

## Sunday, March 8, 2015—Tactics: Developing a Game Plan for Discussing the Word Rightly Divided—Introduction

Note: Gregory Koukl's book *Tactics: Developing a Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* was used as a guide for developing this message. It should not be assumed that I agree with or support everything Koukl believes.

### Why This Study?

- Last week we wrapped up our 30 part study on Right Division 101 that began last July 6. As the end of the study approached and I was contemplating where to go next, I heard about a situation that one of our saints encountered that gave me the idea for this study.
- Tell Sylvia's story.
- I know that Sylvia is not the only one to have encountered this type of situation. I have heard from others about having faced similar situations and circumstances.
- Upon hearing about what happened to Sylvia, I had the idea to spend a couple weeks (no more than 4) talking about how to engage in and maneuver through these types of situations when they arise. I shared my idea with the board and asked for your feedback. The overwhelming response was favorable.
- Over the next couple of weeks I want to try to give you some practical tactics for skillfully and tactfully negotiating these types of situations as well as provide you with some strategies for engaging people in conversation.

### What This Study is Not

- Throughout the course of this study I am not interested in giving you a list or series lists full of topics and verses for you to memorize and or use should certain issues come up. That is your job as an individual believer.
- Psalm 119:11
- I Peter 3:15—it is incumbent upon believers to be prepared to given an answer. The Greek word translated “answer” in this verse is the word *apologia* which means to give a verbal defense or a reasoned statement or argument.
  - Acts 22:1—“my defense”
  - Acts 25:16—“answer for himself”
- Philippians 1:7, 17—Paul was set, i.e., prepared for the defense of his gospel.

- I Corinthians 9:3
- Hebrew 5:13—*Webster's 1828 Dictionary* defines the English word “unskillful” as: “not skillful; wanting the knowledge and dexterity which are acquired by observation, use and experience; as an unskillful surgeon; an unskillful mechanic; an unskillful logician.”
- As your pastor I can help prepare you for the defense and confirmation of the gospel in that I discharge my responsible in teaching you the doctrine. However, it is incumbent upon the individual believer to develop their own “skill” in using God’s word. There is no substitute for experience.
- Use/explain the target illustration.
- I Thessalonians 2:13—the word of God believed and hidden in the heart of a saint will/does effectually work in the believer’s life.
  - Effectually—“With effect; efficaciously; in a manner to produce the intended effect; thoroughly.” (*Webster's 1828*)
  - Efficaciously—“Effectually; in such a manner as to produce the effect desired.” (*Webster's 1828*)
- You can have complete confidence that the word of God will be there for you and do its job when it is believed and acted upon by faith.

### What This Study Is

- II Corinthians 5:20—what this study is about is developing some tactics as an ambassador regardless your current skill level.
  - Ambassador (embassador)—“A minister of the highest rank employed by one prince or state, at the court of another, to manage the public concerns of his own prince or state, and representing the power and dignity of his sovereign. Ambassadors are ordinary, when they reside permanently at a foreign court; or extraordinary, when they are sent on a special occasion. They are also called ministers. Envoys are ministers employed on special occasions, and are of less dignity.” (*Webster's 1828*)
  - Diplomatic—“authorized by letters or credentials to transact business for a sovereign at a foreign court. Ministers at a court are denominated a diplomatic body. . . . Pertaining to ministers at a foreign court.” (*Webster's 1828*)
- **This study is primarily about teaching you some tactics for how to navigate in conversations so that you stay in control—in a good way—even though your current skills/knowledge maybe limited.**

- Successful ambassadorship/diplomacy requires three basic skills: 1) knowledge, 2) wisdom, and 3) character.
  - *Knowledge*—an ambassador must know God’s word rightly divided and what God is doing today in the dispensation of grace.
  - *Wisdom*—an accurately informed mind that has ability to make our message clear and persuasive. Understands the difference between tactical skill and brute force.
    - Colossians 1:9-11
  - *Character*—can make or break the mission. While the attitude of the one professing something does not impact its truthfulness; the attitude of the ambassador does impact how information is received in the mind of the hearer.
    - Philippians 1:9-10, 27
- **It is the second skill of tactical wisdom that I would like to focus on in this series of studies.**

### **Difference Between Strategy and Tactics**

- Strategy involves the big picture, the large scale operation, one’s positioning prior to engagement. This was the objective with Right Division 101, giving you a strategic grasp of God’s word.
- The strategic grasp of God’s word afforded through dispensational Bible study and rightly dividing the word of truth provides a strategic advance in two areas: 1) *offensive arguments*, i.e., it makes a positive case for how the Bible can be properly understood and why God’s word is reliable, and 2) *defensive arguments*, i.e., it answers challenges to the cohesiveness of the Christian message and the authority of the Bible.
- Although I am arguing for a diplomatic model as opposed to a military one, a military example will be helpful in distinguishing the difference between strategy and tactics.
- In WWII, the Allied forces had a strategic plan for gaining an foothold in Europe, “Operation Overlord,” the code-name for the Normandy invasion. D-Day (June 6, 1944) involved the simultaneous attack on five beaches—Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. The execution of the strategy was in the utilization of smaller groups of soldiers deploying their assets to gain an advance and establish a foothold.
- Tactics is literally “the art of arranging” or focusing on the immediate situation at hand. A clever commander can gain the advantage over a larger force who possess superior strength or numbers through deft tactical maneuvering.

- Tactics can help you because they offer techniques of maneuvering in what otherwise might be difficult conversations. They guide you in arranging your own resources in an artful way. They suggest approaches that anyone can use to be more persuasive, in part because they help you be **more reasonable and thoughtful—instead of just emotional.**
- Tactics are not manipulative tricks or slick ruses. They are not designed to embarrass other people or force them to submit to the truth (A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.). They are not meant to belittle or humiliate those with whom you disagree as a means to gaining greater reward at the JSC or higher position in eternity.
- Tactics are designed to allow you to stay in the driver’s seat in a given conversation and help you navigate the minefields and gain a footing or an advantage.
- **My goal is to teach you how to find clever ways to exploit someone’s bad thinking for the purpose of guiding them to the truth while remaining gracious and charitable at the same time. Our aim ought to be to manage and not manipulate.**
  - Make sure it’s your **ideas** that offend and not **you**, that your **beliefs** cause the dispute and not your **behavior**.

### **Start Small**

- Instead of trying to turn every encounter into a full presentation of your position, just aim to put a stone in someone’s shoe. Try to give the person something to think about. Be content to plant a seed that will get the other person thinking?