

Investigating Christianity

Week Five

The Problem of Evil

Outline

- Week 1: Investigative Framework
- Week 2: Christianity and Other Religions
- Week 3: Science and Christianity
- Week 4: Why Believe the Bible?
- Week 5: The Problem of Evil

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The Problem

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

■ The Problem

“There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the *Ichneumonidae* with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of Caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice. Not believing this, I see no necessity in the belief that the eye was expressly designed.”

Charles Darwin, in a letter to Asa Gray, May 22, 1860

“There was a machine designed for shredding plastic. Men were dropped into it and we were again made to watch. Sometimes they went in head first and died quickly. Sometimes they went in feet first and died screaming. It was horrible. I saw 30 people die like this. Their remains would be placed in plastic bags and we were told they would be used as fish food”

“Women were suspended by their hair as their families watched; men were forced to watch as their wives were raped...women were suspended by their legs while they were menstruating until their periods were over, a procedure designed to cause humiliation.”

Ann Clwyd, Interviews conducted by “Indict”

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

■ The Problem

- Evil and suffering exist in abundance
- Therefore God, if he exists, must either be limited (unable to stop evil) or evil himself
- Since the Bible claims God is both all-powerful and loving, the Bible is false

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The Problem

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The Problem
- What Do Other Views Say About Evil?

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The Problem
- What Do Other Views Say About Evil?
 - Basis for critique of evil?
 - Reasonable explanation for why it exists now?
 - Hope that good will triumph in the future?

	Naturalism	Theism	Pantheism	Polytheism	Spiritual Relativism
Is Reality Personal?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes/No
Is Reality Infinite?	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes/No
Does God Exist?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes/No
Does Truth Exist?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Is There A Personal Afterlife?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes/No
Meaning of Human Life	Not significant	Very significant	Individuals not significant	Depends on the gods	Varies

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

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How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

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- What Do Other Views Say About Evil?
- The Biblical View of Evil

And He said, ‘A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.” And he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be in need. And he went and attached himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he was longing to fill his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him.’

‘But when he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’” And he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him, and kissed him. And the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”’”

‘But the father said to his servants, “Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.” And they began to be merry.’

Luke 15:11-24

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“[Jesus Christ] gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age...”

Galatians 1:4

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The Problem
- What Do Other Views Say About Evil?
- The Biblical View of Evil
 - It is evil! The world is in an abnormal state.
 - It is the result of freewill choices of created personal beings to rebel against God

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.”

Matthew 23:37

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“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. And you are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.”

James 4:1-2

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 - God will eventually eliminate evil

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

The Problem

“For you will go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up; and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up; and it will be a memorial to the Lord, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off.”

Isaiah 55:12-13

– God will eventually eliminate evil

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away...and I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Look, the dwelling place of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’”

Revelations 21:1-4

Isaiah 55:12-13

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- Remaining Questions

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 - Why does God let it go on?

How Can a Good God Allow Evil?

- The

- What

- The

“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.”

2 Peter 3:9

- Remaining Questions

- Why does God let it go on?

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- Remaining Questions

- Why does God let it go on?

“And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved...”

Matthew 24:22

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 - Why does God let it go on?
 - Why did God create?

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- The Pro
- What D
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- Remaining Questions
 - Why does God let it go on?
 - Why did God create?

“I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd...”

John 10:10-11

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- Remaining Questions
- Why Should We Trust God's Goodness?

“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:6-8

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■ Why Should We Trust God's Goodness?

“He made Him who knew no sin to become sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

“For while we were still helpless, at the right time

Cl “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a
di loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’
go that is, ‘My God, My God, why have you
G forsaken Me?’”

W Matthew 27:46

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■ Why Should We Trust God’s Goodness?

“He made Him who knew no sin to become sin

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“Greater love has no one than this, that one
lay down his life for his friends.”

2 Cor

John 15:13

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Summary and Conclusion

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- A Reasonable Basis for Christianity
 - The Bible is unique among the scriptures of world religions in its teaching of “grace”
 - The Bible harmonizes with and is supported by science
 - The Bible alone has strong objective evidence to back its claims for itself

Summary and Conclusion

- A Reasonable Basis for Christianity
- What is Biblical Faith?
 - Not “blind faith”
 - Not passive intellectual assent
 - A decision to place personal trust in Christ, based on reasonable evidence

Summary and Conclusion

- A Reasonable Basis for Christianity
- What is Biblical Faith?
- How to Become a Christian
 - Not by good works...
 - By expressing faith in Christ

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- What is Biblical Faith?
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“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name...”

John 1:12

Summary and Conclusion

- A Reasonable Basis for Christianity
- What is Biblical Faith?
- How to Become a Christian
- How to Grow Spiritually
 - Receiving God's love on an ongoing basis
 - A new purpose, centered on learning to show God's love in this world

Summary and Conclusion

- A Reasonable Basis for Christianity
- What is Biblical Faith?
- How to Become a Christian
- How to Grow Spiritually
- Slides Available soon at...
- My Email: DouglasDRudy@yahoo.com