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Faith Bible Church
<http://www.fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>
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Logic Lesson 7a
Terms: Universal, Particular, or Singular

1. In our study of logic we have noted the three acts of the mind. This is the framework for all of logic and thinking itself. To grasp this is to really move forward in thinking with regard to details of life or Bible doctrine and the plan of God.
 - a. 1st act of the mind is apprehension: the concept. The issue is whether the concept is clear or unclear.
 - b. 2nd act of the mind is judgment: the proposition. The issue is whether the proposition is true or false.
 - c. 3rd act of the mind is reasoning: the argument. The issue is whether the argument is valid or invalid.
2. In the first act of the mind we cover how terms are used (“terms” are the public “words” we use for the invisible personal concepts).
3. Terms are *universal, particular, or singular*.
 - a. A universal term designates all members of a class of things, as in “*all men are mortal.*” There are other words besides “all” that indicate that the subject of a proposition is being used universally, such as “*every,*” “*each,*” “*no,*” “*none,*” “*never,*” “*always.*”
 - b. A particular term designates some members of a class, as in “*some men are blind.*” Other words besides “some” indicate that it is particular, such as “*a few,*” “*few,*” “*not all,*” “*sometimes,*” “*occasionally,*” “*seldom.*”
 - c. A singular term designates only one member, as in “*Socrates is dead.*”
4. In ordinary language we often imply rather than state whether we are using a term universally or particularly. “Triangles have three sides” means “*All triangles have three sides*”; but “Vacations are disappointing” means “*Some vacations are disappointing.*”
5. When there is no word like “all” or “some” before the subject of a proposition to indicate whether the subject term is universal or particular, a good rule is to interpret it as universal if the predicate belongs to the subject by nature, i.e. by the nature of the subject, and to interpret it as particular if not. For example, “men” is universal in “men are mortal” because

mortality belongs to the essence or nature of man, but “men” is particular in “men are virtuous” because “virtuous” does not belong to the essence of man.

6. Exercise: Tell whether the subject of each of the following propositions is universal, particular, or singular.
- a. Only a few planes came back.
 - b. The whole air force failed.
 - c. Several planes crashed.
 - d. The pilot brought no parachute.
 - e. Nobody could have survived.
 - f. Every plane with two engines had trouble.
 - g. Without exception everyone experienced multiple troubles.
 - h. Some pilots did not pass any of their tests at all.
 - i. None of those planes was in the air for the last two weeks.
 - j. Man has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, Rom. 3:23.
 - k. Each man was included in Christ’s substitutionary death, Heb. 2:9.
 - l. Nobody is excluded from the grace of God, Matt. 5:45.
 - m. A few believers in each generation advance into the supergrace life.

Let’s Advance in the Logos,

Paster Don