

Sunday, April 29, 2007

### More Piqued Pike

Pike is back for more:

First, [Dawson posed a question](#) that he claimed “would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics.”

This is sheer sloppiness. I did not say that my *question* would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics. Rather I wrote:

If it can be determined that an "omniscient" consciousness would not possess its knowledge in the form of concepts, this would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics which seeks to contrive aspects of man's cognitive experience as evidence for an omniscient being whose thinking serves as the model for man's mental abilities.

The next logical thing to do is to proceed to the task of showing that an omniscient being would not have its knowledge in conceptual form. In other words, my first task is to determine whether or not an omniscient consciousness would possess its knowledge in conceptual form. That's what my paper was about. The part about the ruinous implications for presuppositionalism can wait for another day, since I'm rolling out a thesis in stages. What's interesting is not only has Pike gone on the record affirming my argument's conclusion ([he wrote](#): "God's knowledge--what He Himself knows--is not conceptual"), he has nowhere brought a significant challenge to the rationale I propose for that conclusion. In fact, it does not appear that he has even grasped it. At this rate, he probably never will.

Pike:

Everything that Dawson put forth in his argument was done in order to demonstrate this “ruinous” presuppositional position.

Actually, what I presented in my paper was a rationale for supposing that an omniscient being, if there were such a thing, would not have its knowledge in conceptual form. Pike attempted to interact with this, and readers who've been paying attention have seen the results. He's been all over the place, trying to find his way on the loose sands of the Christian worldview. It's been quite a spectacle.

Pike:

Let me make this clear. Dawson's reason for writing anything at all was, as he himself stated, because:

If it can be determined that an "omniscient" consciousness would not possess its knowledge in the form of concepts, this would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics which seeks to contrive aspects of man's cognitive experience as evidence for an omniscient being whose thinking serves as the model for man's mental abilities.

Pike dishes up more carelessness. Even Pike quotes me saying that the *determination* that an omniscient consciousness would not possess its knowledge in the form of concepts would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics, not the mere *question* itself as he stated above. Now, just to make sure, Peter does understand that presuppositionalism - at least the Vantillian sort - claims that man's thinking is "analogous" to the Christian god's thinking, does he not? He's already come out of the closet in agreement with my conclusion that an omniscient being would not possess its knowledge in the form of concepts. So since he insists that this conclusion could not possibly have ruinous implications for presuppositionalism, perhaps he could explain how the conceptual can be at all analogous to the non-conceptual in the context of the points which my argument uses to derive its conclusion. Don't be surprised to see him dish up some piping hot *ad hoc*.

Pike states:

[I responded](#) to Dawson, pointing out that nothing of what he said was in fact ruinous to the presuppositional

position.

[Wishing](#) doesn't make it so. And Pike's repeated failure to understand what's been presented and demonstrable lack of any firm direction one way or another are hardly a recipe for much credibility for whatever position he wants to claim for himself on these matters from day to day. I suspect we have another specimen which has that nasty habit [we've seen in presuppositionalists before](#): the failure to integrate.

Pike wrote:

My response to Dawson showed that his argument did not apply to the presuppositionalist position in the least, was based on faulty presuppositions of his own, and did not accurately reflect Christian understanding of the concepts of omniscience, etc.

Actually, none of this is true. Pike hasn't even come close to touching my argument. He's been stranded in confusion on the peripheries all along. He still is.

As for a "Christian understanding" of concepts as such, I would really like to see what passes for this among thinkers like Pike. The bible doesn't seem to be of much help here.

Pike:

Dawson then [claimed that I misunderstood](#) his post and had responded to something he didn't even write about.

This was the case in several instances, as I demonstrated in [my first response to Pike](#). In his signature haste-makes-waste fashion, Pike assumed I was arguing that an omniscient being wouldn't know what concepts are, while my argument nowhere attempted to derive such a conclusion. When confronted with this fact, Pike hung his head in defeat, referring to himself as "a victim" for whom his readers are supposed to feel sorry. Then he tried to put the blame on me. Amazing! I cannot make this up!

Pike:

Now [Dawson has posted another response](#). This one is basically ad hominem attacks against me. Hey, when it's all you've got in your arsenal...

Now Pike accuses me of "ad hominem attacks." An ad hominem occurs when an arguer's opponent attacks the arguer personally with verbal abuse rather than attacking the argument which the arguer has presented. In the case of my recent exchange with Peter Pike, this is impossible for me to have done, for he has not presented any arguments for me to attack in the first place. If readers go back and review my first two responses to Pike ([here](#) and [here](#)), they will see that a lot of Pike's mistakes had to be corrected. This is still going on to this day in fact. Now Pike confuses sorely needed correction with "ad hominem attacks." If he's so thin-skinned, why did he choose to engage the matter in the first place?

Pike:

Anyway, if we cut through the abuse, we find that Dawson has merely shifted the goalposts and forgotten the original point of his first post, as he typically does. Dawson's original point was that if God's knowledge was not held in the form of concepts, then this would be ruinous to the presuppositionalist position. Now, however, he claims that all his post was meant to show is that God's knowledge could not be held in the form of concepts. He's not even pretending to try to demonstrate how this provides "ruinous implications" for presuppositionalists anymore. Instead, he's hoping to distract everyone with a song and dance routine in the hopes that no one will realize that he's no longer defending his original premise.

Pike must be one of the sorest losers I've come across on the internet in years. Well, maybe the second sorest loser. I write a paper which seeks to provide a basis for the conclusion that an omniscient being would not have its knowledge in the form of concepts, and Pike is all upset because I didn't spend more time explaining how this has ruinous implications for presuppositionalism. Pike is harboring on this so that everyone forgets how his initial response to my paper was a dismal failure due to his own carelessness and lack of understanding of what I have argued. Pike needs to learn to be a little more patient. If he thinks my conclusion does not have ruinous implications for presuppositionalism, then why's he so worried about it? Since this is just the first stage of a much broader argument which I have yet to publish, it could very well be the case that Pike is speaking out of turn in a premature rush to judgment. Does he stop to consider that there's more to come? No, he's heard enough and

wants to reject something even before it's had its hearing. Clearly he's afraid of something. Even the first stage of my argument is already doing its damage. I've lit a match, and Pike is worried that his house is going to burn down. He thinks he can prevent this by huffing and puffing.

Pike:

But that has NOT always been Dawson's argument. Remember, Dawson's argument was: "If it can be determined that an 'omniscient' consciousness would not possess its knowledge in the form of concepts, this would have ruinous implications for the presuppositionalist approach to Christian apologetics..."

This is most tiresome. Even Pike should be able to see that after I made this statement, I went on to show why an omniscient being would not have its knowledge in the form of concepts. That was the intention of my paper. Hence the title: [Would an Omniscient Mind Have Knowledge in Conceptual Form?](#)

Pike:

Dawson, ...you've only succeeded in making those mistakes.

This is just too funny! Pike has no arguments, so he resorts to schoolyard contradiction. For Pike, debate quickly becomes a pissing match between "Did too!" and "Did not!" In the heat of the skirmish, however, Pike proves himself oblivious to the fact that he's simply making matters worse for himself.

Here's a snapshot of what has happened so far:

**Me:** Here's an argument showing why an omniscient being wouldn't have its knowledge in the form of concepts.

**Pike:** Of course God knows what concepts are! He's omniscient after all!

**Me:** No, you're missing the point of what I presented. I did not argue that your god (assuming it's omniscient) would not know what concepts are. I'm saying that it wouldn't have that knowledge in the form of concepts.

**Pike:** Of course God can use concepts! Like when He communicates to man!

**Me:** Again, you're completely missing the topic of my argument. This has nothing to do with whether or not an omniscient being could use concepts to communicate with other beings. It has to do with the *form in which it retains the knowledge it allegedly has*.

**Pike:** That's right, God's knowledge is not conceptual.

**Me:** See, you agree with my conclusion after all. What's the problem?

**Pike:** Well, you said this has ruinous implications for presuppositionalism! And it's obvious that it doesn't, since God can still use concepts!

**Me:** That your god can "use" concepts, such as when it communicates to other minds for instance, is not sufficient to show that the conclusion that your god would not have its knowledge in the form of concepts is not ruinous to presuppositionalism.

**Pike:** Well, wait! Here's an analogy to show that an omniscient being could have its knowledge in the form of concepts!

**Me:** Well, I thought that you already said your god's knowledge is not conceptual and that you were confident that this would not have ruinous implications for presuppositionalism. Now what's the problem?

**Pike:** Allow me to demonstrate the lunacy of your argument. It would be as if I said: "The sky is blue, therefore atheism is false." You respond: "I agree the sky is blue. So what?" I then respond: "See! Dawson agrees with me that the sky is blue! That's all my argument ever said. He's such an idiot for arguing against me when he didn't even understand what I was arguing in the first place!"

**Me:** I'm not sure I understand what you're trying to say here. Earlier you affirmed that your god's knowledge is

not conceptual. But at times you seem to be saying otherwise. Which is it? Is your god's knowledge conceptual or not, and what's the rationale for your answer?

**Pike:** Your argument obviously does not cause ruinous implications for presuppositionalism!

**Me:** And above you said that's because your god can still "use" concepts. But this only tells me that you've already wandered off-track again.

**Pike:** Well now you're shifting goal-posts!

**Me:** No, actually I'm simply trying to help you understand what I was arguing in the first place since you still don't seem to have grasped it.

**Pike:** But it's not ruinous to presuppositionalism!

**Me:** Well, for one thing, it's premature of you to assert this, for you've not seen how my conclusion will factor into a larger argument. Also, you've not shown that it is not ruinous to presuppositionalism, you've simply asserted - without argument - that it isn't. Meanwhile, you initially came out in agreement with my argument's conclusion even though you've nowhere presented an alternative rationale for doing so. What's more, you nowhere tell us what your god's knowledge is if it is *not* conceptual. You've had plenty of opportunity to speak on this, but you've fallen gravely silent on this topic. Why is that?

**Pike:** Well, you're doing just what you claimed I did - you're responding to things I didn't write.

**Me:** That's true, you did not write Isaiah 55:9 and I Corinthians 2:11, you merely recited them. And I did respond to them, that's true. I can do that you know.

**Pike:** And I pointed out that these verses simply mean that we can't assume that God's knowledge takes the same form that our knowledge takes.

**Me:** I don't assume your god has any knowledge to begin with, if you want to know the truth. Imaginary beings aren't real and can't have any knowledge to begin with. But what's curious is how you seem unwilling to reaffirm your initial agreement with my argument's conclusion. Why is that?

**Pike:** This is BS! (flustered, leaving in a huff)

I cannot make this up!

by Dawson Bethrick

Labels: [Peter Pike](#)

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