

Symptoms of Retardation¹

Vincent Cheung

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PO Box 15662, Boston, MA 02215, USA

<http://www.vincentcheung.com>

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¹ The following is based on written correspondence on the subject.

I have shown in my writings that the only way to obtain reliable information about reality is by valid deduction from revelation. This position is opposed by many people, including those who claim to be Christians, but so far no intelligent argument has been offered against it. Although it is indeed tiresome to answer one lame objection after another, after some time my increasing disappointment with the intellectual incompetence of contemporary Christian scholarship has mutated into a sustained alarm regarding what appears to be a peculiar manifestation of mental retardation in these believers. When pitted against unbelievers, what they call apologetics really amounts to a struggle among idiots, that is, to see who can remain afloat longer than the opposing side while they are both drowning in a sea of stupid.

There is one critic who has expended an unusual amount of effort to criticize me, and his arguments are lauded by my other critics. One of his objections suggest that, although I insist on a system deduced from biblical revelation, I myself do not obtain some of my conclusions from this procedure. As an example, he cites one place in my writings where I appeal to Genesis 8:22 as a basis for the uniformity of nature. He points out that this is insufficient to establish the uniformity of nature, since to mention only one problem, it is impossible to deduce the uniformity of all of nature from this verse. Therefore, it would appear that I do not follow the deductive method that I advocate, and that although I reject intuition and induction as means to reliable information about reality, I in fact depend on these methods.

For the following reasons, this criticism is deviously deceptive, and demonstrates this person's incompetence:

First, I do not claim that this verse alone establishes an all-inclusive principle regarding the uniformity of nature. And I do not say that we cannot use the rest of the Bible. If the critic agrees that the uniformity of nature is deducible from Scripture, only that I fail to use all the verses needed, then the objection does not damage my philosophy, but only points out that I must list more than that single verse from the Bible to establish the conclusion. If the critic disagrees that the uniformity of nature is deducible from Scripture, then he needs to show this by examining the rest of the Bible, deduce all that he can about the uniformity of nature, and then show that the deduction does not result in an all-inclusive principle of the uniformity of nature.

If his purpose is not to argue whether the uniformity of nature is deducible from Scripture, but that I have failed to use the philosophical method that I espouse, then again I will point that I never said we cannot use the rest of the Bible. Since the context is clear that I mention the uniformity of nature merely as an illustration, only a fool would require me to list every verse in the Bible where something about the uniformity of nature could be deduced. And again, I do not claim that the one verse alone establishes an all-inclusive principle of the uniformity of nature.

Moreover, even if he is correct that I fail to use my own method to assert a claim, this in itself does not refute my philosophy or my method, but only exposes a shortcoming in my practice. That is, perhaps my philosophy and my method are better than my practice, but this does not refute the philosophy or the method. Only a fool would suppose that this is an adequate refutation, and only a fraud would advertise this refutation to unsuspecting readers. But I would not even concede that my philosophy is better than my practice, since as I have shown above, the critic's charge against my practice is based on his inaptitude in reading comprehension and on an incomplete list of verses where a complete list is not required.

Second, I do not even believe in the uniformity of nature as such. I deny that there are such things as natural laws in the first place; rather, I affirm that God constantly and directly controls nature, and that he does so in regular ways from which he usually does not deviate. Therefore, nature might appear to be uniform, but it is not nature that is regular, but the way that God acts that is regular.

If we use the term at all, "natural laws" are at best descriptions of the way that God usually acts in the manner that he controls his creation. Since this is a prominent aspect of my system of theology and philosophy, if this critic has been careful in reading and competent in understanding, he would know this. But since he writes as if he does not know this, we must assume that he is either a fool or a fraud, or both.

If I do not even affirm the uniformity of nature, I certainly would not claim that Genesis 8:22 alone establishes an all-inclusive principle of the uniformity of nature. In the context of my work, the topic is raised only to illustrate the failure of science, since it requires the uniformity of nature but fails to establish it through the methods that it endorses, such as sensation, induction, and experimentation.

Third, unless the critic offers an alternative to my philosophy that establishes the uniformity of nature, then he must either abandon the uniformity of nature, or his objection would backfire against his own worldview to highlight the failure of his own philosophy. In fact, since I do not even affirm the uniformity of nature, his objection calls attention to the failure of every system of thought that affirms the uniformity of nature but that cannot establish it, perhaps including his own, whereas it leaves my own position untouched.

His other criticisms against me suffer similar problems, sometimes much worse. Since he presents so many of them, and with an air of sophistication, it would appear to unthinking and impressionable readers that he makes a fair and detailed critique of my philosophy, when in fact he avoids a head-on confrontation with the main thrusts of my system and method.

In addition, since no argument can stand in a vacuum, but since every belief and every action presupposes some basic principles of thought, each refutation that the critic presents commits him to adhere to a defensible worldview of his own. That is, it is

impossible to launch a refutation against someone without standing on one's own assumptions.

To illustrate, among other things, to present a logical refutation presupposes logical rules of thought. How does his worldview accommodate them? If he cannot defend the place of logic in his system, then on what basis does he attempt to refute mine? Or, if his worldview demands a place for the reliability of sensation, then he needs to defend the reliability of sensation. That is, if his worldview assumes that he must depend on his sensation of sight to read my writings so as to criticize them, then unless he can demonstrate the reliability of his sensations, his own worldview would prevent him from criticizing my writings. In fact, the requirement for him to defend the reliability of his sensations logically precedes the possibility of an attempt to refute me. Unless he can satisfy this requirement imposed upon him by his own worldview, every argument against me is intellectual suicide, and every refutation against me is a proclamation of his mental disability.

And this is true of every person who attempts to criticize or refute me without a defensible worldview of his own. If I were to waive this logical requirement and engage him in discussion before he has established the reliability of his sensations (that is, if his own worldview requires it, or if his worldview does not require it, he must present an alternate epistemology that he can defend against my criticisms), it would be by a pure act of pity on my part, since logically speaking, he has no place to stand on as he attempts a refutation.

Then, there is another critic who has invented an analogy to represent my teaching on epistemology. The analogy seems to indicate that my epistemology must be mistaken, in that it is impossible. I was told that this analogy forms a seemingly insurmountable argument against my position. But when I examined it, right away I noticed that the critic forgot to make a place for God in the analogy, although God occupies the only central and necessary place in my entire teaching on epistemology.²

As I recall this critic, whose lack of intelligence and competence is typical of all my other critics, I find myself shaking my head. Some people have criticized me for my reluctance to answer every little objection against me, no matter how small or stupid. There is a reason for this reluctance. It is because every time that I have been compelled, usually by popular demand, to examine a refutation against my writings, I experience this sinking feeling that accompanies my sorrow at the absence of any understanding or intelligence in the objection.

Of course, I am confident of my position and I would prefer to remain immune to refutation, but there is a tremendous pressure to be discouraged by the fact that even Christian critics can be so stupid. And the clamor that surrounds these objections that are supposed to devastate my position only serves to punctuate the subsequent anticlimactic letdown when I finally read them. Nevertheless, as my hope rests not in man, I encourage myself in the Lord, looking to him for intellectual challenge and stimulation. I have

² See Vincent Cheung, "Blinded by Atheism" in *Blasphemy and Mystery*.

repeatedly shown that many of the objections against me from professing believers are often directly or indirectly applicable against God and Scripture. In reality, their complaint is not against me but against the Lord. They disagree with him, but they dare not say this in public or to even admit this to themselves. So they attack the one who makes bold claims for the Master.

Although men may disappoint, the Lord never does. He is always intelligent, stimulating, and invincible in his wisdom. Thus one can always look to the Lord Jesus for intellectual satisfaction. However, my concern persists for the critics and those who find their sophistry persuasive. Their lack of intelligence and competence is a symptom of mental sickness, and unless a cure is administered, they can never become an effective and faithful spiritual army against unbelief.

My prescription is for them to temporarily suspend their engagement with philosophical arguments or apologetic methodology, and to return to a regular study of basic biblical doctrines, basic biblical commentaries, and basic logical reasoning. I am convinced that anyone who can advance or support such dismal objections against me are not prepared for the "solid food" of the Christian faith. Anything beyond the most elementary instructions in theology, philosophy, and apologetics is too far from their present ability to grasp and apply.

The Lord has helped me understand two things from all these mindless attempts at refuting my writings:

First, they illustrate for me the deep damage that sin has inflicted on the mind of man. Some of the critics are non-Christians, but some claim to be Christians, although sometimes their incompetence and behavior cast doubt on such a claim. If at least some of these critics are genuine Christians – and I indeed hold to this assumption – then their unintelligent refutations also illustrate for me that this mental damage inflicted by sin remains evident in the regenerate. Paul calls us to the renewing of the mind, and the Christians who are slow to do so would inevitably exhibit the kind of foolishness that we would hope to find only in unbelievers.

Second, they illustrate to me the need to construct and advance a program of basic biblical education, the kind that I suggest above. As a responsible adult, you do not enter into a kickboxing death match with an infant girl, even if she thinks that she is a kung-fu master who can slaughter you in a ring. Of course you *can* fight her, and kill her, but that is not what she needs from you. No, first you teach her to tie her shoelaces, to use a fork, to ride a bicycle, or whatever is appropriate for her infantile mind and body. In fact, you would advise her to stop kickboxing, and to stop thinking that she can, because she might injure herself in the process.

Likewise, my recommendation is for my critics and their supporters to sit under a program of basic education. I make this recommendation not because they criticize me – that in itself is not the problem – but because of the confusion and incompetence that they exhibit in their arguments. In fact, I have noticed the same intellectual incompetence – a

strange mental blockage or retardation – in their other writings, including their objections against views that I also consider false. They are failures at critiquing any view. At stake is the intellectual and spiritual welfare of the church. Nevertheless, although the critics display obvious symptoms of mental retardation in their writings, if they would repent and turn their hearts to Jesus Christ, there remains hope and healing for them through the renewing of their minds.