

Chapter 8: THE EVIDENTIAL FAITH PATH: “Truth Is What Logic and Evidence Point To”

82. True or false: Zen ‘koans’ make total sense, and I totally understand Zen Buddhism.

83. What question did Ravi Z ask that settled argument with the “Eastern logic” professor?

a. _____

84. “Logic really is inescapable. Both sides of a contradiction cannot be true— on **either** side of the ocean. The intellectual conundrums of the Zen teacher or Eastern guru may confound some folks with their mix of cleverness and nonsense, but they certainly do not _____ logic. In reality, these riddles were logically constructed to appear as if they defeat rational thinking. Why? The claim, as we saw above, is that this is to help people _____ of logic and move toward some kind of esoteric experience called _____.”

85. Eastern “logic” tells us to forget about any definitions of anything? Why do the very definitions of words depend on the logical mind understanding the meaning of those words?

a. _____

86. William Lane Craig: “Logic and facts are the keys to showing soundly that a _____ is true. Since a proposition that is logically _____ is necessarily false and so cannot be the _____ of a sound argument, and since a proposition validly inferred from factually true _____ ought to be regarded as factually true, one may generalize these notions to say that a _____ ought to be regarded as true only if it is _____ and fits all the facts known in our experience.”

87. What argument did Rene Descartes and the “Continental rationalists” use to conclude that the only real knowledge is limited to the logical and mathematical?

a. _____

88. David Hume and the “empiricists”, however, argued that, “the _____ mind neither knows nor proves anything without engaging in the real world. ... that _____ investigation wins over rational _____.”
89. After about a century, Immanuel Kant posited that we need both, that “Real knowledge comes when the _____, _____ power of the mind is applied to the real-world _____ gained through the _____. These **two elements** are fundamental, undeniable realities.”
90. Extra credit: Was Kant’s argument logical? If so, and considering that Kant would go on to pronounce that God is dead, was that pronouncement logical?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
91. So, that leaves us with Kant’s argument that we must consider **both** the _____ power of the mind and the importance of _____ experience, i.e. tangible evidence. *(You won’t find this quoted verbatim in the book.)*
92. *(This one might cause a mild headache.)* Why does Mittelberg say that “Logic is therefore much more readily used to ... show things to be untrue”?
- a. _____

93. Illogic to the extreme: “The Baha’i faith earns the dubious honor of being most rationally _____ of all the religions. ... Having logical contradictions at the heart of a religion’s teachings is not just a problem—it is _____ ...”
94. Although logic (mind power, reasoning) is essential to evidential thinking, tangible _____ evidence is also required.
95. The “sensory experience aspect ... wields the weapons usually described as facts or evidence— [and] can be used to _____ a faith claim and show it to be _____ (where it touches on facts related to the tangible world, ...)

96. How did DNA testing support or refute the claims of the Book of Mormon (i.e. the claim that North American Indians were of Middle Eastern descent)?

a. _____

97. But, why does the public's trust of scientific 'truth' probably go beyond what is warranted?

a. _____

98. We have to rely heavily on historic evidence, but the value of such evidence is often questioned and devalued. Mittelberg says, "What we need is not the _____ of historical knowledge but extra _____ and care in investigating the facts that undergird any historical record."

99. Why do we need to be so careful in deciding what history we accept as reliable?

a. _____

100. Along with history, archaeology is also vital to the evidential faith path. How does the history of findings regarding the Hittites support (or not support) the idea that THE ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF ABSENCE?

a. _____

101. Now, for the major point of this chapter: "So just as we rely on the Evidential approach in ordinary, everyday life, it can also be extremely valuable in the realm of religious understanding. For a relatively _____ group of people, this is the primary path they've used in figuring out what to believe. For the rest of us, this approach provides us with the keys we need to _____ the spiritual conclusions we've arrived at through one or more of the other _____ —..."

102. Why do you think he says that only a small group of people choose their faith primarily for evidential reasons?
- a. _____

103. Why is the evidential faith path important for the rest of us?
- a. _____

104. To understand one of the greatest obstacles to objective investigation of evidence, Mittelberg points out that, “somewhere along the way, some leading thinkers in our society have moved away from the general use and application of _____ knowledge and toward an _____ that determines in advance what kinds of conclusions will be deemed acceptable within the _____ community. In effect, these people hijacked _____ — which historically had been dominated by people of faith— and transformed it into something else, often referred to as _____, “the belief that the _____ method is the only method for _____ truth.”
105. What is the doctrine behind scientism, and its narrower expression, logical positivism?
- a. Only naturalistic factors (as opposed to _____ ones) will be considered as possible causes or explanations, _____ of the strength of the _____ presented. ... In effect, it is an attempt to decide by _____ that science will be, from this point forward, atheistic. By definition, God and all things _____ are ruled out, in _____, from even being _____.
106. It’s no wonder that *Harper’s* magazine titled its review of Dawkins’s latest book as “_____ Scientism: The _____ of Richard Dawkins.”
107. Mittelberg questions whether scientism is scientific. “Isn’t it the pinnacle of closed-mindedness to say, “Well, even if _____ there could be a real _____ in the universe that I don’t understand and can’t see, I’m resolutely _____ to consider the _____ of His being involved in the world”? It’s like covering your eyes and then complaining that you can’t see!

108. Varghese, the one-time champion of “logical positivism” who later announced its logical failure as a philosophy, offered the following assessment of the “new atheists”: “How do these works and authors fit into the larger philosophical discussion of God of the last several decades? The answer is they _____. ... they _____ to engage the real issues involved in the question of God’s _____ ... they show no awareness of the _____ and _____ that led to the rise and fall of logical positivism.”
109. “The good news is that we don’t have to go along with them. Instead, we can support the growing number of philosophers, scientists, and educators who remain open to all of the possible _____ to the biggest and most profound _____ of our day, including the _____ of a divine Creator.”
110. One of the most influential atheists of the 20th century, Antony Flew, said, “My life has been guided by the principle of Plato’s Socrates: _____ the evidence, wherever it _____.” After a lifetime of pursuing the evidence, however, he embraced the view that there is a God—an _____ designer—behind the _____ of the universe.
111. “Apparently neither Einstein nor Flew, two of the brightest minds of the past century, had any sense that good science or the Evidential approach was limited to the _____ of the _____. And neither should we. Rather, we should embrace and apply the powerful tools of _____ and _____ ... employing them in our efforts to find or confirm a faith that squares with the facts.
112. In conclusion, there are two elements or components of the evidential faith path: Logic (reasoning) and facts (tangible evidence). Do you agree that we are **commanded** to employ both in choosing our world view? Why or why not?
- a. _____

