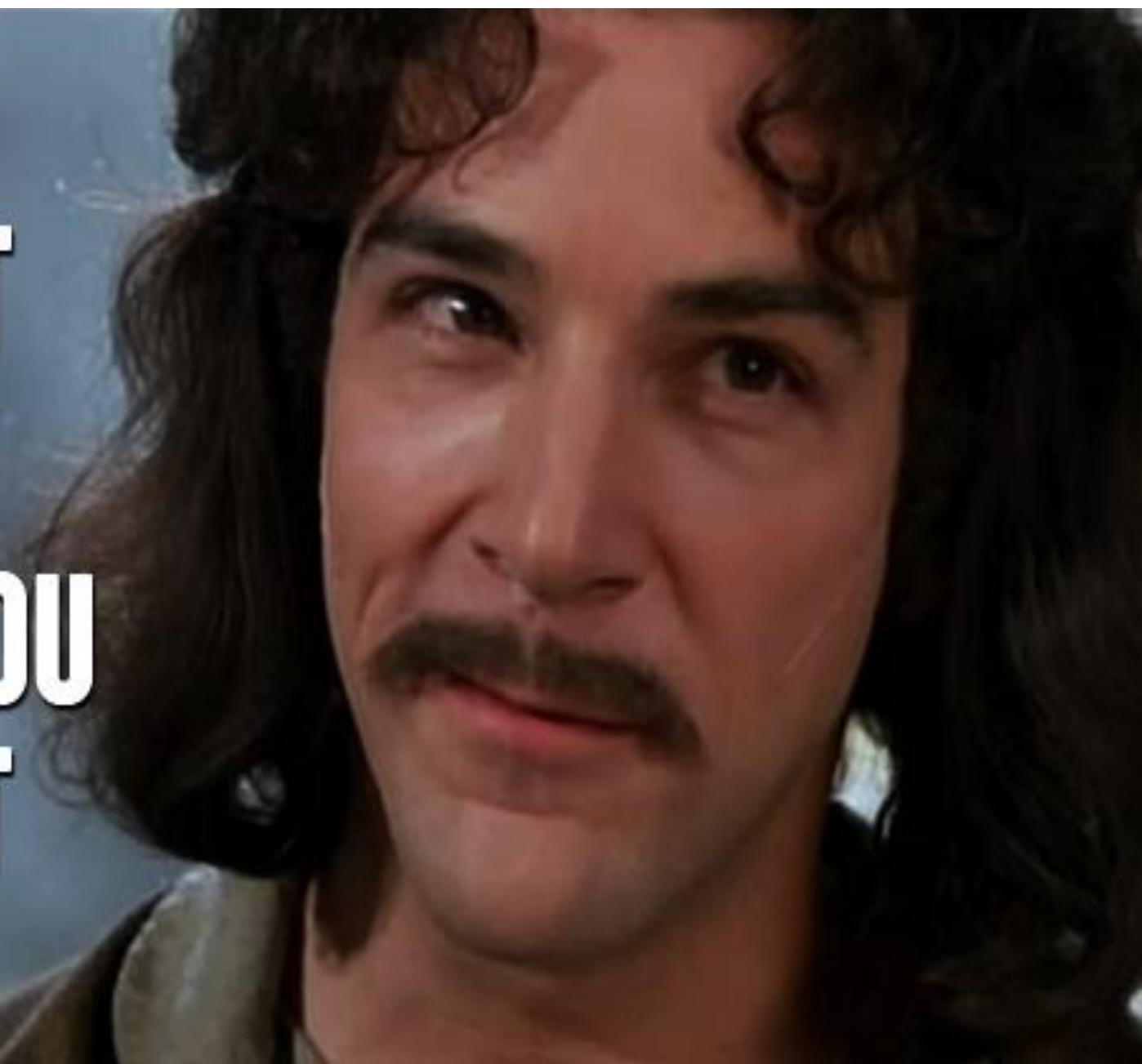


“If you wish to converse with me, define your terms.” - Voltaire

I DO NOT
THINK IT
MEANS
WHAT YOU
THINK IT
MEANS.



I Corinthians 13:11 - When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man I put childish ways behind me.

Ravi Zacharias - the three levels of philosophical argument:

Level 1 - Abstract, Objective Principles (Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, etc.)

Level 2 - Illustrations and Examples

Level 3 - Application, or “the Kitchen Table Talk”

Paul demonstrates this technique in his dealings
with Felix. Acts 24: 10-26

Acts 24:10-16

10 When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: "I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense. 11 You can easily verify that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. 12 My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. 13 And they cannot prove to you the charges they are now making against me. 14 However, I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, 15 and I have the same hope in God as these men themselves have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. 16 So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

Acts 24:17-21

17 After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings. 18 I was ceremonially clean when they found me in the temple courts doing this. There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance. 19 But there are some Jews from the province of Asia, who ought to be here before you and bring charges if they have anything against me. 20 Or these who are here should state what crime they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin - 21 unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: "It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today."

Felix decides to hold his judgement, but Paul's respectful tone and unassailable logic win him further audiences with the Procurator.

Acts 24:24-26

24 Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 As Paul talked about righteousness, self-control and the judgement to come, Felix was afraid and said, “That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.” 26 At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him.

Verse 25 describes all three levels:

Level 1 - Righteousness (objective principle)

Level 2 - Self-Control (example of righteousness in practice)

Level 3 - the Coming Judgement (the application both to Paul as a believer, and Felix as an unbeliever)

Romans 6:16-20

16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey - whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18

You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. 19 I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

According to Paul, righteousness stands in contrast to sin and death.

II Corinthians 6:14

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.
For what do righteousness and wickedness have
in common? Or what fellowship can light have
with darkness?

Again, righteousness is defined here by its
opposition to wickedness. This helps, but is still
not the objective definition we need.

Ephesians 4:22-24

22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Righteousness = Godliness

God is a known factor

He is unchanging

We can know His characteristics by looking to the
Bible

Now we have an objective understanding of
Righteousness

Level 1 Objective Principle: Righteousness

This is the foundation for the rest of Paul's argument.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Level 2 Illustration: Self-Control

We have an objective definition of Righteousness.
The fruits of the Spirit of God fit right into that
definition.

Paul's Level 1 Principle is Righteousness

His Level 2 Illustration is Self-Control

Now Paul will apply the Principle

Romans 2:5-11

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgement will be revealed. 6 God will repay each person according to what they have done. 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. 9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; 10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 11 For God does not show favoritism.

Are you ready to put off childish ways?

Are you ready to live your life with an unchanging,
objective principle as your guide?

Do you want the glory, honor, peace and
immortality promised to those who “persist in
doing good?”