

PROBLEM OF EVIL

Part 1

The Question:

“How can you believe in God when there is
so much evil in the world?”



What Is The Problem?

- The Intellectual Problem- This addresses the Logical Problem of Evil. Abstract reflections about the issue.
- The Emotional Problem- This addresses a dislike of God (or the idea of God) because of evil.
- “First and foremost, we must distinguish between the intellectual problem posed by suffering and the emotional problem posed by suffering. The intellectual problem concerns whether it’s plausible to think that God and suffering can coexist. The emotional problem concerns people’s dislike of a God who would permit suffering.”

What Was The Question Again?

- “How can you believe in God when there is so much evil in the world?”
- What do you think is presupposed in this question?

Evil

- The questioner has assumed that evil exists.
- The evil this person is assuming exists is what we could call Objective Evil.

Objective vs. Subjective

Objective Evil - An act is evil regardless of anyone's opinion of the action. It is evil whether or not I think it is evil.

Subjective Evil - An act is evil only if I (or the person) thinks/feels it is evil. The act could be evil to me but not for you.

Moral Values & Duties

Objective Moral Values - This deals with something's moral worth.

Objective Moral Duties - This deals with obligations and prohibitions.

What Is The Problem?

1. In the absence of God, why think human beings are objectively valuable?
2. In the absence of God, why think objective prohibitions and obligations exist?

Answering these questions in the negative leads us to our first premise in our argument:

- If God does not exist, objective values and duties do not exist.



“The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.”

WAIT A MINUTE!!!

- The question we began with was not trying to say “there are no moral values and duties”.
- The question presupposed that objective moral values and duties exists!
- **Because if there are no moral values or duties, the question is not valid!**
- This observation leads to the second premise:
- **Objective moral values and duties do exist.**

Good & Evil

- No one can live consistently without affirming objective moral values and duties.
- We simply have no reason for denying moral values and duties as we have no reason to deny the physical world.

“Any argument against the objective reality of moral values will be based on premises that are less obvious than the existence of objective moral values themselves.”

– Louise Antony
Atheist Philosopher



Didn't God Say So?

“They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.” *Romans 2:15*

The Moral Argument

1. If God does not exist, then Objective Moral Values and Duties do not exist.
2. Objective Moral Values and Duties do exist.

Therefore,

3. God exists.

Q&A

What questions might you have?

The Emotional Problem

- This needs a more pastoral approach, trying to appeal to intellectual answer will seem insensitive and calloused.
- “Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” - **2 Corinthians 4:14-17**

Jesus

RC Sproul was once asked:

“Why do bad things happen to good people?”

and he answered:

“That has only happened once, and He volunteered.”

