

Getting the Most from the Logic of God's Word

God's use of logic throughout the Bible sought to produce in a person an insightful understanding of the goodness of God and generate an intuitive desire for a relationship with Him. But this may be incomprehensible with contemporary logic.

Contemporary logic, based on science, may explain much of how the world "is;" but, it cannot explain morality, how human beings "ought" to live.

Logic is Based on Objective Fact

What affects your evaluation of reality? Throughout God's word, there is an emphasis placed on the human senses of sight, hearing, and touching. Corresponding to reality, truth is not subjective, and with objectivity, one cannot rule out the possibility of the supernatural.

3) while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 4) '**You yourselves have seen** what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5) Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; 6) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (Ex 19:3-6, ESV)

The Basics of Logic

Logic is a process of disciplined reasoning and thought that leads to a valid conclusion. The process has been codified into principles of logic that leads to an inference, a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning. These inferences form a basis for an argument, which can be used to determine what is true or false, correct or incorrect, ethical or unethical, etc.

The Law of Identity: The Law of Identity means that anything is identical to itself and that its nature remains consistent over time. Your coffee cup is a coffee cup affirms the Law of Identity, because you recognize the coffee cup doesn't change over time.

The Law of Identity applies to what is objectively true - the quality or state of being absolutely true. Does that which is true in accordance with fact or reality? Consider the question: is God's word true?

And the Lord said to Moses, "Is the Lord's hand shortened? **Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not.**" (Num 11:23, ESV)

20) But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.' 21) And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?'— 22) when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, **if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken;** the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him. (Deut 18:20-22, ESV)

1) **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2) He was in the beginning with God. 3) All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4) In him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4, ESV)

1) "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2) In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. 4) And you know the way to where I am going." 5) Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6) Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life.** No one comes to the Father except through me. 7) If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." (John 14:1-7, ESV)

The Law of Non-Contradiction: The Law of Non-Contradiction means that contradictory statements cannot both be true at the same time. This is necessary to determine what is objectively true or not and develop a reliable understanding of reality absent of contradiction.

This law is foundational for distinguishing truth from falsehood, as it ensures that statements about reality are consistent and do not contradict one another. Consider the question: Can God's word be both true and false at the same time?

**God is not man, that he should lie,
or a son of man, that he should change his mind.**

Has he said, and will he not do it?

Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? (Num 23:19, ESV)

42) Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. 43) Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44) You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and **does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him**. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for **he is a liar and the father of lies**. 45) But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. (John 8:42-45, ESV)

17) So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, 18) so that by two unchangeable things, in which **it is impossible for God to lie**, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. (Heb 6:17-18, ESV)

20) But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. 21) I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because **no lie is of the truth**. 22) Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. (1 John 2:20-22, ESV)

The Law of Excluded Middle: The Law of Excluded Middle, states that "A statement is either true or false; there is no middle ground." Truth is objective and absolute; it is not subjective according to a personal view and relative in accommodating all views.

When examining what God says, observe carefully the options available to you. Is there a middle choice?

3) while Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: 4) 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5) Now therefore, **if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples**, for all the earth is mine; 6) and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (Ex 19:3-6, ESV)

16) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17) For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18) **Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:16-18, ESV)

An Interrelated Process: The Three Laws of Logic form the foundation of reason and work together to provide the means to understand reality and communicate with others. Observe and discuss these passages.

Can you see how God's word utilizes the Law of Identity – a statement that identifies and is consistent with itself?

Can you see how God's word utilizes the Law of Non-Contradiction – an idea that is free of contradiction?

Can you see how God's word utilizes the Law of Excluded Middle – a concept that is objective and absolute and cannot be relative?

Can you see how God Himself utilizes all three laws to help you determine the truth of life? Do you perceive the beauty of God's logic?

Come, Let Us Reason Together - God

Throughout the Bible, God appeals to thought and reason.

16) Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, 17) learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

18) "Come now, **let us reason together, says the LORD**: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

19) If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; 20) but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Isa 1:16-20, ESV)

In the Old Testament, God presents evidence to appeal to our ability to logically deduce:

1. Who is the living God.
2. Why create man, the image of God, and the meaning of life.
3. How God plans to restore the image of God, which He personally guarantees.
4. How God plans to restore His kingdom on earth.
5. How one could be holy as God is holy and become a descendant of Abraham.

Come, Let Us Reason Together – Jesus Christ

Like His Father, Jesus Christ presents evidence to appeal to our ability to logically deduce:

1. Why Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God.
2. How Jesus will help His Father restore His kingdom on earth.
3. How, despite God's people disobliging God from the Mosaic Covenant, Jesus provides the means of how one can be holy as God is holy and become a descendant of Abraham.
4. Why be moral and what happens when one dies.

Example: How many pieces of evidence does Jesus provide from which to logically deduce whether Jesus is the Messiah or not?

31) "If I alone bear witness about Myself, My witness is not true. 32) There is another who bears witness about Me, and I know that the witness which He gives about Me is true. 33) You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. 34) But the witness I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. 35) He was the lamp that was burning and shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. 36) But the witness I have is greater than the witness of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness about Me, that the Father has sent Me. 37) And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness about Me. You have neither heard His

voice at any time nor seen His form. 38) And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. 39) You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness about Me; 40) and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. 41) I do not receive glory from men; 42) but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. 43) I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 44) How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the only God? 45) Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46) For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" (John 5:31-47, LSB)

Example: Using reason to evaluate the moral standard of what is good.

16) And behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?"

17) And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."

18) He said to him, "Which ones?"

And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19) Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

20) The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?"

21) Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." 22) When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

23) And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. 24) Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." 25) When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" 26) But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matt 19:16-26, ESV; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27)

Is an act good because God commands it? If God is sovereign and all-powerful, then morality is subject to God's whim as He is capable of enforcing His commands. An act is good because God simply says so, not because it is inherently good; the difference between good and evil does not matter to God. But Is morality based on whim?

Or does God command an act because it's good? Is there is a moral law that is external to and higher than God? This means that God is not sovereign.

Come, Let Us Reason Together – the Apostles

Like God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son, the apostles exhort all Believers to know their faith well enough to share, explain, and defend the reason "for the hope that is in you."

13) Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? 14) But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15) but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16) having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17) For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. (1 Pet 3:13-17, ESV)

The apostles present evidence to appeal to our ability to logically deduce:

1. How one can receive God's means of salvation, the gift of His Son Jesus.

2. What is required of a person so that God would choose to be that person's God and become "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people for God's own possession."

3. How God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, will help those Believers abiding in Jesus Christ in their sanctification.
4. What concludes at the end of human history and how salvation consummates.

Example: Know God's word as the basis for reason and logic.

44) Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45) **Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** 46) and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47) and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48) You are witnesses of these things. 49) And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:44-49, ESV)

The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, was the authority of the synagogue. Citing Scripture supported the arguments of the apostles and writers of the New Testament, and they taught that God's word was continuous, from the very beginning Genesis through Jesus Christ and the new church including Gentiles.

17) "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.** 18) For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. (Matt 5:17-18, ESV)

Example: How are the apostles' arguments presented and justified in an attempt to sway the listener to seek salvation from the penalty of sin?

Example: How do the apostles place an emphasis on Christian ethics by being "in Christ" or abiding in the "indwelling Holy Spirit" in the process of salvation from the power of sin and use logic to teach a new concept in living by transforming one's mind?

How do the apostles persuade one about the future when the process of salvation is completed – salvation from the presence of sin?

What We Can Learn?