

Short Item: The limits of Science and Reason

- People assume things
- For example: people assume their senses are reliable
 - That what they-
See
Hear
Taste
Smell
Touch
Feel

Is actually what they are perceiving it to be.

- The same goes for your thoughts
 - People assume their memory is largely reliable, and what they remember happened last week actually did!
 - They assume that they can trust their thought process.
- It may well be that they can.
 - But without a reason to trust your mind and senses, you are actually trusting them purely arbitrarily.
- For example:
 - If you believe in the truth of the Bible, that God gave us the rules of reason, and made our bodies in order to perceive the world in a largely accurate way, then that's fine.
 - But if you don't you have a bit of a problem.
 - Why trust a blob of grey matter that came about by mindless processes?
- Not to mention, science and reason have serious limitations.
- You see they rely on two different types of reasoning.
 - One is called inductive reasoning
 - That's the type science uses.
 - You put forward a working hypothesis and you test it with observation
 - Say: 'All swans are white'
 - So you go and find 100 white swans, and you think you know that all swans are white.
 - But do you really? Your knowledge is only provisional.
 - As soon as you find a black swan all you thought you knew crumbles.
 - Ok, but there's another type of reasoning called deductive reasoning.
 - That's the type of reasoning that maths uses.
 - 2+2=4 - pure reason, not connected to physical things.
 - In theory that can give definite knowledge

- You can make formal arguments with this like this logical syllogism:
 - All cats are animals
 - My pet is a cat
 - Therefore my pet cat is an animal.

Correct ✓

- Fine. But here's the problem
 - Mathematical rules of logic cannot say anything about the world unless they have some data from the world - some facts to put into their logical 'sums'.
 - How do you find those?- by the first type of reasoning, which we found was only provisional knowledge!
- Therefore, surprisingly, it's really impossible to know things for sure by science.
 - That's not to say science is useless
 - But it needs a foundation, and has serious limits.
- There is another way to know things
 - By knowledge being revealed to us by Some Ultimate Authority.
 - If you haven't got that, you haven't got a foundation.
- The claim of Christianity is - that *it is* that foundation.
 - And it's a claim that has been put to the test over and over,
 - not least in the lives of those who bear witness to its life changing truth.
 - Many other ideologies and religions claim to change lives and show the truth, but none have the credentials that the Bible has:
 - Its history
 - And, crucially, its central Figure- Jesus Christ
- All else is trust in fallible human effort and ingenuity.
 - But that will not deal with our biggest need
 - People in need of redemption need a Redeemer
 - Only Christianity has that.