

Reasoning and Evidence from Scripture

Introduction.

- A. The Bible doesn't automatically interpret itself.
 - 1. We must read it and interpret it according to our understanding.
 - a. Dig into the Scriptures to see what they mean.
 - b. The Bereans in Acts 17:11.
 - 2. This involves two types of reasoning.
- B. Types of reasoning.
 - 1. Inductive: specifics to the general (Lk. 7:18-23).
 - 2. Deductive: the general to the specific (Ex. 20:3).
- C. Some Scripture twisting comes from flawed reasoning.

I. Inductive reasoning.

- A. Saying but not citing.
 - 1. What it is: The Bible says... without saying where, then drawing a conclusion.
 - 2. Examples.
 - a. Ginsburgh.
 - b. Von Daniken.
 - c. Humphreys.
- B. Selective citing.
 - 1. What it is: Choosing only verses that support one's view, while ignoring verses that don't.
 - 2. Example: Jehovah's Witness denial of the Trinity.
 - a. John 1:1, Col. 1:15-20.
 - b. Ignoring Mt. 28:19, Jn. 8:58, 1 Cor. 6:11 & 12:4-5, etc. and the attributing of OT characteristics of God to Jesus.
- C. Inadequate evidence.
 - 1. What it is: not giving enough evidence for the claim.
 - 2. Examples.
 - a. Von Daniken.
 - b. JW view of blood transfusion.
- D. Solution.
 - 1. Chapter and verse, please.
 - 2. Are all the relevant data there?
 - 3. Is it adequate?
 - 4. What does traditional Christianity say about this?

II. Deductive reasoning.

A. Confused definition.

1. What it is: deduction from an inaccurate definition.
2. Examples.
 - a. Anti-death penalty from Ex. 20:13
 - b. Cayce: resurrection and born again = reincarnation.
 - c. Mary Baker Eddy on the Trinity.
 - d. JW definition of the Holy Spirit.

B. Ignoring alternative explanations.

1. What it is: ruling out other explanations of the texts.
2. Examples.
 - a. Von Daniken: astronauts.
 - b. Mormon missionary: could any man have written this book?

C. The obvious fallacy.

1. What it is: considering a case closed when it's not.
2. Examples.
 - a. Von Daniken: *Undoubtedly* the Ark was electrically charged.
 - b. JW: The Word of Truth tells us *very clearly*....
 - c. Mormon: The two sticks of Ezekiel *plainly*....

D. Virtue by association.

1. What it is: associating one's views with the "good guys" of Scripture.
2. Examples.
 - a. Mary Baker Eddy using Is. 9:6 and herself.
 - b. Rick Chapman: *How to Choose a Guru*.
 - c. Mormons: Smith and Cowdrey visited by Peter, James, and John.
 - d. Muscaro: the Upanishads.
 - e. Yogi: various holy books teaching what the Bible teaches.
 - f. Mormons placing passages from their book alongside the Bible.

III. Responses.

- A. Do not defer to the experts: follow the Berean example.
- B. Understand the flow of Scripture and the pattern of its ideas. If something doesn't match, research it.
- C. Obvious isn't always obvious.
- D. Recognize that virtue (or guilt) by association is a fallacy.
- E. Above all, KNOW the Scripture.