

Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able?
Then he is not omnipotent.
Is he able, but not willing?
Then he is malevolent.
Is he both able and willing?
Then whence cometh evil?
Is he neither able nor willing?
Then why call him God?

- Epicurus

Classical Theism (12): The logical problem of evil defeats modern theism/Christianity

Bible Doctrines (The True-Good-Beautiful)

T/G/B

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

Opening passages: Heb. 11:1-3, 8-10, 13-16. Psa 73:24-25.

Preparation for the Word of God, John 8:31-36. Truth seeker of functional view of religion (Freudian/Marxian).

3 Parts to Bible Class: There is far more to Truth and Reality and the SL than merely asserting a true proposition.

Part I: Spiritual basics: Love and the nature of the human will: libertarianism, compatibilism, or hard determinism.

Part II: Philosophical foundations. POL: Ludwig Wittgenstein, language and our modern “death” of God age.

Part III: Doctrinal development: Classical theism 12: How the logical problem of evil exposes fallacious views of God.

Part I: Basics: Anything that is not done out of love for God defaults to some form of legalism or religionism.

1. Love for God is the root, hinge, and fruit of all virtues. Love is necessary and sufficient cause of virtue.
2. Consider the power of love in creating virtuous Christians in 1 Cor. 13. Want more patience, kindness, humility? How about more faith and hope and maturity? The Bible tells us how and it is not by conduit systems.
3. Love and virtue are directly related to one’s character and will. There are three views on the human will and the causal activity of God.
 - a. Option #1: Libertarianism: a person’s will is totally free and autonomous. This is the most popular view, especially in free will defense on the POE. However, this view is incoherent as well as an absolute nightmare in trying to make it work with man’s fallen nature or the POE.
 - b. Option #2: Compatibilism: a person’s will is somewhat free, but it is connected to antecedent factors like his character and desires. His will is compatible with his developed sense of good or sin.
 - c. Option #3: Hard determinism: no free will. God determines it all. This is fatalism.
4. God and human choices (concurrency):
 - a. God is the cause enabling all operating causes to operate.
 - b. Therefore, every operating agent acts through God’s power.
 - c. Every power in any agent is from God and so God is the efficient cause of all operations.
 - d. Apart from God’s concurrency, there would be nothing—no good and no sinful acts.
 - e. As free will agents we act through His power.
 - f. God is the first cause. All lower agents’ causes work through His power/cause.
 - g. Therefore, God really is the greater cause of every action of secondary causes of free will, which is why Scripture says that all of man’s works are attributed to God, Isa. 26:12; John 15:5; Philip. 2:13.
 - h. God works in and through every agent according to its nature.
 - i. In concurrency God’s causation is no threat to us being free. Rather, His direct causation in giving *esse* to everything, including our free will and actions, guarantees our choices.
 - j. There is no free will that operates outside of God’s causation.
 - k. In concurrency God writes the story of our lives in providing the existence and actualization of our wills, which are free to turn according to compatible antecedent factors.

5: Hermeneutics

4: Language-92

3: Epistemology 32

- Existence 50
- History 50

2: Metaphysics 32

- Trans. 50

1: Reality

- Logic 32,
- Truth 32

Part 2: Philosophy of Language (92)

Outline

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is philosophy of language?
- ✓ Theories of meaning
- ✓ Plato's *Cratylus*
 - Hermogenes
 - Cratylus
 - Socrates
- ✓ Aristotle (384-322 BC)
- ✓ Transition to modern philosophy of language
- ✓ Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)
- ✓ Gottlob Frege (1848-1925)

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976).

W. V. O. Quine (1908-2000).

Noam Chomsky (1928-)

Realist view of meaning.

Foundation of meaning.

Communication of meaning.

Elements of language.

Function of language

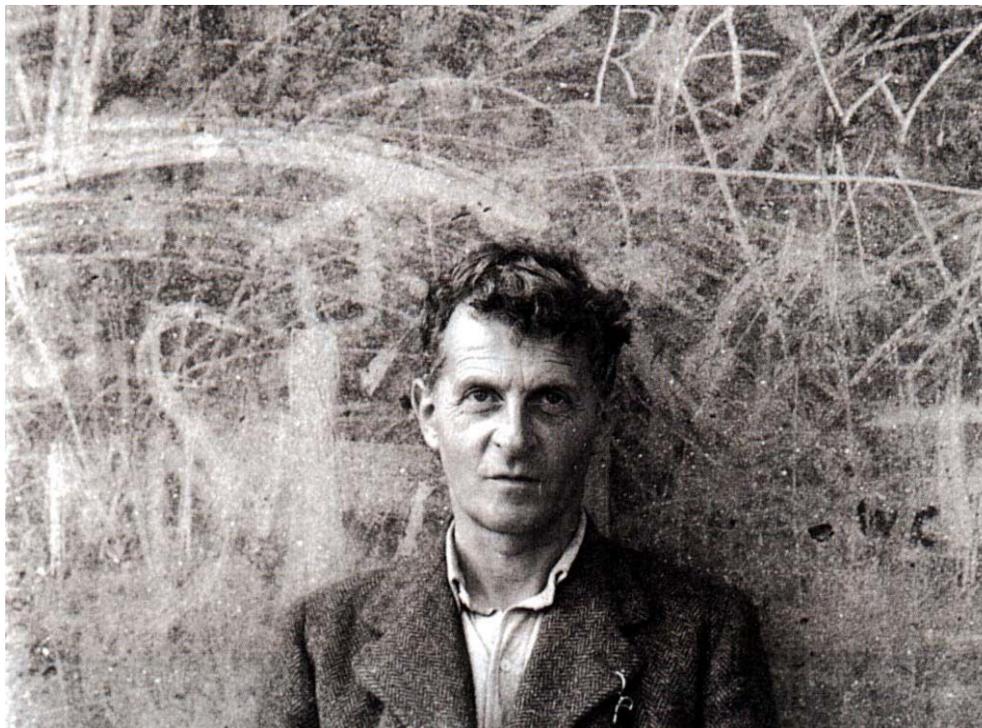
Meaningful God-talk.

Analytic Philosophy

Conclusion.

Analogy.

Metaphysical analogy.



Ludwig Wittgenstein

“The limits of my language means the limits of my world”

(This is manifestly false)

1. History of modern philosophy: realism, epistemology, and now analytical philosophy.
2. A few words about our modern “death of God” Nietzschean and Freudian era where God only lives in the heart.
3. There is no greater significant figure in the development of analytical philosophy than Ludwig Wittgenstein. His two works:
 - a. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
 - b. *Philosophical Investigations*
4. Seven propositions in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*:
 - a. The world is everything that is the case.
 - b. What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts.
 - c. The logical picture of the facts is the thought.
 - d. The thought is the significant proposition.
 - e. Propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions.
 - f. The general form of truth-function is $\overline{p}, \overline{\xi}, N(\overline{\xi})$
 - g. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.

\overline{p} = all atomic propositions

$\overline{\xi}$ = selection of propositions

$N(\overline{x})$ = operator for series of propositions

1. The problem of evil is a major reason many do not believe in God and why many Christians are disoriented to the nature of evil, good, and God, and eventually lose their faith by reductionism.
2. Overview of God's Story and evil: Gen. 50:20; Psa. 119:89-91; Isa. 46:9-10; Dan. 4:35; Matt. 26:24; John 17:12; Acts 4:24-28; 17:24-28; Rom. 9:10-23; Eph. 1:3-6, 11; 2:10; Philip 2:12-13; Col. 1:16-17; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 Pet. 2:8; Rev. 13:8; 17:17.

What kind of God do you believe in?

Modern View of God

Personalism

Neo-theism, Personalism. Consider Matthew Arnold:

God is a magnified and not natural man... In general as God is said to have made man in his own image, the image of God, man has returned the compliment and has made God as being outwardly and inwardly in the image of man. What we in general do is to take the best thinking and loving of the best man to better this best, call it perfect and to say that this is God, so we construct a magnified and not natural man by dropping out all that in man seems as a source of weakness and by highlighting the very utmost that all in man seems as a source of strength in man such as his thought and his love.

Classical View of God

Simplicity

Divine simplicity: The doctrine of divine simplicity has a number of crucial implications, which are, accordingly, also essential to classical theism. It entails that God is *immutable* or changeless . . . It entails that He is *eternal* in the sense of being altogether outside of time and space. It entails that He does not “have” existence, or an essence, or His various attributes but rather *is identical to* His existence, His nature and His attributes: He *is* His existence which *is* His essence which *is* His power which *is* His knowledge which *is* His goodness. Affirmed by such Christian, Jewish, and Muslim thinkers as Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Maimonides, Avicenna, and Averroes. It is central to the theology of pagan thinkers like Plotinus. It is the *de fide* teaching of the Roman Church, affirmed at the fourth Lateran council and the first Vatican council, and the denial of which amounts to heresy.

What kind of God do you believe in?

Modern View of God

Personalism

(Cleanthes, Modern Evangelicalism, Plantinga, Craig, Moreland, Hicks)

- Univocal understanding.
- God is anthropopathic (noun, adj.)
- God is not simple
- God's goodness means God always does the moral and obligatory right action.
- Eternality is only in beginning and end.
- God is person like you and me except He does not have a body.
- He is in time.
- He has separate attributes.
- He is a Moral Being.
- He behaves Himself.
- He is limited with respect to what He can do.
- God does not know the future of free choices.
- He needs evil to produce good.
- God's knowledge is discursive (Molinism)

Classical View of God

Simplicity

(Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, orthodox position through history)

- God is simple.
- Analogical understanding.
- God is Esse (act of existence)
- God is incomprehensible.
- Descriptions of Him are analogical.
- He is not a moral being.
- He is unlimited in power.
- He knows all things at once.
- He is timeless.

1. The neo-theism in contemporary Christianity has only itself to blame for the modern problem of evil
2. The problem of evil cannot be solved in neo-theism. We will look at all attempts.
3. Discussion of the logical problem of evil (Epicurus, Philo/Hume, Mackie)
 1. God is all-powerful.
 2. God is all-loving.
 3. God is all-knowing.
 4. Evil exists.
4. The only way to solve this problem is by a total reorientation in our understanding on the nature of God, the nature of good, the nature of evil, and a host of other major issues. This problem is impossible to solve apart from philosophical realism. There are seven metaphysical developments that are required to see the fallacy of the logical problem of evil. We need to see the failure of all modern attempts before we can really *understand* what is going on here.



J.L. Mackie
1917-1981

5. J.L. Mackie is categorized as a hard atheist. He is not a mere skeptic or a soft atheist lacks belief in God. A word about new definitions of atheism that applies to all babies.
6. Mackie understands exactly what the modern theist claims (God is omnipotent, God is all-good, God is all-knowing, and there is evil). He is not engaged in strawmen tactics.
7. Moreover, Mackie understands exactly what your response will be as watches you modify the various propositions.
8. His argument is powerful because it is logical and a priori. Science or future discoveries are no help here. How does this compare with evidential arguments?
9. His charge is that the theist is positively irrational, that he lives with his own contradictions, that he is committed to irrational faith. Does faith remove contradictions? Would you believe that square can be the same as a circle if you have enough faith?

10. All modern evangelical responses (Hicks, Swinburne, Craig, Moreland, et al) to Mackie's logical argument fail as they all modify one of the propositions.
11. Mackie's argument is not about what cannot be proved about God. Rather, the argument is a proof positive of the lack of existence of God. The existence of God is necessarily false according to his logical argument.
12. If God is omnipotent and good, why is there evil? Does God not want to wipe out evil?
13. Can an omnipotent being be limited? Can He be constrained by His own nature? Does this even make sense? Does God not have the power to make free creatures who do not sin by giving them beatific vision? What about Adam and Eve? What about Satan?

14. The fallaciousness of the “means to an end” defense (Hicks, Swinburne)
 - a. This teaches that God *needs* x (evil) to achieve y (good). This “needs” is understood as “necessary.”
 - b. If it is necessarily true that God *cannot* get good without evil as a means, then God simply cannot get the good any other way.
 - c. Of course the “can’t” is modification of P1. God is now limited and needs evil to produce good.
 - d. Do I really need evil to get to good? What about the Holy Spirit? Is evil necessary for progress in virtue?
 - e. Who created this “necessary” law that requires evil? Is God subject to laws He creates?
 - f. If God is good, which means opposing evil, then why is there evil?
 - g. Are we saying that God is omnipotent, and wholly good, which means fighting against evil, but evil is required to get to the good?
 - h. The key issue is the idea of “necessary,” so it does not apply to some cases where evil does result in good.

15. The fallaciousness of the free will defense (Alvin Plantinga) is that it places limits on God's power and it requires libertarian view of freedom. In this view, it is impossible for God to create any world in which people do not sin

16. More on free will defenses against the problem of evil.
 - a. It is the most popular.
 - b. The idea is the free will is a 3rd order good that explains the existence of lower orders of evil.
 - c. Free will is so valuable that it is worth all of the pain and suffering.
 - d. Puts limits on God's omnipotence or knowledge. Why create Satan?
 - e. Free will defenses are always libertarian and so they are ontologically random or irrational. In this case, we could be Charles Manson for no reason or he could be us.
 - f. Is it really "impossible" for God to make a world with free beings who would not sin? No! He has already done it; it is called Heaven.
 - g. Why not start with Heaven? Do we really need a Holocaust and children dying of cancer and starving to death to give other freedom?
 - h. Why not have a perfect world of happiness?
 - i. Free will defenses offer false dilemma: robots or free creatures.
 - j. Is the free will of the rapist worth a child tortured being raped?