

## **II. Faith, Reason, Logic and Truth**

There are many factors that affect how and what people believe about things. Philosophers like Aristotle determined that the primary factors that help shape peoples’ philosophies are faith, reason and logic.

**Faith** according to Hebrews 11:1 is “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” In other words, faith is a solid conviction and a divine, God-given assurance of a future or present reality. There are a four types or personalities of faith:

- emotional faith – a feeling of assurance or trust in someone or something
- intellectual faith – belief; stronger and more stable than emotional faith
- volitional faith – an act of the will; a faithfulness that manifests itself in behavior
- heart faith – comes from the very soul; center of one’s identity, mind and will

**Reason** is the intellectual capacity by which conclusions are drawn by premises – one statement preceding another. According to Aristotle, human reason manifests itself in what he called the three acts of the mind: 1) understanding, 2) judging and 3) reasoning. These three acts are expressed in 1) terms, 2) propositions and 3) arguments.

Terms are either clear (intelligible and unambiguous) or unclear. Propositions are either true (is what it says it is) or untrue. And arguments are either valid (conclusions follow logically from the premises) or invalid. Therefore, to disagree with an argument, it must be shown that either the terms were ambiguous (unclear), the propositions (statements) were untrue, or the conclusion was drawn illogically. Otherwise, to disagree is to say “you have actually proved your conclusion to be true, but I refuse to accept it. I am so stubborn that I insist on living in falsehood instead of the truth.”

As we said in the first lesson, we are in a war. In this war, we defend **reason** as well as **faith**, for reason is the friend of truth. In defending faith, we take back territory of the mind that is rightfully God’s. Ultimately the process, as defined by Justin Martyr, is:

- A man seeks truth, unaided by reason, and is disappointed
- It is offered to him by faith, and he accepts
- And, having accepted it, finds that it satisfies his reason

**Logic** is the branch of philosophy that involves the understanding of the laws that govern our thought process. Logic is the order that reason discovers in thinking about thinking. There are three principles of logic:

- The first principle of logic is the law of non-contradiction. *A logical statement cannot contradict itself.* “There is no such thing as absolute statements” “Never say never”
- The second principle is the law of identity, reality and existence. *Something is what it is regardless if we acknowledge it or not – and when we do, it remains what we say it is – A is A.* Gravity exists whether Isaac Newton had discovered it or not. To deny that gravity exists does not change the fact that it does.
- And the third principle of logic is the law of the excluded middle (gray area). *Something cannot be both A and not-A.* God cannot both exist and not exist.

Christian Apologetics  
“...always be prepared to give a defense”

Therefore, logic by itself cannot help us find truth, but will only help us detect error.

**Truth** is an expression or statement that correctly and accurately corresponds to its object. We believe in absolute Truth. The world does not. Its two primary enemies are pluralism and relativism. Relativism claims that truth can be different for different people based on their perspective, environment, opinions and feelings. Pluralism states that all truths are true, even if they oppose each other – in other words, two completely opposite premises can still be true. We need to distinguish between *truth* and *taste*. Two people can have two different opinions if they are a matter of taste, not truth. (e.g. someone can be both tall and short, but someone cannot be both 5’10” and 7’3”)

And relativism is encouraged, even required, in our institutions of higher education in the name of “openness” and “tolerance”. And yet to claim that the Christian viewpoint of absolute truth is wrong, violates the very foundation upon which relativism and pluralism are built.

**Truth** by its very nature is:

- Noncontradictory – it does not violate the basic laws of logic
- Absolute – it does not depend upon or is relative to any time, place or condition
- Discovered – it exists independently of our minds; we do not create it
- Inescapable – to deny its existence is to affirm it
- Unchanging – it is the standard by which truth claims are measured

The scriptures tells us that God’s Word is truth (John 17:17), Christ is truth (John 14:6) and the Holy Spirit is truth (John 14:16-17). Truth is purifying (I Peter 1:22), sanctifying (John 17:17, 19) and part of our spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:14).

The elements above make up the components of the lens through which people look at things. This intellectual lens through which people view reality and the color of that lens makes up their **worldview**. It is a strong determining factor that contributes to what they believe about the world. The next step in preparing a strong apologetic argument is understanding what a worldview is, how many there are, why they are important and what questions are precipitated by a worldview.