

Geometry: Conditionals (If...then...statements)

Procedure:

After introducing your students to the concept of Conditionals and the truth relationships between the conditional, its inverse, its converse, and its contrapositive apply them to some biblical concepts. Ex:

John 14:15 (KJV) – “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

First note that the keeping of the commandments is a natural result of loving God. That is – *If you love me, **then you will** keep my commandments.*

Now consider the converse – *If you keep my commandments, then you love me.* Since the original statement and converse do not have the same truth-value this statement is not automatically true. In fact, we readily recognize that this statement is not true – even though we often approach it this way.

Next consider the inverse – *If you do not love me, then you will not keep my commandments.* Once again, the inverse does not have the same truth-value as the original, so this statement is not automatically true and once again we recognize that indeed it is not.

Finally, consider the contrapositive, remembering that the contrapositive does have the same truth-value as the original. Notice how this gives you another way of considering this verse. *If you do not keep my commandments, then you do not love me.*

Application:

We often put the emphasis on the wrong part of the conditional. In this example we often focus on the keeping of the commandments to demonstrate our love. While this can be a demonstration of love it certainly does not cause love, whereas loving God does motivate us to keep His commands – it is natural. When we consider the logical truth as presented in the conditionals from Geometry, we can have a different perspective on God’s working in our lives.

Now, find other verses to which you can apply this exercise. Make it relevant to your class and issues they deal with. Remember this exercise at other times of the year as well.