

Defending the Faith – Class 3 Tactics Part 2

Review 3 previous tactics

- Columbo 1 – What do you mean by that?
- Columbo 2 – How did you come to that conclusion?
- Columbo 3 – Shaping the Argument

Go over homework questions from last week

A. Suicidal Views

These are views that self destruct. “If you give them enough rope, they’ll hang themselves with it” argument

Oxymoronical arguments

- T-shirt front says: The statement on the back of this shirt is false – back says statement on the front of this shirt is true

- All you have to do is point out the problem and you’re done

- Like an atheist telling you God isn’t real because God told him

If it’s true, then it’s false - when a statement made can’t live up to it’s own validity.

- We come across these arguments all the time

- o There is no truth – is this statement true?
- o There are no absolutes – is this an absolute?
- o No one can know any truth about religion – how did you come to that truth about religion?
- o You can’t know anything for sure – are you sure about that?
- o Talking about God is meaningless – what does this statement about God mean?
- o You can only know the truth through experience – What experience taught you that truth?
- o Never take anyone’s advice on that issue – why should I take your advice on that?

Suicide tactic works because it uses a rule of logic you are already familiar with – **law of noncontradiction**.

Says statement A is the case then statement A is not the case:

- I used to believe in reincarnation, but that was another life

- Nobody goes there anymore. It’s too crowded.

- I wish I had an answer to that because I’m tired of answering the question.

- I never, never, repeat a word. Never.

- This page intentionally left blank.

Your final step is the only step: Point out the contradiction.

- When someone says “People should never impose their views on others,” ask if those are his values (they are). Next ask why he’s imposing his view on others.

Someone defeat this argument: God doesn’t take sides.

- What do you think God’s opinion is? (what do you mean by that?)

o That he doesn’t take sides, I told you.

- So you’re saying in our argument, God would side with you?

o Yes.

- Then you’re saying God would SIDE with you? Then I guess God takes sides after all.

This statement makes the mistake called **practical suicide**. The argument can’t stand on it’s own.

B. Sibling Rivalry

Offers two opposing ideas that don’t go together when looked at, like arguing siblings

- Question: Is Ghandi in Heaven

o Hinduism says that good and evil are relative – Christianity does not, hence the argument makes no sense

- I’m just doing what comes naturally

o Homosexuality and adoption – if homosexuality is normal then adopting children would be unnatural as the function between two homosexuals cannot produce a child

- God cannot exist because there is evil in the world

o There cannot be evil unless there is a moral basis for what is good

- If there is no God, then morality is simply what a person's opinion is
- So for there to be evil there would have to be a God, hence the argument does not make sense

The goal of the suicide tactics is to address the flaw in the argument and show that the claim cannot stand because of its inconsistency.

Taking the roof off

Close to suicide tactic, this one just shows that the claim made – followed to its ultimate conclusion is ridiculous or absurd.

- To do this, first you have to take the claim and go for a ride in it

○ Often at work, Erik makes a claim, and for a moment I assume what he says is completely true – then follow to its logical end. If it makes no sense, then pointing it out takes the roof off.

- In the outside world, this tactic is called 'reductio'.

○ Argument – (Christian side) I don't think same sex marriages should be sanctioned by the government

- (opponent) well, people said the same thing about interracial marriages. They were wrong then, and you are wrong now. Same sex marriage is right.

○ (you) so you think the government should approve of same sex marriages

- (opponent) of course.

○ But people said the government should approve of slavery too. They were wrong then, and you are wrong now. Same sex marriage is wrong.

Jesus used this very tactic on the Pharisees once – **Matthew 12:24-26, 28**

- Claim: Jesus drove out the demons by the power of Satan

- Taking roof off: if Satan is driving out Satan, he is destroying his own kingdom which is absurd

- Therefore: Jesus' power must not come from Satan, but from God who opposes Satan.

Those who oppose Jesus are not opposing Satan, but God.

Challenge – I should be able to sleep with men if I want because it's natural for me to do so.

- Take the roof off: If gay-bashing comes naturally for someone, it must be okay. This is obviously wrong.

- Therefore just because an impulse is natural does not mean it is moral Homosexuality cannot be justified this way.

D. Steam Roller

Steamroller is something that can happen to you and has to be dealt with.

- More aggressive form of criticism that comes your way and when you deal with overwhelming personalities – they may not even overwhelm you with facts or arguments

- See this on the news stations all the time

○ Keep interrupting – no word in edgewise

○ They pile on challenge after challenge every time they hear something they don't agree with

○ Always keeps you on the defensive

- Must be dealt with but you have to use your tactics and your head or get sucked in

○ Remember when someone gets mad, it's over.

- 3 tips to overcoming steamrollers

○ 1. Stop him – put forth a nice request to speak and finish your point before going on to the next question or topic – deal with the onslaught one question at a time

· Ask him/her to give you adequate time – they give you something, you'll give them a time to respond or ask questions afterwards – mutual understanding that each will get their turn

○ 2. Shame him – if they keep interrupting, have to get a little more aggressive in your request for space.

- “I’d love to respond to your questions, but you keep breaking in to my response. Could I have a few moments without being cut off to develop my point? Then you can tell me what you think. Is that all right with you? – wait for a response
- Whatever their response, then hopefully that shows what kind of argument they are interested in having. – to you and to others listening.
- Try to stay pleasant and gracious – but stay in control – diffuse the hostility if you can
 - 3. Leave him – When all else fails, let it go. Let them have the satisfaction of having the last word, then shake the dust off your feet and move on. Wisdom dictates not wasting any more time on the fool.
- Not everyone deserves an answer – cuz not everyone is looking for one.
- An ambassador is always ready to give an answer or response but even Jesus said “do not throw your pearls to swine or what? – they will trample them under their feet and turn and tear you to pieces.” Jesus didn’t answer Pilate and said to the Pharisees “neither will I tell you by whose authority I’m doing these things”.

E. Rhodes Scholar

- Often called the Fallacy of Expert Witness
 - People are believed because of their position rather than on the facts
 - The pope may have an opinion on whether you are good at your job, but he doesn’t know enough about your trade to make those types of judgments or claims.
- Sometimes all you have to do is ask them where they got their ‘facts’. Many times it is simply their opinions.
- You must maintain that what they believe is not as important as WHY they believe. Credentials are not enough. You need reasons.

F. Bedtime Story

- Often response to Rhodes Scholar is the Bedtime Story
- Where someone invents a ‘hypothetical’ or a fancy story instead of producing real or logical arguments.
- Best rebuttal is “That’s a great story, but you didn’t answer the question...”
- The story often is a distraction from the original point.

G. Just the facts

When in an argument, the more specifics you know, the less likely your competition will have a rebuttal, because it shows you have a better knowledge on the subject than they do.

- Why Abortions Are Performed (memorize)

- The overwhelming majority of all abortions, (95%), are done as a means of birth control.
- Only 1% are performed because of rape or incest;
- 1% because of fetal abnormalities;
- 3% due to the mother’s health problems.
- Source: Central Illinois Right To Life

Number of abortions per year: Approximately 2.2 Million in usa 46 million worldwide

Number of abortions per day: Approximately 6,027 in usa 126,000 worldwide
(Planned Parenthood and CDC numbers for daily and yearly stats)

Quick tips to engaging your targets

1. Be ready – make the most of every opportunity
2. Keep it simple – don't have to bring them to the foot of the cross to make an impact
3. Avoid kingdom jargon – may come across as hokey or lose the interest of your hearer
4. Focus on the truths of Christianity, not just its personal benefits
5. Give reasons for your arguments
6. Stay Calm – don't lose your cool or get mad or on the defensive
7. If they want to go, let them leave – don't force the argument or conversation
8. Don't let them leave empty handed – give them a way to follow up on what you challenged them with or a church invitation.