

Evil

1. If God is good, omnipotent and omniscience how can he allow evil? (If God's nature is good and if God has all power and if God knows everything why is there still evil?)
 - a. Does not evil prove there is no God, or at least prove there is no God who is good, omnipotent and omniscience?
2. Origin of Evil
3. Purpose for evil
4. What is evil?
5. Suffering
6. Atheism and evil

Logical Problem claims: It is logically impossible for God and evil to co-exist. This is based on the assumption that God and evil are logically inconsistent. But, it is logically possible for God and evil to co-exist especially if God has a moral reason for permitting evil.

Probabilistic Problem claims: The seriousness and breadth of evil in the world is too great to allow the probability of a God allowing it to reach this extent.

- a. We do not know enough to decide if God has sufficient reason for the evil that occurs
- b. Christian doctrine actually embraces the probability that God and evil co-exist.

David Hume, H. G. Wells and Bertrand Russell concluded that the God of the Bible does not exist because of the suffering and evil they saw.

Hume wrote: "Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing: whence then is evil?"

What is evil?

Evil is natural and moral. It can occur as a natural disaster and it can occur at the instigation of man.

Moral evil: war, crime, cruelty, slavery, ethnic cleansing, etc.

Natural evil: hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, etc.

The argument to blame God for evil misunderstands the nature of evil. The pseudo-argument goes like this:

- a. God created everything
- b. Evil is something
- c. Therefore, God created evil

This argument is defeated in this way. First, God did create everything.

But, evil is not a thing or a substance or a creation. Evil is the lack of something. Evil is that gap that is missing in something's completeness. Evil is the absence of something good.

Norm Geisler said, "Evil is like a wound in an arm or moth-holes in a garment. It exists only in another but not in itself."

Evil results when things are not in their right place, right relationship. Imagine taking many good things and using them for the wrong purpose. Imagine good people in a wrong relationship.

Where did evil come from?

God made everything perfect. Every creature was perfect. How do perfect creatures do evil? How can a perfect creation produce evil?

- a. God make perfect man with free will
- b. Free will can choose against perfection.
- c. Evil will result from perfection with free will

Animals cannot sin. Animals do not choose between evil and good. Animals do not have the ability to decide between a moral and immoral choice. Animals do not have free will. They are what they were created to be.

Will is a choice between two desires. Free will is the opportunity to choose between two desires. No free will is to have no choice between desires.

Free choice leaves the possibility of a wrong choice.

God created the fact of freedom which made evil possible.

Man performs the acts of freedom and actually does the evil.

Geisler says, "Forced love is rape and God is not a divine rapist. He will not do anything to coerce their decision."

J. B. Phillips said, "Evil is inherent in the risky gift of free will."

Why doesn't God stop evil?

Stopping evil would stop free will. Without free will there would be no love or voluntary response to God. Destroying free will would destroy evil and love, so this would in a sense be evil.

- a. If God is good he will defeat evil.
- b. If God is omnipotent, he can defeat evil.
- c. Evil is not defeated
- d. Therefore, God will one day defeat evil.

This turns the existence of evil as proof there is no God into proof there must be a God for evil to exist, to be identifiable and to anticipate its defeat.

It is impossible to distinguish evil from good unless you have a reference point that is absolutely good.

If God does not exist then the questions about evil do not exist either.

A theist does not have to claim or make our present world or circumstances the best of all possible worlds because we know that this is the best way to the best possible world.

If God is going to preserve freedom and also defeat the evil that results from this freedom, then this is the best way to do it.

Paul Little said, "If God were to stamp out evil today, he would do a complete job. His action would have to include our lies and personal impurities, our lack of love, and our failure to do good. Suppose God were to decree that at midnight tonight all evil would be removed from the universe – who of us would still be here after midnight?"

So, why wait? Because, I would be destroyed in God's destruction of evil.

God does control evil today with human government, the church, the family, the Word of God and other institutions he has established.