Name: Kevin Lei

Speech Title: A Postcritical View on the Bible

Speech Purpose: To convince the audience to adopt the view that focusing on the “spirit” rather than the “letter” of the Bible allows one to engage with the Bible in a way that is both true to Christ and logically sound.

Speech Thesis: While many argue over the Bible's exact details, embracing an approach focused on the essence of Jesus' teachings allows us to make sense of seeming discrepancies, allowing us to engage with the Bible in a way that is both spiritually fulfilling and logically sound.

Introduction

1. Attention material:
2. Thesis: While many argue over the Bible's exact details, embracing an approach focused on the essence of Jesus' teachings allows us to make sense of seeming discrepancies, allowing us to engage with the Bible in a way that is both spiritually fulfilling and logically sound.
3. Preview: I will discuss the challenges of literal interpretation, explain the concept of a lens that focuses more on the spirit of Christianity rather than unimportant details, and demonstrate how this approach aligns with Jesus' teachings and maintains logical consistency.

*TRANSITION:*

Body

1. Interpreting the bible literally leads to a false dichotomy where it appears that you must choose between it being literally inerrant or entirely human; either you will have to do a lot of mental gymnastics to get things working, while still being plagued by doubt, or you can swing to the other end of the spectrum and think that the Bible is literally false and therefore untrustworthy.
   1. The bible has numerous internal inconsistencies, if taken literally, such as the creation story as told in Genesis and the numerous laws outlined in Leviticus.
      1. Genesis 1 goes in the order of first creating day and night, then water and sky, then land and vegetation, then sun and moon, then sea and sky creatures, then land animals and both Adam and Eve simultaneously, whereas Genesis 2 goes in the order of first creating land, then streams on land, then Adam, then the garden of Eden and vegetation, then all animals, then Eve.
      2. Leviticus 11 outlines some lifestyle guidelines for the Israelites, mentioning how animals that chew their cud or have split hooves are considered unclean and should not be eaten, as well as about twenty other specific animals that don’t exactly follow this rule.
   2. These two passages are obviously either incoherent or nonsensical in a grander narrative of love, and it wouldn’t make sense for a divinely inspired text to contain such blatant errors.
      1. rebuttal
      2. block

*TRANSITION: (Internal summary / Internal preview)*

* 1. When faced with seemingly incoherent and contradictory surface text, we prioritize the spiritual subtext over the details, acknowledging the Bible's narrator as intentionally unreliable—not deceptive but using mythic portrayals to convey spiritual truths.
     1. Examining Matthew's genealogy, considering the contemporary numerology, specifically the significance of doubling 7 and the number 3 to arrive at 42, suggests that the fourteen generations from Abraham to David, David to the Babylonian exile, and the exile to the Messiah are symbolic claims about Jesus's status rather than literal genealogical facts.
  2. This approach offers a middle ground for addressing controversial Biblical passages, allowing one to neither assert that God explicitly commanded morally problematic actions nor dismiss those sections as merely barbaric myths from an unenlightened culture.
     1. rebuttal
     2. block

*TRANSITION: (Internal summary / Internal preview)*

1. (Main Point 3 Thesis statement)

*TRANSITION: (Internal summary / Internal preview)*

Conclusion

Summary statement: (restate preview statement)

Concluding remarks: (tie back to introduction)

References *(in APA style)*