

Entrust Biblical Masculinity Lesson 14 Masculinity & the Mind Part 1 5/18/23

INTRO:

- Can God make a rock so big he cannot lift it?

- If we say yes, then we admit that there is something God cannot do because God would then create a rock which He couldn't lift.

- If we say no, then we must admit that there's something God cannot do; create a rock which He cannot lift. Either way, our answer will affirm that God is not omnipotent, apparently.

- However...

- He has violated the law of non-contradiction.
 - The law of non-contradiction says something cannot be both true and not true at the same time when dealing with the same context. (More on that in a minute)

- When it is said that God is omnipotent and "nothing is impossible," those statements, like all statements have a context; a realm in which they exist and function; God's universe, namely.

- Impossible means things that are impossible, yet pertain to logic; God's rules of logic and do not contradict logic.
 - Impossible: created the universe from nothing; raising the dead; granting conception to a virgin; healing blindness by speaking.

 - Those things are impossible, but they are not logical contradictions. A contradiction would be: he raises a man from the dead who remains dead; he grants conception to a virgin who does not conceive.

 - Those violate the law of non-contradiction; they are simple examples.

- The question is like asking: "Can God's infinite power exceed his infinite power? Can a God of infiniteness produce something to make himself finite?"

- That violates the law of non-contradiction. We cannot have something be both finite and not finite at the same time and in the same context.
- It's a violation of the law of non-contradiction to state that an infinite Being can create finiteness for himself.
- C.S. Lewis: "It remains true that all things are possible with God: the intrinsic impossibilities are not things but nonentities. It is no more possible for God than for the weakest of His creatures to carry out both of two mutually exclusive alternatives; not because His power meets an obstacle, but because nonsense remains nonsense even when we talk it about God." (*The Problem of Pain*, Harper One, 1996, p. 18)
- **Conclusion:** The question violates the law of non-contradiction. As such, it is not actually a question; it is a non-sensical question, a non-sensical scenario, and therefore a non-statement; a non-question.

- What about, "God cannot lie? (Num 23:19), or, God cannot sin (Jas 1)?" Simple: to lie and sin would violate the very definition and existence of his nature. Again, he cannot go against his nature. God is infinitely holy. Therefore, it is a contradiction to state that he can sin or be evil, b/c that would be to say: he is infinitely holy and he is not infinitely holy.

- Ecclesiastes 10:10 If the axe is dull and he does not sharpen *its* edge, then he must exert more strength. Wisdom has the advantage of giving success.

- So it is with our minds: learn logic and it will sharpen our minds
- Logic is like your best tool in your toolbox; you use it for everything.
- The mind; the powers of reason and discernment are like a muscle. When we exercise them, they become stronger.

1. What is logic?

a. Definition:

“the science that investigates the principles governing correct or reliable inference.” (Dictionary.com)

“a particular way of thinking, especially one that is reasonable and based on good judgment.” (Cambridge)

b. God and logic

- Logic involves thinking in a way that is right and true, as God is right and true.
- Man did not invent logic. He merely observes it.
- Man did not invent logic anymore than he invented the law of gravity, photosynthesis, or the rotation of the Earth. Instead, man observes these things.
- Logic is a part of the very nature of the true and living God who is revealed in Scripture. Though famous for his work concerning logic, Aristotle did not invent logic. Instead, he helped to classify what God had created, the framework of all reality.
- There are fixed laws of logic, and, therefore, logical fallacies.

c. Man and logic

- God has made man in His image. As such, man is created as a rational creature.
- Being rational, man irresistibly operates according to the rules of logic.
- Logic is hard-wired into all language, communication, and mental powers of reasoning.
- However, man’s sinful nature distorts his ability and willingness to use logic in a way that glorifies God.

- Depravity has not distorted logic anymore than depravity has distorted the wetness of water.
- Depravity has distorted man's use of logic:

Romans 1:18–21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,¹⁹ because **that which is known about God is evident within them;**

- In other words: man is a creature who reasons and irresistibly operates by logic. By that logic he knows that God exists.

for God made it evident to them.²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

- God's "invisible attributes" (e.g. creativity, power, wisdom, love, kindness, etc.) are both "clearly seen" (by man's God-given ability of observation) and "understood" (by man's God-given ability of logic and reason).
- Furthermore, just like the astonishing design of things like the human heart, the growth of a tree, the flight of a falcon all testify to a Designer and Being far greater than a heart, tree, and falcon, so the rules of logic testify to a Ruler.
- Logic is an elegantly designed structure of thought and reason (by which we all operate), which demands an elegant Designer.
- The result, therefore, is that man is "without excuse," which means that every person born is accountable to God and cannot say in the judgment, "I was ignorant of your existence, glory, and my accountability to you."
- Therefore, man's innate powers of logic and reason render him utterly accountable to the God of the Bible.
- Every day, as man operates irresistibly by the principles of logic in his job, recreation, finances, and relationships, he demonstrates himself accountable to use that logic and reason the most obvious

truth before him: God exists, He created all things, He is good, He is worthy of worship, and I am accountable to Him.

²¹ For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- In his sinful depravity, man uses God's logic to rebel against God.
- For example, man attempts to, using logic, reason that God does not exist (e.g. evolution, atheism, agnosticism)
- He uses logic to devise ways of sinning (robbing God of glory, committing sexual sin, invent new ways of sinning) and to justify his sin.
- Thus, man uses one of God's greatest gifts to him (inherent in the image of God) as a weapon to craft and execute sin against God. For this, man is entirely condemned in sin and without hope, in and of himself.

d. The limits of logic

- Logic is a powerful tool to discover general revelation and comprehend special revelation
- Special revelation cannot be discovered by logic, but only through Scripture and the illuminating grace of God

Gordon Clark: "This is not to say that all truth can be deduced from logic alone. The seventeenth-century rationalists gave themselves an impossible task. Even if the ontological argument be valid, it is impossible to deduce Cur Deus Homo (*why God became man*), the Trinity, or the final resurrection." (*God and Logic*, by Gordon Clark)

2. Why study logic

- a. God is a God of logic and we are made in his image.

- Refining our skills in logic is a way to grow in glorifying Him by operating as close to His image in us as possible.

b. To glorify God with our minds by learning to think according to what is true.

Peter 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- To love God with all our minds:

Matthew 22:36-38 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And He said to him, “ ‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ ³⁸ “This is the great and foremost commandment

c. To better understand God’s word.

- 2 Tim 2:15 tells us to study to understand God’s word. Learning logic helps us do so.
- Hermeneutics is applied logic; logic applied to the text.
- Logic better enables us to discern the meaning of a text:
- Westminster Confession of Faith 1.6: “The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or **by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture**: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.”
- To avoid hermeneutical errors of contradicting interpretations of a text or doctrine (e.g. how to handle the apparent contradiction of Romans 3:28 and James 2:24).

d. To be discerning in the face of error

Ephesians 4:14-15 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵ but speaking the

truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ,

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

- Logic helps us discern error.
- It serves as a smoke detector for falsehood and foolishness.
- “There is no objective truth.” This is an absolute, objective statement of truth. “There is no truth” is a claim of truth.

3. What are logical fallacies?

- A logical fallacy is a violation of God’s laws of logic, which thereby renders one’s argument or line of reasoning as less effective
- There are at least dozens of logical fallacies

4. Fundamental laws of logic

- a. Law of excluded middle: any statement is either true or false
- b. Law of identity: if a statement is true, then it is true
- c. Law of non-contradiction
 - i. Described: a statement cannot be both true and false, at the same time and same relationship

For example: you might be on the phone with someone in Florida, and you say, “It’s snowing,” and they say, “It’s not snowing.”

That would not be a violation of the law of non-contradiction b/c the statement, “It is snowing,” made by the 2 people, is not in the same time and context / relationship.

- ii. Judas and the law of non-contradiction

- Two accusations against the Bible: 1) We can't know what it says b/c it's been innumerably translated. 2) There are contradictions (always ask them to show you).
- One of them concerns Judas' death:
- For example, we have a set of two statements about Judas. 1) Judas hanged himself. 2) Judas fell down, and his bowels spilled out.

Matthew 27:5 And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself.

Acts 1:18 Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.

- However, neither statement about Judas contradicts the other. That is, neither statement makes the other impossible because neither excludes the possibility of the other.
- The statements can be harmonized by stating: Judas hanged himself, then his body fell down, and his bowels spilled out.
- Do these verses violate the law of non-contradiction?
- In order to violate God's law of non-contradiction, we would need something like 1) Judas' bowels spilled out. 2) Judas' bowels did not spill out.

iii. The doctrine of election

Some have proposed that the biblical doctrine of election / predestination and man's responsibility to repent violate the law of non-contradiction.

- Prior to creation, God chose who would be saved.
- However, people are responsible to repent and be saved.

- Therefore, it is a contradiction to say that God made the decision to save all who would be saved and one must make the decision to be saved.

Is that a violation of the law of non-contradiction?

Acts 13:48 When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

iv. The doctrine of the Trinity and the law of non-contradiction:

Ex: The accusation sometimes goes: You say that God is 3 and God is one. That cannot be, for it is a contradiction. You Christians and your Bible; it is contradictory; you are tripping over your shoelaces.

The Trinity is not a violation of the law of non-contradiction. We do not say that God is 3 and one. Rather, the Scriptures teach that God is 3 IN one.

- Partial quote from the Nicene Creed:

“We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen...”

“We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father...”

“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets...”

- In other words:

God is one God

God is three Persons (Father, Son, Spirit)