

Rom. 14:19
So then let us
follow after
things which
make for
peace, and
things
whereby we
may edify one
another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

Anna Surface 2010

John 8:32 And
ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

August
11
2019

COME NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER

by Jim Stauffer

“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.” (Isaiah 1:18)

In this chapter the Lord reasons with Israel through the prophet about their sin and how He would respond to their having strayed from His commandment. He details what their problem is and then tells them how He plans to test them to purify their hearts and minds.

The very logical point of this discourse by Isaiah is to teach them sin is a deviation from God that can be detected simply by an understanding our minds can grant.

There seems to be in our day and age, though this passage indicates it did not begin with us, a rationale that environmental situations such as poor upbringing and bad choices in life take control of us and lead us to do things reprehensible in the eyes of God. While there is no doubt the friends we make in life can lead us away from God (**1 Cor. 15:33**), Isaiah says we have the wherewithal to either avoid that completely or to recognize it and change it by looking logically at the situation and making a wise judgment.

The Hebrew word for reason here means just that, to decide or judge. Therefore, Isaiah is saying, let us look at this thing logically and we will see where we are in relation to what God has required of us.

Micah tells us here that the gist of our relationship with God is just that, *“He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).*

Let us take a look at this verse briefly in view of Isaiah’s demand from God that we reason about man’s obedience to His message.

God has clearly, according to Micah the prophet told us what is good. He told Israel and has also told us today by way of His covenantal relationship what is good. That is, He has given us commands that lead us

to live and conduct ourselves in a way that is good. When the rich young ruler came to Jesus and called Him good, Jesus immediately referred him to the Law which was good. He told him he could understand God’s law and therefore do good by obeying it (**Mat. 19**).

After spending a large portion of **Romans 3** explaining how man has failed God by transgressing His law, Paul then explains the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary was to bring righteousness to man as God once again asserts His demand for justice/righteousness in the lives of His people (**Rom. 3:24-26**). He explains it so we can *understand* what God demands and obey it.

Paul tells us earlier in this epistle to the Romans the kindness of God leads us to repentance, that is a change from practicing our choices and turning to obedience to His will (**Rom. 2:4**). He then tells us later such a conversion on our part leads us to become like God in such kindness to others, *“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;” (Colossians 3:12).* Surely God expects us to *understand* He is teaching us to be different than the world. We are to return kindness and good for evil (**Romans 12:21**).

Humility is the key to the necessary submission of our hearts and minds to God as He demands for us to be His children (**Mat. 16:24-26; 1 John 3:1**). We are reminded often that exalting ourselves, thinking more highly of ourselves than we should leads to condemnation while humbly bowing to Him will eventually lead to our exaltation (**Rom. 12:3; Jas. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6**). This is not a difficult principle for us to *understand*.

It is then not an unreasonable request for God to reach out to us when we fail to meet His standards with the phrase, *Come now, and let us reason together.*

Argument or Assertion

By Doy Moyer

Controversy entails the use of argument. Real argument. Unfortunately, some confuse *argument* with *assertion*. What do I mean by this?

An argument, in its proper sense, is a reason or reasons given for or against a particular proposition. It is the *because* that follows any assertion. Using argumentation involves reasoning, making inferences, and applying these to the proposition under discussion. In this sense, an *argument* has no negative connotations. Through solid argumentation, we can grow in mind and understanding.

Some confuse the above with “argument” in the negative sense, where one just asserts something to be true without offering solid reasons. In this sense one just “argues” with another by disagreeing or objecting by assertion. There are no solid reasons attached to the assertions. There is no logical flow. The argument is merely expressing an opinion that differs, yet provides no real reasons why it is right other than the say-so of the individual. “This is true.” Why? Because it is. I said it. End of discussion.

An argument, in the proper sense, is a reasonable and honorable endeavor. However, an “argument” in the negative sense is worthless. Assertions without reason are, at best, frustrating, when engaging in discussion.

A proper argument is stated in a way that leads to a valid conclusion. For example, here is deductive argument:

All that is material had a beginning.

The earth is material.

Therefore,

The earth had a beginning.

This is valid (where validity has to do with the form of the argument and the conclusion is inevitable).

Assuming that words are defined appropriately, if the propositions are true and the form is valid, then we have a sound argument. If one were to object to this, he would have to do so on the basis of challenging either the validity of the form or the truth of one of the propositions. Since the form is valid, then the only real challenge to this would have to be dealing with the truth of the propositions.

A follow up in a discussion like this would be to consider the question, “Why should we accept the proposition x?” The answer would be to provide reasons for why that proposition is true.

On the other hand, an “argument,” negatively, is often just an interjection of objections and assertions. These can vary from “You’re wrong” to “You’re stupid.” One might say, “Here are some reasons why you should accept that Proposition X is true.” One interjects at this point, “Anyone who believes that proposition is just dumb.” The discussion is over. Assertion

overpowered argument, and nothing good was accomplished.

Kids are often heard arguing this way. How many times do we hear kids yelling at each other, “Yes!” “No!” “Yes!” “No!” “I’m right; you’re wrong.” There is no sense or reason. It is just a yelling match to see who can hold out the longest. I suppose this is to be expected among the immature. It is not acceptable when trying to have a serious discussion.

In the face of a controversial issue, some just state an objection, yet they provide no real argumentation. They may call into question the intelligence of the other person. They may indicate that anyone who can’t see it their way is not very intelligent. Yet they still offer no logical reason or argumentation for the position they hold. They may even be nice about their objection, stating that they just think this is the way it is, but they still make no real argument for or against the position. They state a position as if it were a fact, but give no evidence or reason to back it up. Any evidence to the contrary of their position is simply written off with no thought of actually considering it.

Are we not seeing this more and more in the age of social media? Logical argumentation is a difficult process. It requires critical thinking. It requires challenging our own thinking and attempting to formulate a position in a logical and concise manner. It is much easier just to object and leave it at that, feeling frustrated because the other person is just being stubborn. Often a discussion is abandoned with a simple, “we’ll just have to agree to disagree,” even before the hard work of providing real argumentation has begun. We want to state our objections, but we feel we don’t have time to develop the position we hold.

Due to the frustrations, people will say something to the effect that they don’t want to “argue” about this or that. They are using “argue” in the negative sense. They have made their assertions, and even though they have not really attempted to formulate a logical argument, they are ready to quit discussing. The discussion ends with no one improving for the better. It’s not good enough just to say, “I believe x,” when we are trying to convince and convert. “I believe x *because...*” is how a more reasonable and responsible discussion will ensue. “I disagree” by itself is irrelevant. “I disagree *because...*” at least opens the door for further consideration.

Christians will find that real argumentation is to be part of their defense of Christ. Being disciples involves being critical thinkers. Defending Christ or making an argument for a particular biblical position requires reasoning, inferences, definition, stating positions in well-defined manner. The subjects we deal with, whether with unbelievers or among one another are often controversial and they are bound to spark disagreement. If we are going to take positions, then we

need to do so in an honorable way. We should learn to employ the proper use of “argument.” We need to learn how to avoid fallacies (I’m not saying I do so perfectly—far from it—but shall we not educate ourselves in this process and strive to learn how to better engage discussion?). It is not good enough just to state an objection or make an assertion. “Because I said so” just won’t work.

Engage the mind. Let’s learn to formulate sound arguments and logically state reasons for or against a particular position with clarity and honor. If all participants in a discussion will do this, it will be much more pleasant and challenging than just getting into an “argument.” We stand to learn more and draw closer to the Lord by better understanding His truth.

Don’t Make This Mistake in Logic!

It’s a shame to have to say this, but, to many “professing believers” logic is a dirty word. It’s shameful because one of the finest practitioners of the skillful use of logic is the Apostle Paul himself. One cannot read **Romans chapter seven** where he discusses his difficulties with living in the flesh or **1 Corinthians 15** discussing the necessity of believing in the Resurrection of Christ from the grave without being impressed with the fact that proper use of logic is the Christian’s friend!

I made a new acquaintance recently whose approach to unbelievers began with, “I know I can’t prove to you that God exists, but....” and my response to him was simply that, if that were the case then God lied in **Romans 1:20** when He said the gentiles were “*without excuse*” for their idolatry and abandoning the only true God. The words “*without excuse*” signify the presence of adequate and inescapable evidence for God’s existence. So what was my friend’s mistake?

When Galileo popularized Copernicus’ theorem that the Sun, not the Earth, was the center of the solar system and that the earth moved around the Sun, he was called in for heresy. We have no more evidence today than he did then, but today everyone believes Copernicus and Galileo were right. What changed? Well, while Galileo provided proof for the Copernicus’ theorem, he could not MAKE THEM BELIEVE IT! The problem was not the knowledge but with the human heart, the will to go where the evidence leads. We have the same problem with unbelievers today. We can, and have, demonstrated the falsity of evolution and provided proof for the existence of God, but that is not the same thing as making them believe it against their will. We can’t do that! (TBC)

Cleveland Reddinger

RELIGIOUS PRETENSIONS

“Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek Me daily, And delight to know My ways, As a nation that did righteousness, And did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinances of justice; They take delight in approaching God” (Isaiah 58:1-2).

Isaiah’s work as a prophet involved calling the people of God back to true righteousness. A reading of Isaiah reveals that the children of Israel were in trouble spiritually. Consequently, they were being taken into captivity by a foreign power. What was their trouble? Interestingly, Israel was full of themselves. Isaiah condemned their hypocrisy, pride, and false piety. Yes, it is true that Israel was careful about exhibiting the correct forms of worship; their rituals were carefully observed. Outwardly, it appeared that all was well with their lives and with their relationship to Jehovah. But all was not well with Israel and their neighbors. God’s people had disregarded the need to show love for their neighbors and concern for the needy. We might ask: “Well, weren’t their neighbors really ungodly people—people who were in opposition to God?” That is true. But Israel was even neglecting their duties toward each other! That is why Isaiah castigated them so severely. His alarm was loud and clear. Your values are wrong! You are asleep spiritually. Your excuses will be removed.

In the eyes of Israel, they had been doing what God wanted to them to do. Day after day they expressed concern about God’s will. They delighted in seeking direction from God for their lives. How could they live just lives, they asked? Their practices, their wishes, their worship was correct (**Isaiah 58:4-5**). Because their outward expressions of service were well-known, then surely God would be pleased with them. Or, so they thought.

“Why have we fasted, they say, and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice? In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers” (Isaiah 58:3). Fasting was authorized only on one day—the day of atonement (**Leviticus 16**). In time, on their own initiative, Israel had added other days of fasting—four other times to remember the destruction of Jerusalem (**read Zechariah 7-8**). What fasts is Isaiah talking about? It is clear that Israel wanted God to pay attention to the fact that they were *fasting*. They added this “religious activity” to what God had commanded of them. Yes, God saw times when they denied themselves food and water. Surely, God would be proud to have them as His people!

God did not view Israel’s displays of piety the same way Israel viewed their actions. “We have fasted; look at us!” God says: *Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.*” The question is why did God say this?

Randy Harshbarger

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

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We offer Correspondence Courses

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BIBLE CLASSES - SUNDAY -

STUDY OF AUTHORITY - TEACHER
BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY - 1&2 TIMOTHY

JIM STAUFFER - TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING

SERMON:

INFALLIBLE PROOFS
BY BILL MILLER



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10