbelief you and I bang heads with day after day in our lives. So obviously we want to study the Word of God from the standpoint of how it impacts that and how it differs from this.

So the first thing under 1, against pagan cyclic seasonal views - remember we went through Baalism - cyclic seasonal views means that history goes round in a circle, round in a circle, round in a circle. It's not going anywhere. It just keeps going. Every year we have spring. Every year we have summer and so forth. It just keeps going round and round.

Against that view Deuteronomy insists history is moving under God's sovereign providential control toward an end state. That's a teleological view of history. It means history has a purpose and a progression toward a goal. You will not find that in unbelief. Where you find it like in Karl Marx and in more modern forms of unbelief, it's been stolen out of the Bible. Marx stole it two ways. He stole it because he read Hegel and Hegel got it from the book of Daniel. Marx also learned it from the Protestant radicals who were pre-millennialists. So it's very clear the idea of communist progress. That's just stolen capital from the Bible. It's not original with atheism.

Against the pagan cyclical view Deuteronomy insists that history is moving under God's sovereign providential control toward an end state that establishes physical, public, global, righteous, and just kingdom of God. We'll see that in Deuteronomy 30, 31, and 32. That's the end state of history. That is where history is moving. That's part and parcel of what we've studied bow in the book of Deuteronomy.

We have a view of history that conflicts profoundly with unbelief. Against pagan amoral manipulative views such as the prophets of Baal the idea we can go into an orgy to manipulate fertility in order to get rain for example. That's what fatalists believe. That's what Elijah had to deal with. Against pagan amoral views Deuteronomy insists that specific historic outcomes in Israel's existence are contingent upon her submission to or rebellion against God. That is an ethical view of history. That was the blessings and cursings we just covered in Deuteronomy 28, a view profoundly different from secular ideas that history goes independently and coldly and impartially irrespective of our ethical choices.

The promises of Deuteronomy involve the entire physical universe because to affect geophysical and biological changes on earth there must be control of extraterrestrial matter and energy repeating the implications prior Noahic Covenant. If God is going to promise there is not going to be a flood on planet earth He has to control the extraterrestrial forces that impact this planet. So therefore a geophysical promise about conditions on this planet implies geophysical control of the entire universe - a tremendously different view that we have in the Bible.

The Diaspora after the collapse of the theocracy in the 7th century apparently is a radically new confidence around the globe that man can think effectively about reality that reality is in fact rational. Although the world of unbelief failed to learn that such rationality was primarily ethical and not amoral. That's the background. That's the Deuteronomic view of history.

So now we come to point 2 on page 3. Part of the answer to question A is that a rational uniformity of nature exists because the Bible is necessary and sufficient to justify such assurance. I use the word necessary, which means now I'm going to have to show why there isn't an answer to the uniformity of nature outside of the Scripture. And here it comes.

David asked why do we say the Bible was necessary. That is that it is the only assurance we have of the uniformity of nature. Can't the unbeliever challenge us by saying that he too has an answer? The answer that is usually given is this one.

"Nature has always been uniform so I expect it always will. So, the Bible is not necessary. I can assume that and I can toss the Scriptures and I can go on with my life in a merry fashion because nature has been uniform so I assume it's going to be tomorrow. Why can't I say that?"

Two logical problems with that answer - logical problem #1. The premise that nature has always been uniform is by itself an unjustified speculation since historical observations exist of miracles like the creation and the resurrection - observations that must first be eliminated by naturalism's philosophical filters.

So the premise behind that answer is incorrect. If somebody wants to say that I believe tomorrow is going because it always has been uniform they've got to justify why then - how do you deal with the resurrection? That was not uniform. How do you deal with creation? How do you deal with the miracles?

"Well, those didn't happen."

Okay, now we move to another issue. Now we deal with question A. Now we've got to deal with the metaphysical issue of what happened in the past. What is reality like? I would say in response to that you've used a filter. You've filtered out supernatural things that you don't see today. So now in order to get to the question you're imposing a philosophy uniformitarianism. You can do that. I'm not saying you can't do that. But, be up front when you do it. Say in fact that's what you're doing. So the logical problem here is unless filtering is somehow spelled

out as it stands the premise is the logical fallacy of a hasty generalization based on an unargued philosophical bias.

So you've got a logical problem in the premise.

Second problem there is an unstated logical step between the premise (nature has always been uniform) assuming that's okay now because now we're advancing to another point. So you say nature has always been uniform and the conclusion it always will. This argument is an infamy that is one with an unstated bridging proposition. You can't go from the first proposition to the second one without an intermediate statement. That in-between step must be this - the upcoming future will be the same as the past with its past-past and past-future which is precisely the point at issue whether the coming future will be like the past. This is a line of speculation in the case of circular reasoning. So you're justifiably saying - you are trying to justify the idea that tomorrow is going to be the same as today by simply saying tomorrow is the same as today. You've come around in a full circle so that's an arbitrary statement. So there is no justification for the statement. You are just restating the question; but you're not answering the question. You're just restating it.

Three, Deuteronomy and the rest of the Bible because it constitutes information transfer - that's so important. Remember we said revelation in the Bible information transfer from the Creator's mind to man's mind is necessary as well as sufficient to provide a base for everyday confidence in a knowable future. No other rational source of confidence in the uniformity of nature exists - only circular reasoning and an arbitrary guess. It has to be an arbitrary guess because what did we say? The only way you can get answers to questions A and B together is with a guess. You have to start with an arbitrary guess if you're going to reject the Scriptures.

So let's go now to Deuteronomy and question B. Discussion 1 one aspect of question B raised by David in session 64 the necessity of non-contradiction for truth to exist. I had commented that a local college music professor's claim that you can have A and non-A together is unmitigated irrationalism that characterizes contemporary culture with its mysticism and semantic manipulation. David asked why such an unbeliever couldn't claim that we Christians tolerate contradictions in our theology such as the trinity. So we too apparently have contradictions. So if we're going to insist on non-contradiction isn't our Christian theology suffering from the same sin, so to speak?

Let's look now at Deuteronomy and the Bible's view of God because remember as I said hastily in the Q&A of session 64 that the Christian looks at this from the creator-creature distinction; the unbeliever looks at it from the continuity of being situation. So right away we're starting at two different places.

It turns out with this trinity thing this gets very involved - far more involved that we can do justice tonight; but I want to make you aware of just how deeply involved this gets when we deal with logic and the trinity.

First Deuteronomy and the Bible's view of God - Deuteronomy continues the Old Testament revelation of a certain multiplicity within the one God.

NKJ Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

This is plurality. Those are plural pronouns. They are not singular pronouns. Hebrew picked out - Moses if he was the final editor knew a singular from plural pronoun. Why did he pick plural pronouns? The casual answer to that on the part of Bible critics is that's the plural of majesty, like "we say." You've heard a king would say "we" when he means himself. So it's often explained as a plural of majesty. But that's not the only explanation.

Deuteronomy 6:4 says:

NKJ Deuteronomy 6:4 " Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!

Judaism has said, "See, there is no multiplicity in God. After all, Deuteronomy 6:4 says that the Lord is our God; the Lord alone, the Lord is one.

Well that's the Hebrew word echad and if you'll note the footnote I'm using John Metzger who is supported by this church who spent about 5 years writing his 400 page book on exactly this question, Discovering the Mystery of the Unity of God. So John, this is a lot of his reasoning.

The multiplicity becomes more evident with the incarnation of the Son of God in the New Testament. Is it a contradiction to insist upon both the multiplicity and the unity of God?

That is A and non-A. Is that a contradiction? That is the question David legitimately asked.

Under one, Deuteronomy presupposes non-contradiction throughout Moses' exhortations but chiefly in its judicial proceedings in capital criminal cases, the theological consistency test in 13 and the empirical evidence test in 18. Both those tests that figure in capital cases, not just casual crime but capital crime are using the non-contradiction thing because that's the whole essence and the logic of those two passages. So it's clear that rationality and non-contradiction were very important to Moses and the biblical writers.

Clearly the multiplicity-unity must not refer to the same aspect of God or there would be a contradiction. So I'm not saying that God is 3 in 1 in the same way. The problem is what is the difference in the three-ness and oneness? How do we get further incite into that one? That is how we start unfolding the question. I want you to see that Christian theology never asserts that God is 3 in 1 in the same sense. Augustine, these guys weren't stupid.

When they formulated the Doctrine of the Trinity they had thought this through probably more profoundly than our (?) today.

The biblical revelation of God's multiplicity asserts this multiplicity about the Creator as revelation from that Creator who is the source of logic. So the claim of contradiction needs to consider the implication of creator-creature distinction for logic.

Point 2, next page. Logic Biblical vs. Aristotelian So now we want to go back in history and look at what the church had to do in the first 400 years while they were developing the Doctrine of the Trinity. They had a big problem because many of the church fathers were trained in Greek ways of thinking. So now we have to say - let's think about this

Is the logic that was classically taught in Greece and Aristotle was the key guy. He wrote the book on it. Is that the same as the logic that is being used in the Bible?

You say, "There are two different logics?"

That's exactly what we're saying. Watch this.

The church spent 4 centuries considering the trinity doctrine as well as the hypostatic doctrine. The trinity is not the only doctrine by the way. How is Jesus God and man in one person? Try that one on for a rationality issue. Against a solitary monotheism view so this was not a casual snap judgment. In fact the 4-century discussion exposed a difference in how logic works with the creator-creature distinction and without it. That is in the pagan continuity of being. The problem here is how to understand what three-ness and oneness refer to when used of God since they refer to different aspects of God.

In Aristotle and Plato there exists ideal forms or logical categories that are universal through all existence, universal categories. The problem is in their view there's continuity of being. God and everything else is in the same existence.

Existence as Aristotle conceived it is unitary. It has a universal sameness. Oneness and three-ness must be the same everywhere. Any application to God is conceived of as occurring within this unitary existence since in this view God Himself shares this unitary existence with us. Thus it would seem that both such categories cannot simultaneously apply to God without a logical conflict. Aristotelian logic is used by Jehovah's Witnesses and other non-Christian cults in the use of John 1:1 as well as by classical Unitarians and Judaism and Islam.

Immediately we have a contrast of the Bible thought that holds there are two kinds of existence - the creator and the creature, not one. How do we know that oneness and three-ness categories act the same across the creator-creature boundary? To help us think this through let's define 3 terms that concern word meaning - univocal, analogical and equivocal. Univocal meaning of oneness and three-ness would say that these terms mean identically the same thing for God and man. Analogically meaning would say that these terms are similar for God and man. Equivocal meaning would say they are totally different for God and man.

From Genesis 1 we learned that God created via language and that man was created in His image of the triune God. Man thus is an analogy to God. He isn't the same as God; but he similar to God. We shouldn't be surprised then that human language with its terms and categories turns out to be analogical to God's language and concepts. Terms and categories like oneness and three-ness when used of God should not be taken as univocal to what they mean when they address created objects. Their meaning down here in our creature existence is similar but not identical to what is up there in the creator's existence. Nor should we conclude skeptically that their meaning when used of God is equivocal to what they mean in our creature existence. That would land us in total skepticism cut off from any relationship with God.

How can we recognize the ways in ways analogical to what they mean regarding God. We do so by noting the way He reveals Himself in Scripture, special revelation and in creation. For example He uses terms like Son, Father, and Spirit in the Bible that are analogous to our experience in family relationships and in physical wind and breathe. He expects us to relate our everyday experience to our understanding of His self-revelation. That's how He's using these words. To understand God's oneness and three-ness we think upon our everyday experience

Here is what is not being thought about when people raise the trinity as a conflict. What I'm going to show you now is everybody lives in the same dilemma down here, not just in the trinity. Watch.

Everyday experience of unity and plurality - political experience shows the tension between unity that is all power in the centralized government and plurality power distributed among many as an anarchy. We know sometimes vaguely that both political unity and political plurality must somehow coexist to a limited degree. Few would argue that one should overwhelm the other in order to eliminate the so-called contradiction.

Experience with arithmetic also shows a tension between unity and plurality. Take 2 plus 2 equals 4 - clearly a plurality here of countable objects is assumed to exist. Yet the statement also presumes that the two objects remain two objects while we are counting them and that the symbols 2, =, and 4 remain the same whenever they are used. That is there is unity to existence. So to eliminate any contradiction which is more ultimate, unity or plurality? In practice no one does this except the radical Hindu monist who thinks all diversity is an allusion. We simply live with both assuming that there are two different we are experiencing though we can't seem to state what the difference is.

Another example of this is accountants. I mean it drives accountants crazy when you take business accounting how do you categorize different things? Do you include them all in the same? Or, do you divert them? You are dealing with multiplicity and unity every time you do an accounting problem.

So we can legitimately claim that the two worldviews of the Bible and of paganism carried two distinct view of logic. The Bible uses Trinitarian logic asserting the equal ultimacy of unity and plurality that recognizes analogies between ultimate meaning to God and derivative meaning to man. Western paganism has tended to use Aristotelian logic that asserts a

continuity of being with the resulting univocal meaning of terminology throughout all existence whether human or divine thus ending unnecessary contradictions. That has plagued Christian theology as that footnote shows you.

To sum up the unbelieving critic who casually contradictions (trinity, sovereignty, free will) most likely has not thought deeply about the logic he is using. First he offers no justification for using logic as a universal evaluation tool since he has no assurance that rationality exists. We've already covered that. He can only join Socrates and Kant in arbitrarily positing such rationality exists. In doing so he thus lays rationality in a foundation of irrationality. Believers who trust divine revelation of the Bible however recognize God as the ultimate source of rationality for human use of logic.

Second the critic faults biblical Christianity by contradiction while accepting the same kind of contradiction in his everyday experience of unity, plurality and faith in free will. While unable to explain his rational acceptance of everyday paradoxes he expects believers to explain their rational acceptance of the trinity. He observed here behavioral inconsistencies.

Now let us go on to the third and last section, Deuteronomy and question C. This is the ethical issue. This is a little easier to see. Discussion of one aspect of question C raised by David in section 18 - the necessity of biblical revelation for objective morality and dealing with Mt. Sinai event. Remember we said that Mt. Sinai event back in session 18 last year - I had that section where I showed that apart from the Bible all ethics is subjective. You can't construct an objective ethic.

David legitimately asked this question. Why couldn't a non-Christian argue from an objective ethic based on human nature and evolution; which they do by the way.

So let's look again Deuteronomy's view of ethics. Notice the methodology here. We're going first to the verbal revelation of God because that is our intellectual authority. We are submitting our minds to how God tells us we are supposed to be thinking. We do that by submitting to the text. Very obviously Deuteronomy roots ethics in God's revelation of His holy nature and that nature's demands upon any who would seek a relationship with Him. That's Deuteronomy 5.

Under that we have points on page 6. The resulting ethics do not emanate from individual human speculation as though Moses originated it. His Egyptian education was trumped by God's interventionary revelation. Moses was an educated man. He was raised in the royalty of Egypt. He probably knew hieroglyphics. He probably knew all the writing techniques in the ancient world. He was familiar with the cosmologies.

Isn't it striking that Egyptian cosmology doesn't show up in the Bible? Wouldn't you think that if Moses was writing out of His Egyptian intellectual education and preparation you'd see Egyptian ideas in the text? How come you don't? You see Egyptian words in the text. There's an Egyptian vocabulary that comes across in Genesis and in the early Pentateuch that doesn't happen later in the Old Testament. Old Testament

scholars have pointed that out. It's clear particularly in the Pentateuch - who's editor of the Pentateuch? Moses. He is using Egyptian vocabulary but without Egyptian ideas. How come they got purged?

The resulting ethics do not emanate from social consensus. The first generation clearly did not consent to Mt Sinai ethics. So it wasn't an ethic that was constructed out of a boat or out of some sort of congregational agreement. The resulting ethics do not arise from meaningless random evolutionary survival process. They are predicated on 6-day creation and supernaturally guided history. So all those other quoted sources of ethics are simply eliminated in the book Deuteronomy.

So no truly ethics exist outside of biblical revelation. So this is what I was saying back in session 18 just sort of a review. Then point 3 is going to deal with what David brought out.

By objective ethics is meant that ethical standards exist independently of individual feelings or desires or opinions. I mean you can hold to an ethic and be fighting it yourself because we've all had that experience. We are condemned by our conscience. That's the ethic working. It's not coming out of our instinct. Our instinct is to sin, Romans 7. So ethics don't emanate that way. Otherwise if it isn't objective the ethic has no moral authority over such feelings, desires and opinions. If it's coming from them it can't be an authority over them.

In session 18 and several subsequent lessons I argued that the Bible is necessary as well as sufficient for establishing objective ethics. That is every attempt by unbelief to establish ethics ultimately turns out to be subjective. I pointed out that ever popular moral relativism reduces to mere autobiographical expressions of one's likes and dislikes. Here is a review of session 18. Subjective ethical judgments ultimately say nothing about actions themselves they only reveal attitudes of people toward such actions.

"I don't like the fact that Joe murdered Jane."

But you haven't talked about the act, the value of the act. That's not what you've said what you've said is you don't like it. But do you see the difference between saying I don't like something and the value of the thing independently of whether you like it or dislike it?

Subjective ethical ethics says nothing about the actions. Therefore it leads how can moral outrage exist when there might be other people who see nothing at all wrong with such acts.

Sometimes you'll be on jury duty and you'll run into somebody who thinks that way.

All that can be said is that attitudes vary toward such acts. It's all a mere matter of personal taste or appeal. This is the reduction to absurdity argument. Subjective ethical theory refutes itself and this to me is the most powerful answer to it. It refutes itself since a subjectivist can't live without making objective ethical judgments. Cheat him and watch what happens. Particularly the judgment that others ought not to impose their ethic upon them. Since ethics betray real beliefs

that action shows they really don't believe in their own theory. There is a behavioral inconsistency between what they're saying and what they're reacting to in every day life. Politically it would result in anarchy so in the end it causes totalitarianism whereby the strong impose their ethic upon the weak in order to maintain social order. That's how we get positivist law. It's a reduction again to absurdity.

No the last thing, point 3 here, these are the ways in which classical unbelief has tried desperately to build a foundation for objective ethics because thoughtful unbelievers know the dangers of moral relativism.

We as Christians don't have to preach to well educated non-Christians. They understand where relativism leads and it sometimes terrifies them. They are very disturbed by it. You take people who are thoughtful in the business world, people who are thoughtful in the political world. They understand the dangers of relativism. So they've come up with different approaches. It's one of these approaches that David raised.

So the first approach is called - well let me see under point 3 - popular attempts to erect objective ethics outside of biblical revelation failed because the subjectivity of moral relativism leads to such absurd results. At least 4 popular attempts exist that try unsuccessfully to support objective ethics.

First is the coherence model. This was seriously advocated by Nelson and some other guys. A society common moral beliefs can be integrated in a self consistent manner with what is known about human nature, the world and social behavior. That such a system exists and works justifies its objectivity without reference to God. In other words a society can come up with a pretty coherent way of viewing life. And it works for them, so what's the problem? Don't they have an objective ethic?

The problem is this. Coherence alone doesn't imply truth. That's a logical fallacy. The Third Reich had a coherent system of morality; but that didn't prove the Nazi order was objective truth. It just showed that all the Germans agreed to it.

B is the one David raised, the human nature model. Whether an act is injurious to human nature appears to be an objective standard. After all, human nature But it has problems. Number one, why choose human nature as the protective species? Modern ecologies now are using animals and even plants as protective species so this model begins with an arbitrary assumption that human beings have special value. Where did that come from?

Tell it Sanger down here, the ethics professor at Princeton who says, "That's not right. It's not human."

He has a species sensitivity or something like that - it's basically species prejudice.

"So you should be open to an animal. An animal suffers. An animal can sense pain animal. So why don't you say animals is also bad?"

You are on a slippery slope here. So you can't arbitrarily say humans. What about plant nature? What about animal nature? How do you make a decision there? So that's the problem there. One cannot.

Finally, point 2 one cannot move from a statement about fact to an inference about value. It's something to an "ought" thing. You can't go from and "is" to an "ought" without some intermediate statement.

Point C last page the human need model or the social contract model. This is a sophisticated version of the earlier one that David raised - the human nature model. For human survival certain ethical standards must be established in society that do not rest upon individual desires or opinions. That's the third one.

It has problems. This model makes ethics contingent upon social agreement where as objective ethics are true in themselves whether there is social agreement or not. Think of the South in the days of segregation. Didn't they have social agreement that it was right to own slaves? Isn't that a social contract that they had? They had a war to decide that issue.

Point 2 how is it decided about who's qualified to do the agreeing? That's the whole issue of citizenship. Maybe we shouldn't agree; maybe it should be the elite. We'll just trust the elite to agree.

The reason is not to be nitpicky. It's to say, how do you decide this? Your ethical system doesn't support answers to these subsidiary questions that you need to answer to make your model work.

Three, how is it decided when two groups agree to different ethics. What do you do then? North and the South in the days of the Civil War.

Four, one cannot move from a statement about a fact (Humans need to survive.) to an inference about value, without intermediate supporting statements. There's a gap in there. There's a logical gap.

Finally, the evolution model. This model argues that no objective morality actually does exist. What does exist is a sense that one exists. You got that? Evolution has inbred in us the sense that there is value out there. It really doesn't exist out there, but we have the sense that it does. The reason that we all have that sense that there is an absolute value is because of evolutionary pressures and the need to survive.

So that was developed this way. Such a sense came about from evolutionary pressures favoring those actions promoting survival. That's usually the way the evolutionary model is stated.

There are problems though. Number 1, it doesn't explain the sense that compassion and mercy to the weak is right. Being merciful toward the weak doesn't help your survival, does it? Does that help society survive - to keep alive cerebral palsy children? Does it help survival of a society to carry the elderly? Does it help the survival of society to be compassionate to people, the Good Samaritan story?

Two, makes the sense of objective morality contingent on evolutionary processes that could have been different elsewhere in the universe. Well

suppose there is another society on another planet with a different evolutionary tree? What happens if they were to visit the earth and intermix with us? Now what do you do? Which ethic trumps then?

Third, it ends up making ethics subjective because there is no objective ethic. It agrees that all ethics is subjective in the final analysis. Nothing is said of acts themselves. So it suffers from the inability to be lived out just as the subjective ethic of moral relativism does.

So we conclude God's Word (the Bible) is both necessary and sufficient to answer the three great questions.

We've gone over a little bit tonight. This is a lot of material all packed together. I hope you at least keep the notes because you'll want to think this through.

You're going to encounter people who think this way. The stuff I'm telling you here may sound far out with some of you. That's because conversations with intelligent unbelievers. These are questions that are going to come up. David and George have brought them up in the Q&A. So we've seen these guys bring these questions up.

The takeaway tonight among all the details is the preciousness of the Word of God to appreciate what we have. This is not some casual little book to be studied in 15-minute segments in Sunday school and then kissed off when I reach 18 years of age. This is the revelation of God Himself. We can go out there and hold our heads proudly that we believe in the Word of God. We ought to actually pity the people who have rejected it because they don't even realize what kind of a mess they're in. They're walking around blind trying to answer the three questions and they haven't got a foundation for any of the 3 questions. And I am supposed to be intimidated by them? No, you are not to be intimidated by them. Feel sorry for them. Pray for them because they're the ones with a problem, not us.

(Closing prayer)

Question

Sorry for the rush tonight. There was a lot of material to cover and I didn't want to string it out because this is not a class on apologetics but Deuteronomy. I really did want you to see that when working through Deuteronomy history you're getting a worldview that is in total collision with the world around us. It should provoke you to think deeply about the Word of God and these kinds of issues. What it does is build you up spiritually where you can have that confidence that you can look believer in the eye and truly feel sorry for them because they've got the problem.

Any comments?

Where was that? Part B. Okay, the question is on part B, point 2. I made the point that we have recorded history of non-uniform events in Scripture. We also have tales in the ancient world - Enuma Elish and others of similar non-uniform events. Why do we pick the non-uniform events of the Bible over the non-uniform events of external pagan literature? The answer is because the Bible presents those events as

justifiable by all the rest; the Bible gives you a total picture. By the way, is exactly why you cannot argue - remember that the amoeba diagram I keep showing? Here's an example. If you argue one little point the unbelieving world will swallow you up.

This is what VanTill (?) meant when he said, "You can argue with the unbeliever about the one particular non-uniform event of the resurrection and you could prove that it actually happened. The unbeliever could sit there and look you in the eye and say, 'Gee, this is a strange universe. Strange things happen. Why not send it into Ripley's Believe it or not?'"

Now what happened there? You won the battle, but you lost the war. That's because you presented the non-uniform event resurrection escaped from, separated from the whole thrust of the whole picture. So when you look at Enuma Elish you look at the gods and goddesses and so forth, you need to really understand that literature and what it's saying. That is the pagan view. When you look carefully at Enuma Elish and the other one, (?) Flood Legend - Gilgamesh Epic is another one. Read them, and what do you notice? Irrationality. It's presented in a context of irrationality. The gods and the goddesses are arguing with each other. The problem you've got there is on Tuesday - say they have local deities and temporal duties. Let's say we are all bailiffs now and living in Harper County. He is the goddess, he and she - they are the consorts for this area of Harper County. All of a sudden there is an invasion from Cecil County into Harper County. The way that would be interpreted in the ancient world is that the gods and goddesses of Cecil County beat up the gods and goddesses of Harper County. So that way, you never know what's going to happen next Saturday. Maybe the gods and goddesses of Montgomery County are going to beat the gods and goddesses of Harper County. See what happens? You get suddenly enmeshed in this irrational scheme.

You don't get that in the Scriptures because the God of Abraham calls him out of one geographical area and moves him into another geographical area and claims that the contract holds in all areas. That's the rationality.

So when you see an event like the resurrection or you see an event like the floating ax head of Elijah, it is placed within that sovereign control of God. You don't have this never ending. Of course we know as Christians that some of the supernatural things in mythological pagan literature are actually memories of Scripture screwed up.

You have to sit and discuss that. People will throw that out and what I've noticed is that they will toss it because they ran into it somewhere. If they are really serious - you have to distinguish between people who are playing games with you versus people who are honestly seeking. You shouldn't waste your time with somebody playing a game unless you play games. Most of us don't have time to play games. If the person is sincere, the challenge would be to get the Gilgamesh Epic out of the library.

"Let's sit down and read it and then let's read Genesis 1 through 9."

Question

He points out sometimes it is useful to play games because it gives you a little - let's say combat experience. As you get more relaxed because your confidence grows in the Word of God - some of this is body language. Often times what happens is people are throwing it at you to watch your response. They want to see if they can press your hot button. It's a little game of doing that. If you don't let them see they've pressed the hot button, kind of smile, there is a war going on even in your body language in these kinds of events.

Let me take you to Proverbs 26. Here is guidance on how to respond to those kinds of things. There are verses 4 and 5 of Proverbs 26. This sounds like a conflict. This is one of those proverbs where it says one thing; it says another thing.

You say, "Wait a minute. Is this a conflict in Scripture?"

No. It's a proverb. Proverbs are made by saying statement A in a certain way and then statement B in another way. They are about the same thing, but they are approaching it two different ways. They are said so they sound paradoxical; but that's to drive you to think about it. So writers of proverbs have an incentive in their teaching style to provoke us to think. That's why you have proverbs that are antithetical.

Now Proverbs 26:4-5 - I'll read these two verses to you and I'll show you the two strategies. There are only two strategies here.

NKJ Proverbs 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

What that's warning you to do is it's warning you not share his presuppositions. If you answer him according to his folly, you have bought into his question. I have done that so many times. I don't know how many times I have to learn verse 4 - not to answer a fool according to his folly.

He is coming at it from a continuity of being standpoint. You are a creator creature person. You are not to answer him according to his folly.

You can show him that there is a difference - a profound difference here. If you don't get anything across, at least get across that you are both starting in two different places. Most people don't even think about starting points. It's not part of our education - tragically. So that's the first thing.

NKJ Proverbs 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

The second thing though sounds paradoxical.

NKJ Proverbs 26:5 Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

What does that mean?

NKJ Proverbs 26:5 Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

That's what in the handout tonight that's what I was doing when I was giving those models. I was critiquing them. I was answering the fool according to his folly let he be wise in his own eyes - showing the fool is contradicting himself. That's why in bold letters I gave you the logical errors that were being made showing that we understand the question. We examine that question and we find it doesn't fit. It has logical conflicts in it. That is what it means when it says:

NKJ Proverbs 26:5 Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

Otherwise he's not going to understand that he's got problems with his own view. That takes time because you can't answer a fool according to his own folly if you can't get inside the fool's head. That means you have to sit and listen to him. Sometimes the fool has a hard time really expressing what he means to say. It's like we all do at times. So it takes a lot of patience and understanding to sit there and listen to this. But if you don't - and I've done this so many times. You start off listening to him and you haven't listened to where he's coming from. Your answer isn't relevant to him. He's over here and you shot over there.

You are like the hunter that shot last week. He was shooting at a deer and shot right through their house and almost hit their daughter. You want to get your targets right here. So that's what that is. Now the early one

NKJ Proverbs 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

Don't buy into his position. You've got to answer it from a biblical position. This is hard. This stuff is not easy to do. It takes a lot of thought and I don't want to discourage some of you here. I'm trying to show you that there are answers out there. As Christians we can have confidence that God means what He says. Unbelief is screwed up in a profound way.

But men like David and George work in a work environment where they're getting hit with this. We're not making this up. This is where you are!

Question

What he's pointing out in the Moslem issue - you're still dealing with the ultimate authority. What you have to do going back to Proverbs 26 - what he was saying about the Koran professes to be continuing the previous revelation. You show it contradicts the previous revelation. What you are doing is answering a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own conceits.

That is you are getting inside his view and saying, "Let's assume his view is right just to see where it leads."

That's the absurdity position.

Our time is up other questions we can talk about them.