

Monday, August 27, 2012

### STB: Two Years and Counting

It has now been two years to the day since I posted [my refutation of the argument](#) showcased on Sye Ten Bruggencate's website "[proof that god exists dot org](#)." While the argument on his site remains unchanged, Bruggencate has so far failed to vindicate the defense of his worldview which he has presented to the world against my critique.

Of the several points that I raise against Bruggencate's case, I think the most damning include

- a) the lack of any rational justification on Bruggencate's part for categorizing the examples he cites (e.g., truth, the laws of logic, universality, mathematics, science, moral principles, etc.) as "immaterial" (as opposed to *conceptual* phenomena), and
- b) Bruggencate's association of his god with "abstract entities" such as truth, the laws of logic, mathematics, science and other conceptual operations only suggests that his god is something *psychological* rather than an independently existing entity.

All of this serves to confirm my view, for which I have supplied ample argumentation (see for instance [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) that the Christian god which Bruggencate claims to worship is nothing more than an imaginary construct on the part of its believers. Moreover, by failing to recognize the conceptual nature of phenomena like the laws of logic and moral principles, and insisting that they have some fundamental relationship to the Christian god, only indicates that Bruggencate has no *conceptual* understanding of these things and arbitrarily prefers a "storybook" view of logic, universality, mathematics, etc. After all, Christianity has no account for concepts, and the absence of any philosophical understanding of the nature and formation of concepts is the gaping void in which Christian apologetics takes refuge.

Bruggencate's reaction to my criticisms of his argument has typically consisted of a two-fold evasion: on the one hand, he complains that my criticisms are too lengthy for him to spend any time examining; on the other, he seems to think that the best way to engage my criticisms is to have some kind of live debate. Neither approach addresses any of my criticisms, and neither approach suggests that he is either capable of or serious about defending his worldview against my critique in an intellectual manner. In fact, it only suggests that he is unwilling even to familiarize himself with the substance of my criticisms, which are available for him to examine in written form at his leisure. I suspect that engaging my criticisms would force Bruggencate to confront the fact that his worldview provides no account for concepts, and since he likely recognizes this, albeit probably only on an implicit level of awareness, he likely senses that this is not an area of discussion for which he would be very well prepared. The failing here is not due to lack of education, but rather a heritage of subscribing to a worldview which is inherently anti-conceptual in nature.

Bruggencate's excuses for ignoring my criticism ring hollow and lack the stamina to go the distance. After all, two years is certainly long enough for Bruggencate to read a paper that's less than ten pages in length (the [PDF version of my critique](#) is only *nine* pages long - something that would be "longwinded" only for high school students taking the bonehead path). Bruggencate does know how to read, does he not? Meanwhile, he champions apologists like Cornelius Van Til, Greg Bahnsen and John Frame, who have published writings far exceeding the length of my one blog entry. Indeed, one advantage that my blog entry criticizing his argument has over the argument he presents on his website, is that one can copy and paste it to a word processing file and print it out (or simply print the [PDF version](#)), as opposed to having to click through a series of pages on a website which never allow you to see the entire argument on one shot (and that's only assuming there is an argument there to begin with, which in Bruggencate's case is certainly debatable).

Christian apologists are constantly asserting, often without any argument whatsoever, that non-believing philosophies cannot provide an "account for" their own intellectual underpinnings without "borrowing" from the Christian worldview, thereby undermining their non-believing stance. But when this is challenged, and

internally consistent accounts are presented on behalf of a non-Christian worldview's intellectual underpinnings, those same apologists either remain entirely silent, or make excuses for not engaging the matter any further (e.g., "it's too long for me to read!"). This exposes the only thing that the apologists have had all along - a highfalutin bluff intended to intimidate rather than inform.

Every encounter I've had personally with Sye Ten Bruggencate, and every encounter I've witnessed between him and some non-Christian, calls to mind the image of a schoolyard bully picking on some unsuspecting child and trying to provoke a playground fight, bellowing the words "After school, punk!" as though it were an impressive show of force in itself. Given the failings of the Christian worldview, this is really the only thing someone like Sye Ten Bruggencate has to rely on. This is why years of Sye's silence will likely just keep rolling on while my refutation stands unchallenged.

by Dawson Bethrick

Labels: [Concepts](#), [Knowledge](#), [Logic](#), [Morality](#), [Presuppositional Gimmickry](#), [rationality](#), [Universality](#)

*posted by Bahnsen Burner at [12:00 PM](#)*