

Tactics – The Last Class – Review

1. In our interactions with others pertaining to life and eternity, our goal is to use diplomacy as an ambassador of Christ. We need to have knowledge, use wisdom and display character in our interactions with others. We can use questions to advance our conversation and show interest in what the other person thinks. Remember that we only have to get to bat, not hit a home run. Always try to leave a stone in their shoe (something that they can't forget).
2. Tactics that we use to help us to maneuver through and stay in control of the conversation begin with the Columbo tactics. We first need to understand what the other person is telling us. Therefore, our first Columbo question is – “What do you mean by that”? It helps to keep us in the driver's seat of the conversation.
3. How did you come to that conclusion? Many people just repeat talking points that they have heard. Our second Columbo question doesn't let your challenger off the hook. Make him give you reasons why he believes the way he does. It shifts the burden of proof to him. If the person is a professor in the classroom, make her give reasons for her views. Don't fall for the “professor's ploy” of making you prove why she is wrong. The person who makes the statement bears the burden of proof for that statement. Make her give reasons for her views. If you ever find that you can't answer the questions in your conversations, tell your challenger that you need time to think about it. Get off the hot seat.
4. The Columbo III tactic is using questions to lead a person to some new insight. You ask leading questions with a specific goal in mind. You can also narrate the debate to bring your challenger back on topic. In order to become better in each encounter, you need to anticipate what you might say the next time. Reflect on your last conversation. Practice, preferably with another.
5. The suicide tactic takes advantage of the tendency of many views to self-destruct. They are self-refuting statements. Formal Suicide includes views that violate the Law of Non-Contradiction. An example is: There is no truth. Your question: “Is that a true statement”? Sometimes the statement is more subtle such as: Science is the only way to find truth. Your question: “What scientific evidence proves this statement true?”
6. Some points of view fail to work in real life applications. It's not just a logical problem, it's a practical one. They commit practical suicide. Example: “You shouldn't force your morality on others”. Notice the phrase, “you shouldn't”. He's forcing his morality on you.
7. Sibling Rivalry is when a person raises two objections that are at odds with each other. With Infanticide, someone's view is built on a prior concept that disqualifies the view itself.
8. Taking the roof off deals with points of view that lead to unusual, even irrational results. The absurdity of some worldviews can be easily pointed out by taking them to their ultimate conclusion. This is called *reductio ad absurdum* or taking the argument to its absurd conclusion. You can do this by taking the other person's argument and repeating it back to him. You take the argument for a test drive to see where it goes.
9. Someone that you talk to may refer to what an expert (scholar) says about a topic. Even though the expert may have great knowledge about some topics, his reasoning may be faulty on the

particular topic you are discussing. This is where the Rhodes Scholar tactic comes into play. Don't let your opponent make the assertions of the expert without asking how the expert came to his conclusions (Columbo II). Always ask for reasons why.

10. Use the steam roller tactic to defend against a person who keeps interrupting you so that you can't finish a point or respond. There are three steps that you can use to regain control of or stop the conversation.
 - A. Stop him - Be polite. Ask if it's alright to continue to explain your point of view.
 - B. Shame him - Tell him that you want to respond but, he keeps interrupting.
 - C. Leave him - If he won't stop, politely leave.
11. Just the facts ma'am is the tactic that uses the knowledge we said that a good ambassador needs. When people attack Christianity, they don't always have their facts right. Present the real facts to your opponent. If you're not sure of the facts, you may even have to do research to get the correct answer. A more precise answer will carry more weight with that person and those who may be listening.
12. Abortion tactics - Simplify the issue by asking the question: "what is the nature of the unborn?" Then, trot out the toddler.
13. Homosexual marriage tactics - Simplify the issue with the question, "what is marriage?" The answer is Matthew 19:3-6A. What if you are asked, "How does gay marriage hurt you?" You could answer that it turns marriage away from the raising of children to the desires of adults. It puts all aspects of marriage at risk. It decreases liberties.
14. Evolution - Again, as always, ask questions. "What is the evidence for evolution?" "Is it evidence for macroevolution or microevolution?" "How did life begin?"
15. Common attacks on Christianity include:
 - A. "How could a good God condemn a non-believer to Hell? (Possible questions in response are: "What is good?", "what is fair?", "What is Heaven and what is Hell?", "Have you read Romans Chapter 1?")
 - B. There is too much evil in the world for there to be a God as described in the Bible. (Possible responses are: "What is evil?", "What is too much evil?")
 - C. Jesus can't be the only way to Heaven. (Possible questions: "Who is God?", "Is there such a thing as absolute truth?").
16. Fallacies:
 - A. Genetic – Belief that an argument is refuted by discovering the psychological reason why someone believes it.
 - B. Strawman - To attack a weak or exaggerated version of your opponent's position, then declare your opponent to be wrong.
 - C. Equivocation - Changing the meaning of a word in mid-argument.
 - D. Ad Hominem - Attacking the person rather than the argument.
 - E. Circular reasoning (aka "begging the question) - Assumes the conclusion in the premise.
 - F. Red Herring - Anything that distracts from the argument.

- G. Slippery Slope - Neither automatically proves or disproves the argument. Two types: Fallacy (Not a necessary conclusion) or Argument (The logic of one argument slips to the logic of another).
 - H. False Cause – Causal connection assumed with no proof.
17. When you talk to someone about doctrines within the church, be an ambassador of Christ as well. Be familiar with the truth so that you will know false doctrine. Study the Bible! Ask questions.
 18. Always remember that asking questions invites the person you are talking with to engage in conversation. It shows that you are interested in what they think. It also allows you to stay in control of the conversation. If you are trying to make a point, put it in the form of a question! (1 Peter 3:15)
 19. We would like to recommend the book Tactics by Gregory Koukl. We used much information from his book in the development of this course. (str.org)