

Faith Bible Church

“Problem” of Evil-6: Job, theodicy, and God’s love

Matthew 22:36-38 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And He said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.

Matthew 6:24-25 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the kosmos, nor the things in the kosmos. If anyone loves the kosmos, the love for the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the kosmos, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the kosmos.

Any Questions?

**These slides are available
at <http://www.fbcweb.org/sermons.html>**

Philosophical/Theological/Doctrinal & Spiritual Foundations

- Bible Doctrines**
- Eschatology
 - Thanatology
 - Ecclesiology
 - Israelology
 - Dispensationalism
 - Doxology
 - Hodology
 - Soteriology
 - Hamartiology
 - Natural Law
 - Anthropology
 - Angelology
 - Pneumatology
 - Christology
 - Paterology
 - Trinitarianism
 - Cosmology
 - Theology Proper
 - Bibliology
 - Prolegomena

Broad and deep understanding of BD

The nature and importance of maturity (τέλειος, teleios).

Maturity is always related to Bible doctrine/divine viewpoint working under the salubrious ministry of God the Holy Spirit (enlightening and empowering).

Maturity is not just how you handle problems with truth here and there like 2+2 = 4, there is so much more to God and Reality as such.

- Logos Philosophy**
- Logic (32)
 - Truth (14)
 - Metaphysics

1 Corinthians 2:9 but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.

Enough BD to be overcomer

1 John 2:14, "you are strong, and the word of God abides in you"

Lacks BD, DV

Eph 4:14, children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming

Mature Believer – Level 3- Metaphysical Maturity

- High abstract metaphysical understanding of BD; Esse, HU, Trinity, Evil, Good,
- Enormous capacity for synthesis of BD and grasping of spiritual realities.
- Required to understand Trinity, free will, evil, good, the human soul, the hypostatic union, substances and properties, philosophy of mind.

Young adult – Level 2- Doctrinal conceptualization

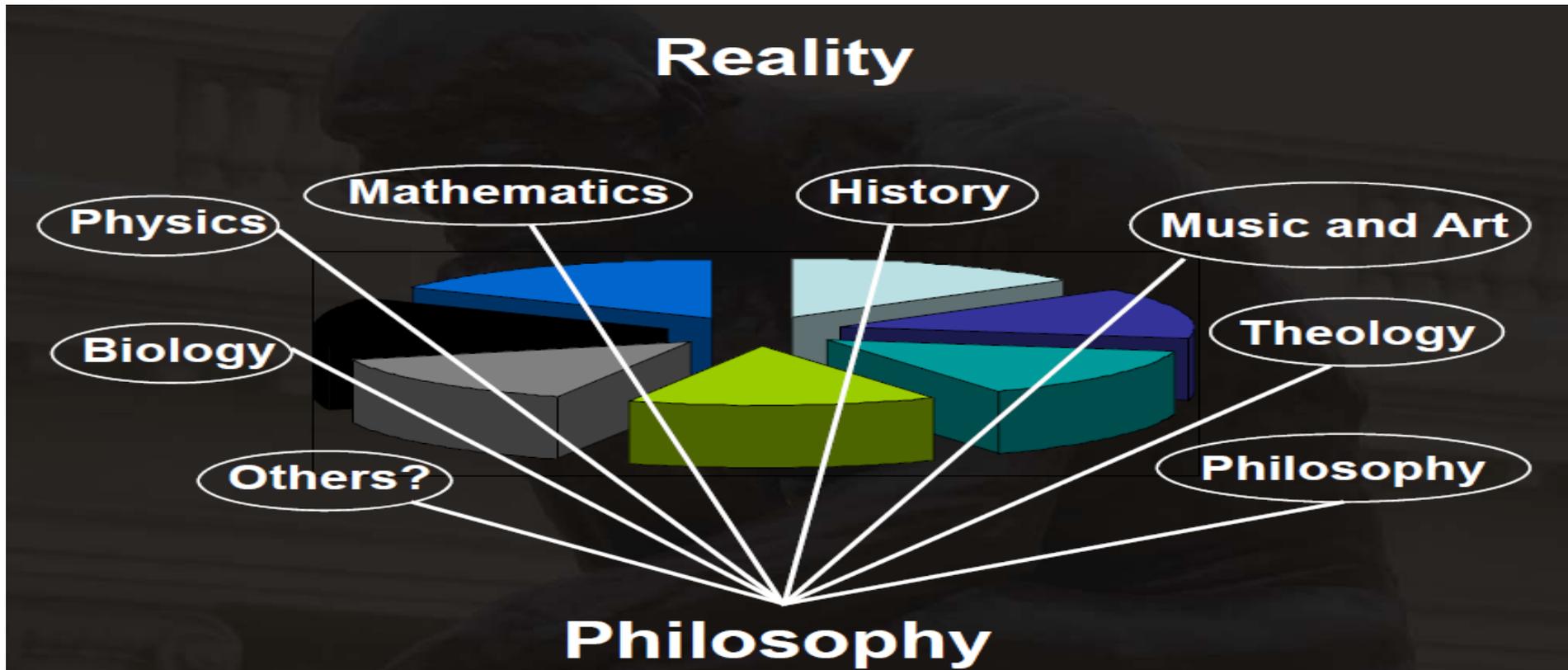
- Cf. Doctrine of evil
- Assumes cohesion of Bible
- Cf. Synthesis in science

Baby – Level 1 = Basic Bible verses

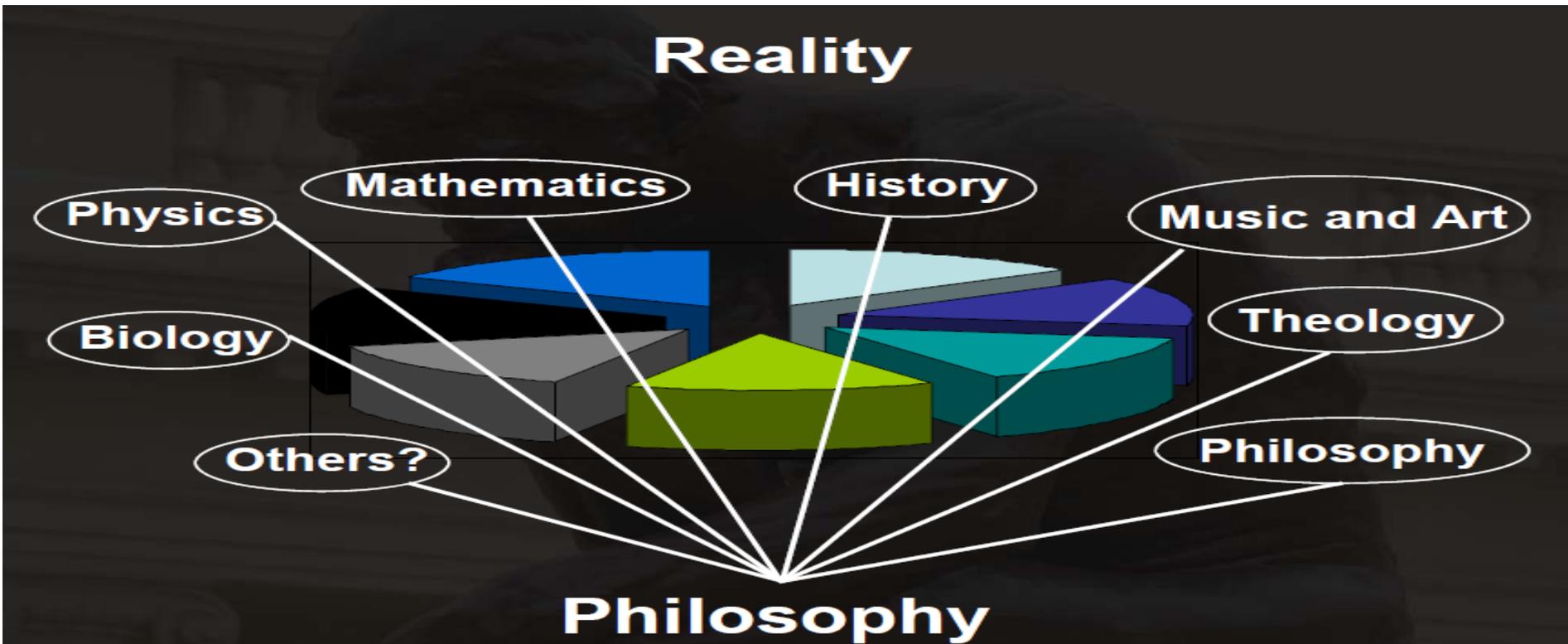
- Basic passages on evil, good, God.
- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Compare this level of understanding in the sciences where one starts with only the particulars of science.
- Lack of cohesion
- Empirically oriented (empiricism always leads to skepticism)

Truth-14

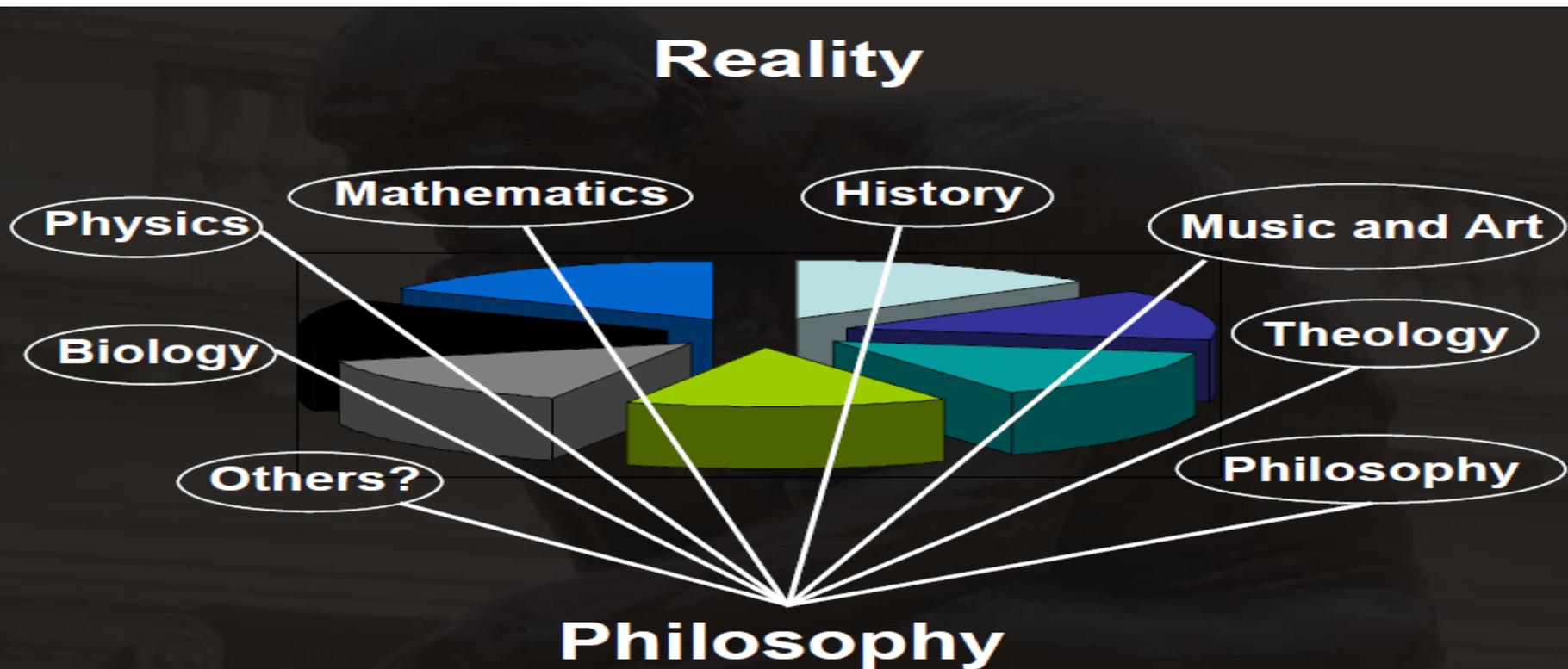
1. One reason that we Christians have trouble convincing postmoderns of the Truth of Christianity is because that they think of religious truth as being functional rather than Reality. Truth is reality—correspondence truth.



2. People always run into problems when they take the tools of analysis and methods of inquiry appropriate for one of the slices of reality and apply them inappropriately to another slice of reality.



3. For example, how you deal with biological questions is much different than how you deal with mathematical questions. It is important to use the tools appropriate for each area of discipline, cf. mathematical aspects of physics, especially on a quantum level; this is much different than botany.



4. To use the methods of analysis designed for one slice of reality for another creates insuperable problems—which we still contend with.
5. It is mind boggling just how blind man and society in general can be to their presuppositions. Incredible how much is believed without even realizing their effect. This has plagued the history of man.

6. Slices of reality. Biology is being/reality in as much as living; physics is reality as much as it is moving; mathematics is being in as much as it is quantifiable; aesthetics is being as much as it is desirable. History is replete with examples of taking the tools and methods of analysis of one discipline to use illicitly use them in another.

7. Aristotle made the mistake of biologizing too many things. He tried to understand all of metaphysics/reality in biological categories. He made everything natures. That is fine with talking about human beings who have natures. But it becomes cumbersome when you are talking about something like physics, where rock natures are to go down and smoke natures to go up. This mistake has resulted in over 1,000 years in Western thought where the natural sciences were stagnant.

8. However, when Descartes comes on the scene everything shifts from biology to mathematics. So he tries to do all of philosophy like geometry. That works well for some things, but not metaphysics. Math does really well with things that do not have natures, e.g., gravitational constants, and Boyle's Law of gasses. Math does great with the natural sciences. However, math does not work on things with natures, like mankind.
9. With the shift from metaphysics to science, metaphysics languishes and has never recovered.

10. With the shift to mathematics, science takes off like never before. This is because man stopped biologizing everything.
11. However, with the making everything quantifiable, metaphysics languishes and this results in the “loss” of reality in value, ethics, God, religion. Man went from being very concerned with being out of the good grace of the church or Christianity to only caring about not being scientific because now science is everything.

12. Science is no more the end all or do all of Truth than any of the disciplines. There are many slices of reality/Truth. All science is is the study of physical entities and the observable laws that they operate under.

13. All slices of reality have one thing in common: esse (existence, reality, metaphysics, reality as such). Not being as living, or moving, or as quantifiable but being as such--metaphysics. When one properly examines reality as such, he “runs” into God—not a vanilla God, but God with the robust attributes of simplicity, aseity, omniscience, omnipotence, impassibility. They all come from this classical understanding of the nature of existence: metaphysics. All of the attributes of God stand or fall together.

Resurrection Special #72:
Problem of Evil-6: Mackie, Job, and Theodicy

Matthew 26:36-56
Garden of Gethsemane

1. Pride in Gethsemane.

2. Kenosis of Christ

- 'Ehyeh, Esse, Ex 3:14

- "Problem" of evil

Resurrection &
the Spiritual Life
in the Epistles

A Walkthrough of the
Resurrection Narratives

A Walkthrough →
from the Lord's Supper to the Tomb

6 Ways of Falsifying Naturalism

The Failure of All Alternate Theories

Bedrock Facts: Death of JC & Multiple Appearances

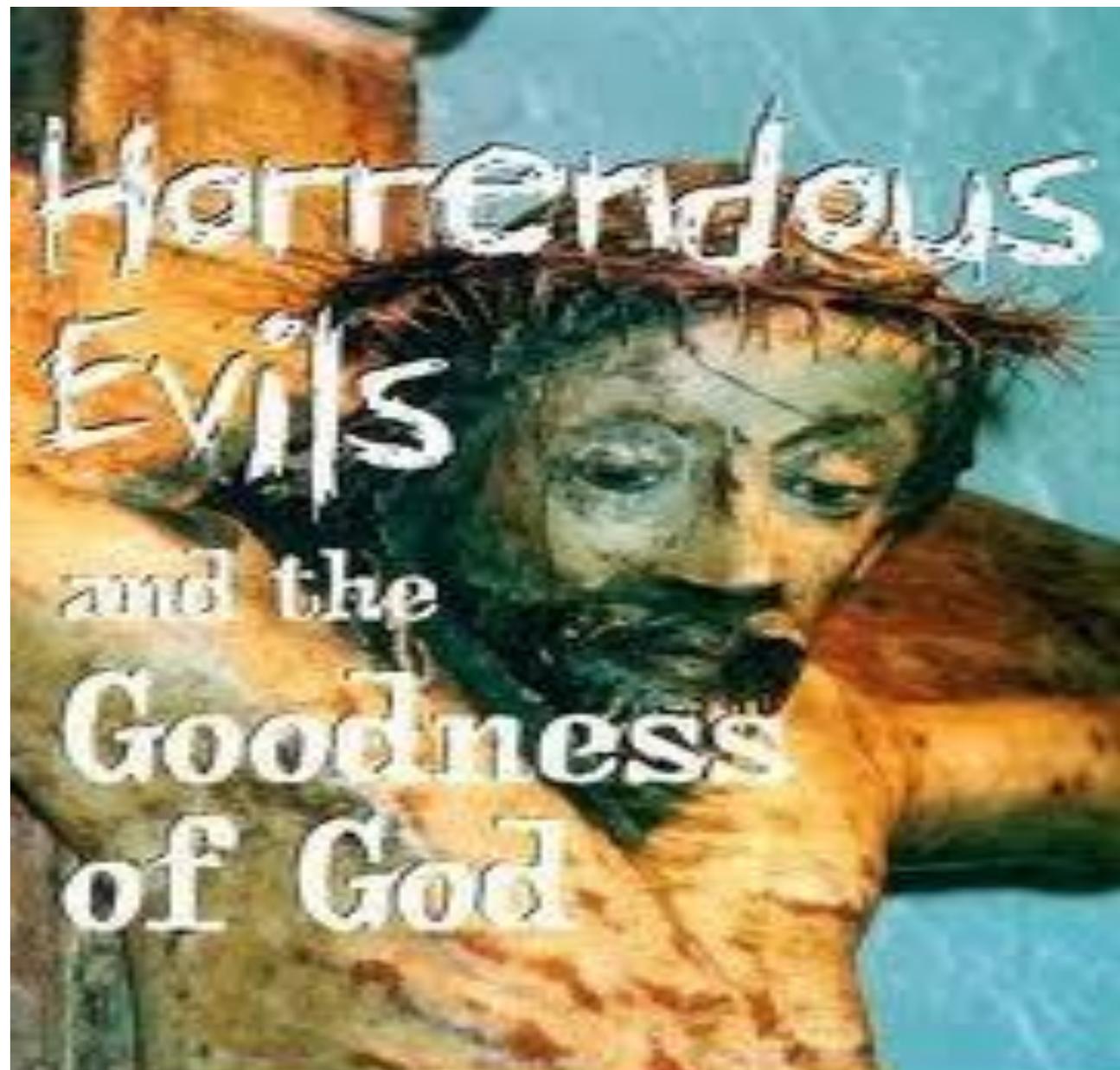
Historiography: Establishing Historical Proof
for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Gethsemane
– at the arrest
of Christ.

Matthew
26:54 "How
then shall the
Scriptures be
fulfilled, that
it must
happen this
way?"



Acts 4:27 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur (ποιῆσαι ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ σου καὶ ἡ βουλή προώρισεν γενέσθαι)



Evil and Suffering in Gethsemane and on the Cross

1. Ultimately, we should always point to the cross of Jesus Christ as the ultimate example of the “problem” of suffering and evil.
2. It is crucial for every believer to understand the basic nature of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. Not only are most Christians modalists (heretical) when it comes to the Trinity, they are Nestorians (heretical) when it comes to the Lord Jesus Christ. These heresies are the high price of “practical Christianity” and focus on our personal problems.
3. In the hypostatic union there is only one Person with two natures which are never mixed and which never transfer qualities.

4. Although there is no transfer of qualities of one nature to the other, there is attribution of each nature to the one Person.
5. This means that human attributes can be attributed to the divine Person but not the divine nature.
6. This means that the second Person of the Trinity experienced human suffering and death through His human nature.

7. The agony of Jesus in the Garden was none other than the agony of God experienced through the human flesh of Jesus. Yes, God experienced agony and a resistance to do the Father's will through the human lower/instinctive nature.

8. It was the Logos, the second Person of the Trinity, who becomes the subject of human attributes, including human passibility, human suffering; hence in the incarnation God experiences human suffering and death, Heb 2:14, 18; John 1:1-14. Christianity has but one voice on this issue until the rise of modern liberalism and anti-intellectualism.

1 Corinthians 2:8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ἐσταύρωσαν).

9. The Eternal Logos actually felt sorrow, fear and anguish in Gethsemane though his human nature, Mark 14:32-36.

Mark 14:32 And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." ³³ And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be **very distressed and troubled.** ³⁴ And He said to them, "My soul is **deeply grieved** to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." ³⁵ And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell to the ground, and *began* to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. ³⁶ And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt."

10. Although in the English there is no distinction between the two wills of the God-man in the Gethsemane, in the Greek there is a distinction between rational will and the instinctive will of human nature.

“Father, if you will (βούλει) it, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not my will (τὸ θέλημά), but yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

11. What Jesus, therefore, spontaneously, naturally, and instinctively wills or desires is to spare His life—Father remove this cup from me—yet what He actually chooses deliberately, that is what He wills “deep down” as based upon the judgment of right reason, is to fulfill the Father’s will—“not My will, but Yours be done.”

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

1. The book of Job is the classical biblical book on the problem of suffering and evil. It provides the human narrative; it puts flesh and bones on biblical theodicy. The metaphysics of evil is very difficult to grasp. Biblical narratives help to grasp various aspects of theodicy. And so the difficult questions raised by the problem of suffering can be considered best in the context of biblical narratives.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

2. Contrary to common beliefs, Job *does* provide a powerful theodicy. It will show that all suffering can be redeemed for the sufferer in a personal love relationship—that pain, suffering, and heartbreak can be woven into joy through the reciprocity of love.
3. The key to understanding Job is to develop its theodicy and theology of suffering. This is far better than simply providing isolated encouraging messages and “encouraging stories.” It is crucial that each believer build his theology and this includes a theology of suffering.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

4. Not only does the believer need to understand that he will be tested and undergo suffering and so he needs to use the appropriate biblical passages, he needs have doctrines residing in him to have power to overcome kosmos diabolicus, and ultimately understand the essential and ultimate nature of evil to be able to give a theodicy.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

5. Common view of Job as expressed in Bible commentaries.

. . . It has been generally assumed that purpose of the book of Job is to give an answer to the issue which deals with the problem of divine justice or theodicy. This question is raised inevitably in the suffering of a righteous man. Job's case . . . poses a problem in the most striking possible way. A man of exemplary rectitude and piety is suddenly overwhelmed with disasters and loathsome disease. How can such a situation be reconciled with divine justice and benevolent providence? It must be admitted first and last that the Book of Job fails to give a clear and definitive answer to the question. . .

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

. . . Job vehemently denies that he has sinned, at least not seriously enough to merit such misery as has been inflicted on him. Justice, he argues, often appears abortive in the world and for this God must be held responsible. Hence Job infers that God has no concern for justice or for human feelings . . . Job wishes to argue his case with God, but he cannot find God nor force Him to grant a fair hearing. Job recognizes God's power, but in a series of protests against God, he calls into question God's goodness. What underlies Job's violent protests against God is His goodness. God's answer to Job is something of a surprise and disappointment. The issue, as Job has posed it, is completely ignored. No explanation or excuse is offered for Job's suffering . . . Job had already expressed his awe and wonder at God's power. He had questions not about divine omnipotence but divine justice and mercy. The complete evasion of the issue as Job had posed it must be the poet's oblique way of admitting that there is no satisfactory answer available to man. There is complete irrelevance of the content of the divine speeches. What Job called into question was God's goodness, but the only attribute God shows is power. He complains about God's lack of goodness, and God never answers—this is both surprising and disappointing (Anchor Bible commentator).

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

6. The proper view of suffering in Job lines up perfectly with the rest of the Scriptures on suffering,

James 1:1-12.

- 1, the trials and sufferings of Jewish Christians.
- 2, “total” joy because of the highly beneficial purpose
- 3, “genuineness of your faith,” unselfish motives.
- 4, *let* = submission to God in times of testing.
- 5, the wisdom that is gained in suffering and testing
- 6-8, the need for genuine faith in God’s ability to give wisdom.
- 9, poor believer should see testing as a form of exaltation
- 10-11, rich believer should orient to the transiency of life.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- James 1:12, final issue in all suffering is loving (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν) God. All tests in life are designed to build integrity and give us capacity to personally love God. With each test there is a temptation to resent the test and thus refuse to let God do the character-building work He desires to perform in us. The idea that all Christians love God is fiction.
- ✓ **James 5:11** Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and *is* merciful.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **Eph.6:10** Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is **not** against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ Genesis 50:20 "And as for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **Romans 8:28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.
- ✓ **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **1 Peter 4:12** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;
- ✓ **1 Peter 5:6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷ casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you. ⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **1 Peter 2:21** For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,
- ✓ **1 Peter 4:13** but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.
- ✓ **Philippians 1:29** For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
- ✓ **2 Corinthians 4:17** For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,
- ✓ **Colossians 1:24** Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **Philippians 3:10** that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;
- ✓ **Rom. 5:3-4** And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

- ✓ **2 Corinthians 1:4-5** who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

7. The issue in suffering is not really the suffering, the issue is how the believer responds to the suffering. Suffering may have good or bad effects. What makes all the difference is the way we respond to them. There are at least 7 possible responses to suffering:
- #1, Rebellion against God, which can lead to blasphemy, persistent carnality, skepticism or atheism.
 - #2, Resignation (Stoic indifference, Marcus Aurelius).
 - #3, Moralism: Seeing suffering as punishment for sin.
 - #4, Virtue making: Suffering is only for the development of virtue.
 - #5, Mystery/inexplicable: Suffering is an inexplicable fact.
 - #6, Hope: Suffering with hope of being richly rewarded in the next life.
 - #7, Joy of deeper fellowship and love: Suffering with joy because the affliction brings the believer into closer fellowship with and love for the Lord.

Problem of Evil-6, Job and Theodicy

8. The book of Job provides us with the philosophy and theodicy of suffering which we will use as we move into the metaphysics of evil and suffering. Apart from understanding theodicy, the believer is limited in his appreciation of the goodness and being of God.