**Sunday, October 27, 2013 – New Heights Christian Church, Kent, WA – Micah Adamson**

**Jesus, the lead defender of the Christian faith:** Lessons in logic and how Jesus reasoned with people

**Sermon Text:** Matthew 22:15-45

**Matthew 22:45-46 (NIV84)** *45 If then David calls Him ‘Lord,’ how can He be his Son?”*

*46 No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask Him any more questions.*

**Introduction:**

*What:* I’m going to attempt to argue that logic is required for us to have a right relationship with God.

*Why:* I feel the need to argue this point is that people in my generation (and older) have argued that logic is a non-Christian idea from Greek philosophy that Christians need to avoid. However, the evidence is that Jesus is the lead defender of the Christian faith and He used logic to argue that He is the Christ.

*All three members of the Trinity related to reason/logic/truth:*

Isaiah 1:18 = Father (not only does God reason, but He expects that we can reason with Him. Could this ability to reason with God be part of being made in God’s image in Genesis 1:26-27?)

John 1:1 and John 14:6 = Son (Jesus = Logos = Word = Logic = Study of, Jesus = Truth)

John 14:16-17a = Holy Spirit (Spirit = Truth)

**Matthew 16:1-4 as an overview of Aristotelian logic from: Piper, Adler, Sproul, Geisler, and Lewis:**

*John Piper taught me that:*

Matthew 16:1-4 shows that Jesus argued that the Jews knew how to use Aristotelian logic on nature and Jesus rebuked the Jews for not being willing or able to use Aristotelian logic on theology.

*Outline of the Aristotelian logic in Jesus’ example about the weather in Matthew 16:1-4.*

MP: If the sky is red in the evening then there will be good weather.

MP2: But if the sky is red in the morning then there will be bad weather.

Outline Jesus’ logic about the Jew’s ability to use Aristotelian logic in Matthew 16:1-4.

MP: If you can use Aristotelian logic for weather forecasting to reason from signs in the sky to valid conclusions about the near future then you should be able to use Aristotelian logic for theology to reason from the signs and miracles that I have already done about my coming as the King of the Kingdom of Heaven.

*Norman Geisler taught me that:*

Explain Aristotelian logic consists of: Major Premise (MP), minor premise (mp), conclusion (c)

(Arguments can have a compound major premise and multiple minor premises and draw multiple conclusions, but we will try to keep it simple and use the conclusion of one argument as the premise of a new argument)

MP1: If the major premise of an argument is true (MP2:) and if the minor premise of an argument is a valid example of the Major Premise, then the conclusion is valid and this valid conclusion can be used to form the Major Premise of a new argument.

*Mortimer Adler taught me that:*

That you should read or listen from Small to Big, Big to Small, and Logically.

Small to Big = Understand the definitions of individual words and ideas

Big to Small = Summarize what the main idea of someone said by putting the parts together

Logically = Determine if what the person said was true (hardest part of reading or listening)

*Mortimer Adler also taught me that:*

Arguments can only be invalid four ways (two pairs of two):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Data: | Logic: |
| Bad: | bad data | bad logic |
| Incomplete: | incomplete data | incomplete logic |

*R.C. Sproul taught me that:*

In order to come to a valid conclusion to any argument, you need to start with self-evident truth in the fundamental major premise of your first argument and build up from there. Even the argument: “I think therefore I am” is built on a deeper fundamental premise. The deepest fundamental self-evident argument in logic is that: Genuine contradictions don’t exist. This formal argument is written as:

If A equals A, then A can’t equal “not A” at the same time and in the same relationship.

If this argument is false and real contradictions really do exist, then you can’t do logic because you can’t establish any major premises about self-evident principles from which to start an argument.

Contradiction = Contra + Diction = Against + Saying

Paradox = Para + Dox = Seem + Think

Antinomy = Anti + Nomy = Against + Law

*C.S. Lewis taught me that:*

If people use logic to prove that logic isn’t valid they abolish their ability to reason and since our ability to reason is part of the most basic definition of being human. And if people abolish their ability to reason then we have ‘the abolition of man’.

**Matthew 22:15-45 as an example of Jesus’ use of Aristotelian logic in a set of 4 Q&As with the Jews:**

Question = A technical term for a trapping question

*Matthew 22:15-22* – Offering Jesus a false choice

Q: Should we pay taxes to Caesar or not?

A: Pharisees used bad logic by saying that there are only two options for how to answer that question.

MP1: If you say that we should not pay taxes (and therefore allegiance) to Caesar then you are guilty of breaking a Roman law, (MP2:) but if you say that we should pay taxes (and therefore allegiance) to Caesar you are guilty of teaching Jews to dishonor God.

Alt MP: If you only pay taxes to Caesar and only pay allegiance to God then you aren’t breaking either law.

*Matthew 22:23-33* – Offering Jesus a false choice mixed with bad information

Q: Don’t the OT laws about marriage and death prove that the resurrection of the dead is impossible?

A: Sadducees used bad logic and bad data by assuming that the new heavens and the new earth will be just like the old earth and by refusing to acknowledge that in Exodus 3:6 God treats dead people as though they are still alive.

MP: If the OT teaches that marriages end at death widows are allowed to remarry then people can’t live forever.

Alt MP: If the OT teaches that marriage ends at death and the OT teaches that people live forever then both must be true and or you don’t understand marriage or death correctly.

*Matthew 22:34-40* – This may be an honest question or another way of offering Jesus a false choice.

Q: What is the most important commandment in the OT Law?

A: The OT can be summed up as laws that govern loving God (Deuteronomy 6:5) and laws that govern loving people (Leviticus 19:18).

MP: If you say that one command is more important than others then you are saying some OT commands aren’t very important, (MP2:) but if you say that all commandments are the same then you are saying that killing someone and forgetting to wash your hands before you eat are just as bad.

Alt MP: If all laws come from God then there must be a way to show how they all fit together.

(Jesus included loving God with our minds from the Septuagint translation of the OT into Greek not necessarily required as the only translation of this Hebrew word, which is why you can’t find “mind” in English translation of DT 6:5. This is a very interesting choice since Jesus currently engaged in logical argumentation as an example of loving God with our minds.)

*Matthew 22:41-45* – Showing a paradox or antinomy and then showing that it’s not a contradiction

Q: Whose Son Is the Christ?

A: The Christ is David’s son by definition based on 2 Samuel 7:12-13.

(Messiah = Christ = Anointed One or rightful king, word not found in the OT but the concept is)

Q: If David and the Holy Spirit refer to the Messiah as Lord and God in the Bible in Psalm 110:1 then is the Messiah merely a person?

A: ???

MP: If David and the Holy Spirit refers to the Messiah as Lord and God in the Bible in Psalm 110:1 then the Messiah must not merely be a person but also God.

(Psalm 110:1-4 is the most quoted OT passage in the NT. Almost every NT author echoes Jesus argument that both David and the Holy Spirit call the messiah Lord, so you can’t deny the deity of Christ without contradicting David and the Holy Spirit in the Bible. This argument only works if A can’t equal “non A”. This argument relies on the fact that there can’t be real contradictions. As Christians we need to affirm the divinity and humanity of Christ, that God is both three and one, and that contradictions don’t exist. This is a paradox not a contradiction just as these other doctrines are paradoxes not contradictions. Martin Luther famously challenged his opponents to convince him that he was wrong either from scripture or evident reason that he was wrong. We would to well to follow Luther’s example since he was following Jesus’ example.)

*Matthew 26:59-66* – Previous conclusions are used to form the premises of new arguments

(MT 26:1 clarifies that Jesus’ arrest is the next time Jesus spoke with the Sadducees and Pharisees after the question and answers recorded in Matthew chapter 22.)

Q: Are you the Christ (a man) and the Son of God (God)?

A: Yes, the Christ is both God and man, and I am the Christ.

MP: If no one can be God and man then a person who claims to be God has committed blasphemy.

Alt MP: If Psalm 110 teaches that the Christ is both God and man then a person who is the Christ can claim to be God and not commit blasphemy.

(Jesus doesn’t feel the need to answer witnesses whose testimony contradicts. Once they finally get two witnesses who agreed they ask Jesus if He is the Christ the Son of God as Jesus already showed was true of the Christ the last time they spoke in MT 22. Jesus replied that He is the Christ the Son of God and then quotes Daniel 7:13-14, which also speaks about the divinity of Christ since the Christ is worshiped in this passage. The Jews conclude that Jesus is not God since He claimed to be God, which is really bad logic based on a faulty premise that doesn’t take into account that God can truthfully claim to be God.)

**Conclusion:**

I started by saying that I wanted to argue that logic is required for us to have a right relationship with God. Here is an outline of my argument:

Major Premise: If believing in Jesus as the Christ is required for us to have a right relationship with God, and if believing in Jesus as the Christ requires us to use logic, then logic is required for us to have a right relationship with God.

minor premise: The Bible shows that Jesus taught that believing in Him as the Christ requires us to use logic.

Conclusion: Logic is required for us to have a right relationship with God.

This importance of logic to Christianity is backed up by the rest of the Bible. In fact, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 teaches that using our minds to reason through and defeat bad arguments is the primary act of Spiritual warfare. It’s what our Spiritual weapons are designed to do, liberate us and others from falsehood about ourselves, our sin, and our God and savior Jesus Christ.

The piece of my Major Premise that I didn’t have time to establish from the Bible is that believing in Jesus is required for us to have a right relationship with God. I want to briefly show that Romans 10:9-15 argues that we can’t call on Jesus to be saved if we don’t hear a preacher and believe the message, which implies that we understood the message, which requires logic.

Romans 10:15 quotes Isaiah 52:7, which says that the good news will be proclaimed to the whole world.

Isaiah 53, which we read this morning, comes right after Isaiah 52 and tells us the good news about the Christ and how His death and resurrection save us from sin.

According to verses like 1 Corinthians 12:3 and John 14:17, the Holy Spirit has to enable people to believe in Jesus or else they can’t believe. But, the Holy Spirit does not open our eyes to believe illogical and false things, but the truth. We can only be convinced by the Holy Spirit through a proper use of logic that Jesus is the Chris the Son of God who alone as both God and man was able to die to save us from our sins. Likewise, we can only convince others of the truth of the gospel by proper Holy Spirit inspired logic. May the Holy Spirit enable us to think rightly about Jesus who is the truth.

***Isaiah 1:18 (NIV84)***

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 as crimson,

they shall be like wool.

***John 1:1 (NIV84)***

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

***John 14:6 (NIV84)***

6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

***John 14:16-17a (NIV84)***

6 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth.

***Matthew 16:1-4 (NIV84)***

The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.

2 He replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,’ 3 and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. 4 A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.” Jesus then left them and went away.

***Matthew 22:15-22 (NIV84)***

15 Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. 16 They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. “Teacher,” they said, “we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. 17 Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

18 But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? 19 Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, 20 and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?”

21 “Caesar’s,” they replied.

Then he said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

22 When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

***Matthew 22:23-33 (NIV84)***

23 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 24 “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. 25 Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. 26 The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. 27 Finally, the woman died. 28 Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

29 Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. 30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. 31 But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 32 ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”

33 When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

***Matthew 22:34-40 (NIV84)***

34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

***Matthew 22:41-45 (NIV84)***

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42 “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”

“The son of David,” they replied.

43 He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says,

44 “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

until I put your enemies

under your feet.” ’

45 If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” 46 No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

***Matthew 26:59-66 (NIV84)***

59 The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. 60 But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.

Finally two came forward 61 and declared, “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ ”

62 Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” 63 But Jesus remained silent.

The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

64 “Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. 66 What do you think?”

“He is worthy of death,” they answered.

***2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV84)***

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

***Romans 10:9-15 (NIV84)***

9 That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

***Romans 10:15b (NIV84)***

…As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

***Isaiah 52:7 (NIV84)***

7 How beautiful on the mountains

are the feet of those who bring good news,

who proclaim peace,

who bring good tidings,

who proclaim salvation,

who say to Zion,

“Your God reigns!”