

One of the most controversial questions confronting Christendom is why does evil exist in the world? The problem is perhaps the most used justification for the indictment of the Sovereign God of the Bible. Skeptics and theological liberals cannot accept the God revealed in Scripture. They ask, how can God be portrayed in the Bible as good, holy, and loving tolerate evil's infliction and pain upon the innocent? The challenge stated in a syllogism: The Biblical God is good. The Biblical God is holy. The Biblical God is loving. The Biblical God is all-powerful, yet evil exists in the world. Therefore, the Biblical God does not exist. Over the span of time the structure for this argument has not changed.

The Bible is a manual of love and prescriptive worship, without error or impurity, and produces comprehensive righteousness. Its Author is the Sovereign Creator, and the only entity whose existence is in Himself. Based on this statement one could argue that God could very well do what He pleases including being responsible for evil in the world. But is this really the God of the Bible? I would argue no.

“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.” Genesis 1:31

Many Scriptures affirm that God is not the author of evil: “God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone” (James 1:13). “God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5). “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33)— and if that is true, He cannot in any way be the author of evil. It is helpful, I think, to understand that sin is not itself a thing created. Sin is neither substance, being, spirit, nor matter. So, it is technically not proper to think of sin as something that was created. Sin is simply a lack of moral perfection in a fallen creature. Fallen creatures themselves bear full responsibility for their sin. And all evil in the universe emanates from the sins of fallen creatures.¹

D. A. Carson said, “The basic problem with the worldview of evil is how to avoid depreciating it. If there is no God and no creation of goodness outside the universe itself, what rational person should feel any outrage before ostensible “evils” at all? Atheism holds no attractions to the committed believer. What we must see, however, for our own peace of mind, is that it offers no solution to the problem of evil. It “resolves” the problem by saying, in effect, that evil is not there.”² Metaphysical naturalism is the claim that there is no supernatural, including God or gods. The problem of evil provides overwhelming evidence against God's existence. The Christian apologist's response is naturalistic evolution cannot explain the intrinsic dignity and worth of every single person. What can explain this is that each person is created in the image of a good God and is fully known and unconditionally loved by Him.³

Is God responsible for evil? The challenge is actually quite silly. If God can do anything, then He surely can allow evil and call it good. Why does He have to explain it? Surely, if omnipotence

¹ John MacArthur. Grace to you. 2020. Is God Responsible for Evil?. [online] Available at: <<https://www.gty.org/library/articles/A189/is-god-responsible-for-evil>> [Accessed 16 April 2020].

² D.A. Carson. How Long O 'Lord. 2006. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic: 27

³ R. Zacharias and V. Vitale., Why Suffering? Finding Meaning and Comfort When Life Doesn't Make Sense. 2014. New York, NY.: Hachette Book Group: 106

means all-powerful without even logical or rational limitation, He can allow evil to exist and not see any incoherence in it. And if God can do anything He pleases, why can't He simply be incoherent as well? That may be irrational to the skeptic, but does not limitless power also mean the power to be irrational without justification? Or take the second premise: Is eliminating pain always the loving thing to do? Is it quid pro quo that if you love somebody you will make their life totally free from pain? Taking it a step further, does love always mean giving one the freedom to have or do whatever one wishes? Is it love to remove boundaries? Very quickly one can see that every premise as stated or implied by the critic makes assumptions that are actually irrational.⁴

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⁴ Ibid., 8