

Smoky Mountain Bible Institute (Est. 2009)

Social Science 106, Economics, Education, Law, Politics

The social sciences are those subjects which examine and explain human beings. We have examined all but four; Economics, Education, Law & Politics. I think we will finish up this soft science this month even though we are biting of a big chunk of the discipline. So, lets jump right in.

Economics: Studies production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. Although this science uses a lot of hard mathematical data it is still a soft science as it studies behavior not the math that is used to study the behavior. Focusing on behavior and interactions between individuals and groups. It is broken down in to two basic categories Micro & Macro. Microeconomics analyzes the basic elements of the economy; Individuals such as households, firms, buyers, sellers and markets. Macroeconomics on the other hand look at the big picture, seeking to understand the whole economy. The combined production, consumption, saving, investment. The things that affect it as well, such as unemployment, labor, capitol, land, inflation, and growth. Governments use this information in order to attempt to make sound monetary and fiscal policies. However, like all soft sciences this can only tell you what people have done and are doing not what they will do. So when governments make policies, economies react to those policies so that a continual cycle of estimation and evaluation. Those who are good at this science often make good stockbrokers.

Education: The process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skill, values, beliefs, and habits. There are a number of methods, formal; teaching, training, storytelling, discussion, dialog, research, or informal; when a student seeks out and acquires knowledge on their own. The method used to educate is called pedagogy. While there are a number of formal methods most current educational institutions in the west use a system that groups people by age and “theoretically” skill level in order to teach a package of information that is to be learned in order to be a productive citizen. However, there is movement to bring back the classical method of education. This method developed in the middle ages and focused on the trivium of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric. In essence you first use the tools of language, then you learn the rules of math and science, and finally you learn how to develop a logical presentation of what you understand to be good, true and right. In essence instead of being given a set things and information to learn and repeat. In the classical method you are given the tools to learn how to learn.

Law: is a system of rules that are created and enforced through social or governmental institutions to regulate behavior. This has been called by some “the science of justice” or “the art of justice”. In most cultures law falls in two main categories criminal that is prosecuted by the state and Civil that is judged by the laws of the land when one citizen brings charges against another citizen. law is studied from a number of different angles; legal history, philosophy of law or jurisprudence, economic and sociological analysis with regard to the effect of legal codes. Of course, we as Christians would claim that the law of God is written on everyones hearts (Rom 2:15), and that Gods moral laws are clear. However, we live in a world where people think we make the laws. We as Christians believe that studying and living and governing a society by law is a good thing. And it is at its best when that law is God’s law.

Politics: activities associated with governance of a country or state. It comes in many forms throughout history; Monarchs, and various fiefdoms have functioned in one way or another to what is now for most the world some form of nation state that uses politics to determine who will rule. Democracy, representative republics and varied forms of modern communism, all use politics in order to form and follow their leadership. Typically groups of citizens or state or national power brokers will gather around a set of ideas and beliefs and use political methodology in order to have their political views be the ones that guide the leadership. (at least in theory) A political system is a framework which defines acceptable political methods within a given society.

So that will wrap up sociology for us. That brings us to our final wing of the institute. Theology; we will begin a study of Theology next month. Till then blessings in Christ Pastor Portier.