

OF LOGIC AND LORDSHIP: THE VALIDITY OF A CATEGORICAL SYLLOGISM SUPPORTING CHRIST'S DEITY

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In attempting to demonstrate the Biblical basis for Christ's deity to their students—in order to train them to properly respond to the objections of pseudo-Christian sects—theological professors often appeal to the classical passages (e.g. John 1:1). Although this can be extremely helpful, I believe that there is a very good argument (to my knowledge, unknown to cultists) based on the use of a valid categorical syllogism with its premises extracted from Biblical passages pertaining to Yahweh's role in creation.

I. A VALID CATEGORICAL SYLLOGISM

In logic there is a fallacy known as the fallacy of undistributed middle, which occurs when a term found in each premise of the syllogism is not properly distributed. For example:

All horses are four-legged creatures;
all cows are four-legged creatures;
therefore, all horses are cows.

In order for the middle term—"four-legged creatures"—to be properly distributed, it would have to be preceded in the first term by the phrase "all the":

All horses are all the four-legged creatures;
all cows are four-legged creatures;
therefore, all horses are cows.

By adjusting the argument with the universal phrase "all the," it has become valid (although it is unsound because the first premise is untrue). Hence for a categorical syllogism to be valid the middle term must be distributed—i.e., universalized by a term or phrase such as "all," "no," or "in every possible world"—in one of the premises.

II. THE BIBLICAL PASSAGES¹

Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer, he who formed you in the womb: I, myself, Yahweh, made all things, I *alone* spread out the heavens. When I gave the earth shape, did anyone help me? (Isa 44:24; italics mine).

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¹All Biblical quotations are taken from the *JB* translation.

Through him [Christ] all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him (John 1:3).

For in him [Christ] were created all things in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers—all things were created through him and for him (Col 1:6).

The first passage, Isa 44:24, states that Yahweh “alone” (a universal term that excludes every non-Yahweh) made all things. The second and third passages, John 1:3 and Col 1:16, both affirm that all things were made through Christ. Therefore if Yahweh alone made all things, and if all things were made through Christ, it logically follows that Christ is in fact Yahweh. The following valid categorical syllogism demonstrates this:

Yahweh is the only one who participated in creation;
 Christ is one who participated in creation;
 Therefore, Christ is Yahweh.

The middle term in the above argument—“one who participated in creation”—is properly distributed because it is preceded in the first premise by the universal term “only.” And it is from the use of this term “only” that this argument gets its strength. For if the Biblical text had not eliminated other participants in creation outside of Yahweh, the Christian would have been guilty of the fallacy of undistributed middle if he had tried to argue in the following way:

Yahweh is one who participated in creation;
 Christ is one who participated in creation;
 Therefore, Christ is Yahweh.

Although it could be argued that God’s very nature, apart from Isa 44:24 or other similar passages,² implies that he only has the ability to create, it is much stronger to argue from a text that explicitly enunciates the point.

²Isa 37:16 is another passage that states that Yahweh alone created the cosmos.