

Faith Bible Church

“Problem” of Evil-11: Job’s Physical Sufferings and Theodicy

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. ² And stop being conformed to this age (τῷ αἰῶνι), but be metamorphosed (μεταμορφοῦσθε) by the renewing (ἀνακαινώσει) of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) and acceptable (εὐάρεστον) and perfect (τέλειον).

Any Questions?

These slides are available

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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

How often do you integrate Bible doctrine in areas of your own spiritual life, character, interpersonal relationships, and society and politics at large?

Foundations

- Logos Philosophy
- Logic (32)
 - Truth (19)
 - 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

- Things in terms of Bible doctrine that is undergirded by biblical passages

Baby & meaning of life

- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Does not apply doctrine or divine viewpoint to all the issues of life
- Fragmented understanding of truth.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

- ❖ The 6 views of truth
 - Coherence (e.g., Stephen Hawking: imaginary time and numbers)
 - Pragmatic (William James, John Dewey)
 - Functional (Oprah Winfrey, modern American view of religion)
 - Existential (Kierkegaard; human existence over human essence)
 - Fragmented: Fundamentalist (Finis Dake), Science (scientism, Dawkins).
 - ✓ CORRESPONDENCE: Total Truth; Metaphysics; Esse; esses; Total Reality (Christian apologists: Classical, evidentialists, cumulative casers, presuppositionalists, Reformed).

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

1. Ultimate (unfragmented) Reality is God: Esse, ‘Ehyeh, the Lord Jesus Christ who is behind all “fragments” of reality.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created (ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα), *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created by Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together (τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν).

Hebrews 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things (φέρων τε τὰ πάντα) by the word of His power.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

2. There are two ways of discovering God as Ultimate Reality--Truth.
 - Natural Theology
 - ✓ Through the interaction of man's intuitive faculties (rationalism and empiricism) with the external world, man *knows* there is a God. He may not be able to prove it any more than he can prove the experiences of his life, but he is warranted in that belief just the same. Simply by interacting with the world, his mind has the power to abstract that there is a God.
 - ✓ On the high end, man discovers God through the scientific discipline of metaphysics, i.e. start with sensible objects and through abstraction one runs into God as the necessary being for all contingence existing things.
 - Sacred Theology
 - ✓ All of these truths must be revealed by God.
 - ✓ One must be properly related to God to know these truths.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

3. Through natural theology one can prove 100 % that God exists, Rom. 1:18-20.
 - ✓ Man's intuitive grasp of being, sensible objects, and reality is so strong that he innately knows that God exists—regardless of the development of his epistemology (as a native or an Oxford don), Rom. 1:18-20.
 - ✓ Because this evidence is 100%, man is without excuse.
 - ✓ The only way you get to 100% proof is through the laws of logic—as per the method of Classical apologetics. You simply can't get to 100% through the evidentiary approach or even prophecy.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

4. Example of how the greatest of intellects will violate the law of non-contradiction in the attempt to repress the knowledge of God. Hawking:

“Because there is a law of gravity, the universe can and will create itself out of nothing.”

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

5. Seldom will one find one sentence with two contradictions, but here we have three contradictions in one sentence of Hawking, “Because there is a law of gravity, the universe can and will create itself out of nothing.”
 - ✓ He says that the universe comes from a nothing that turns out to be something (self-contradiction #1), and then he says that the universe creates itself (self-contradiction #2), and his notion of that a law of nature (gravity) explains the existence of the universe is also self-contradictory, since a law of nature, by definition, surely depends on for its own existence on the prior existence of the nature it purports to describe (self-contradiction #3).

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

6. To reject the existence of God one has to reject the law of noncontradiction as well as the law of causality. This law of causality not only applies to creation but to thinking itself. Not only does one have to use the law of noncontradiction to refute the law of noncontradiction, and one has to use the law of causality to reject the law of causality (e.g., “because”).
- ✓ The law of noncontradiction is demolished by the concept of self-creation. For something to create itself, it must exercise causal power on itself before it exists.
 - ✓ To be before it is, it must be and not be at the same time and in the same relationship.
 - ✓ It must be A and be $\neg A$ at the same time and in the same relationship which violates the law of noncontradiction.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

7. **Romans 1:20** For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.
- ✓ Invisible aspects of God are clearly seen in two ways (note that the knowledge of God is not shrouded in obscurity):
 - From effect to cause
 - From metaphysics: the examination of all things and the unpacking of what is common to all beings

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

8. If man is without excuse for not believing in the true God (Rom. 1:20), then he must be resisting irrefutable arguments. If he is not rejecting irrefutable arguments, then he cannot be said to be inexcusable for not accepting them.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

9. Man rejects the true God because he represses the Truth as such:

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who repress the truth in unrighteousness,

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

10. Truths of natural theology can be known by external evidence; truths of sacred theology can only be known through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. By the internal ministry of the Holy Spirit we can *know* truths whereas by external evidence we can *show* them to be true. Although we know our faith to be true primarily through the witness of the Spirit, we must show our faith to be true through rational argument and evidence. To tell someone else we are sure does nothing to show him that our faith is true

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

11. Outward sensible evidence in reality demonstrates Christianity to be true (cosmo-teleo-moral arguments, miracles), Luke 11:20; 24:25-27; John 3:2; 9:30-33; 10:38; 14:11; 20:31; Acts 2:22-32; 17; 1 Cor. 15:3-8.
- ✓ **Acts 2:22** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—
 - ✓ **John 14:11** "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves.

Truth-19 – Total Truth: Natural Theology & Sacred Theology

12. It is the inward witness and conviction by the Holy Spirit that enables us to know these things are true (and thus stop repressing them). It is the Holy Spirit who bears witness in us of the truth of Christianity. Hence, the importance of staying adjusted to the Holy Spirit. The beliefs of others to the contrary (Mormons) do not falsify what the Holy Spirit testifies to.

- ✓ **Romans 8:15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
- ✓ **1 John 3:24** And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

1. Job's Physical Suffering and Theodicy, Job 2:1-13. Overview of Sufferings:

Job 2:7 Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

Job 2:8 And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

Job 2:12 And when they lifted up their eyes at a distance, and did not recognize him, they raised their voices and wept. And each of them tore his robe, and they threw dust over their heads toward the sky.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

Job 3:24 "For my groaning comes at the sight of my food, And my cries pour out like water.

Job 3:25 "For what I fear comes upon me, And what I dread befalls me.

Job 7:5 "My flesh is clothed with worms and a crust of dirt; My skin hardens and runs.

Job 9:18 "He will not allow me to get my breath, But saturates me with bitterness.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

Job 16:16 "My face is flushed from weeping, And deep darkness is on my eyelids,

Job 19:17 "My breath is offensive to my wife, And I am loathsome to my own brothers.

Job 19:20 "My bone clings to my skin and my flesh, And I have escaped *only* by the skin of my teeth.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

Job 33:21 "His flesh wastes away from sight, And his bones which were not seen stick out.

Job 30:27 "I am seething within, and cannot relax; Days of affliction confront me.

Job 30:30 "My skin turns black on me, And my bones burn with fever.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

2. How can the God of all love just stand by and let Job suffer so much?
3. The problems man has in the face of such suffering in light belief in an all powerful and an all good and perfectly loving God are tethered to his philosophy of life. No one can escape their philosophical necessities.

Some of the problems:

- ✓ False views run the gamut from the callous to the emotionally *based*.
- ✓ False views of God's righteousness: Divine command theory.
- ✓ False views of man's free will
- ✓ False worldviews (hedonism, utilitarianism, pragmatism)
- ✓ False views of the love of God
- ✓ False views of the goodness of God
- ✓ False views of God's purposes
- ✓ False views of the purpose of suffering (only to develop integrity)

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

4. With the book of Job we have the advantage of examining the “problem” of evil from both left brain and right brain insights. While these different perspectives are overstated, at times, there is a significant difference between left brain approaches and right brain approaches to the problem of evil.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

5. Left brain approaches to the problem of evil dominate the philosophical discussions on the “problem” of evil.
 - a. The contemporary philosophical debate in Anglo-American philosophy over the problem of evil is very technical.
 - b. This analytical precision is a wonderful thing: it brings lucidity, analysis, careful distinction, and rigorous treatment.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

5. Left brain approaches to the problem of evil dominate the philosophical discussions on the “problem” of evil.
 - c. This analytical analysis is preoccupied with precise definition of terms, fine distinction between concepts, and complex arguments for philosophical claims—from syllogisms to probability theory.
 - d. All of this is very necessary and must never be discarded. However, it is not the whole story.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture—especially on the problem of evil which is dominated by interpersonal relationships.
 - a. Right brain skills provide breadth of focus that left brain skills lack. Left brain philosophical analysis focuses on more and more on less and less; it is very narrow, clean, logical, and precise. However, it lacks breadth and *nuances*.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - b. Those who are impaired in right brain functions generally have an inability to give an overview or extract a moral from a story or to assess properly social situations. When analytical philosophers need to think about human interactions, they tend not to turn to complex cases drawn from real life or from the world's great literature; rather they make up short, thin stories of their own, or repeat threadbare or hackneyed stories.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - c. However, personal relations are at the heart of certain philosophical problems. Left brain's intellectual vision is occluded from the part of reality that deals with complex, nuanced thought, behavior, and relations of persons. This deficit is undetectable in modal logic or philosophy of mathematics, but will be felt in interactions with people.
 - d. Central to the problem of evil is human suffering and this is a question that interpersonal relations are maximally relevant.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - e. The question in the problem of evil: could a Person who is omnipotent, omniscient, and perfectly good allow human persons to suffer as they do? This is a problem that must be understood in terms of logical detail and precision (left brain) and breadth with nuance (right brain skills). We need the logical consistency, but we also need the whole story! This is one reason that female philosophers do a much better job on the problem of evil.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - f. The Bible provides us with right brain approaches to the problem of evil by giving them to us in biblical narrative. Further, there are things to know which can be known through narrative but which cannot be known as well through methods of analytical philosophy.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - g. However, right brain (narrative) approaches is much messier way than philosophical analysis; there is some sacrifice of sharp and visible orderliness. There is some loss of crisp, clean order which is favored in philosophy with its precise, compelling arguments.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - h. The ideal approach is the examination of literature using both of the mental tools that God has given us: the precision of rigid logic as well as the breadth of nuanced understanding in interpersonal relationships—which must be factored in in any human suffering—all under the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Problem of Evil-11, Job's Suffering and Theodicy

6. Right brain approaches complete the picture.
 - i. Illustration of suffering through narrative/story. Consider:
 - A child suffering the pains of a bone marrow transplant and who wants to know from her mother why she does not help her and stop her suffering when she so clearly could, just by taking her out of the hospital.
 - In the midst of the excruciating pain of bone marrow transplant, the mother could give her daughter a detailed logical and apathetic description of blood cancer and how the stem cells in her bone marrow are producing these cancer cells and how they need the marrow to get out the good cells to clone and reintroduce into the marrow, and then give a pharmacological discussion of how cytotoxic drugs are designed to kill her cancer cells.
 - Or she could give her daughter a second-person experience of her as a mom loving and taking care of her (cf. nested stories in Job).