

Faith Bible Church

“Problem” of Evil-2: “Logical” Problems of Evil

Acts 17:24-28 "The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; ²⁶ and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ that **they should seek the God** (ζητεῖν τὸν θεόν), **if perhaps they might grope** (ψηλαφήσειαν) for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring.'

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 (10)
 ○ Metaphysics

John 8:32 you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Enough BD to be overcomer

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

Lacks BD, DV

Eph 4:12-14, God gives pastors to churches for the purpose of edifying believers so they will no longer be children

Mature Believer – Level 3- Metaphysical Maturity

- High abstract thinking with enormous capacity for synthesis of BD and spiritual realities.
- Great capacity for BD and PLG.
- Deep and well developed worldview that he can defend.
- Developed view of metaphysics, e.g., Esse, True nature of God

Young adult – Level 2- Doctrinal conceptualization

- Synthesizes truth
- Doctrinally oriented
- Aware of anthropopathisms.

Baby – Level 1 = Basic Bible verses

- Dependent on others
- Limited to basic apprehension
- Unable to defend concepts because lack of synthesis of truths
- Limited to isolated Bible verses
- Empirically oriented
- Tends to anthropopathize God.

Views of Truth

**Correspondence =
BIBLICAL VIEW**

Correspondence = Total Truth =
Takes both science and Scripture seriously!
Recognizes God as Author of 2 Books

1) Natural
Revelation, Rom.
1:18-20; 2:14-15
Natural power
Science

2) Special Revelation,
2 Tim. 3:16-17.
John 17:17
Supernatural power
God

Cosmic/Relative views of Truth

- 1-Coherence: it fits with my views
- 2-Pragmatic: it works
- 3-Functional: it functions
- 4-Existential: it fills my needs

Can one know truth through
someone's lifestyle?

- **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**

Signs and wonders?

- 2 Thessalonians 2:9;
Deut.13:1-3; Rev13:11, 13-14

Pragmatism?

- Jer. 44:17

Fundamentalist: Fragmented View of Truth

- Bels.: Anti-logic, anti-philosophy, and anti-science
- Fideists: Denigrate science and education
- Scientism: Rejection of Agent; irrational
- Liberalism: Distrust Bible
- Mysticism: Distrust Reality

Resurrection Special #69:

Problem of Evil-2: Job

**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**

Matthew 26:36-56

Garden of Gethsemane

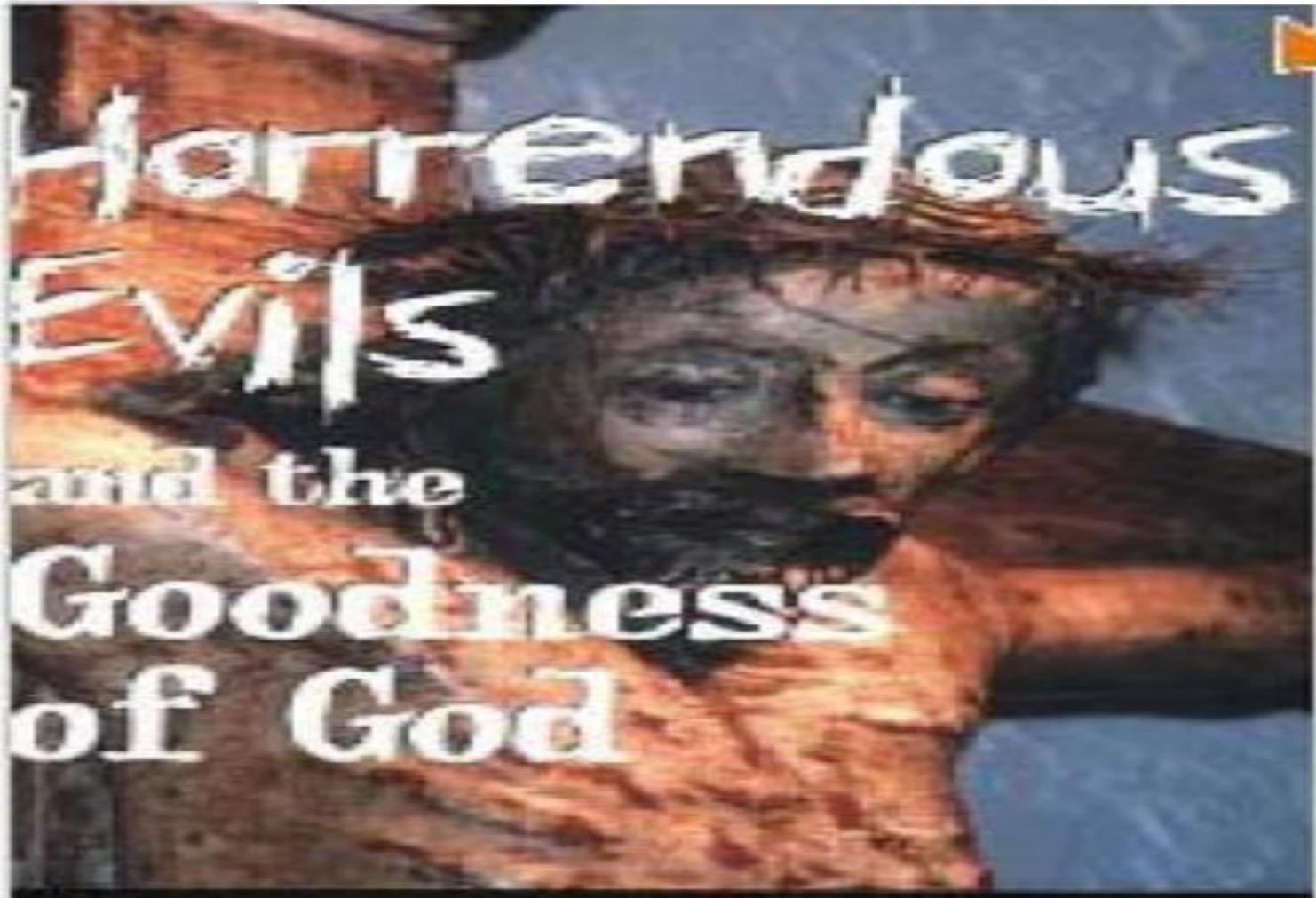
1. Pride in Gethsemane.

2. Kenosis of Christ

- 'Ehyeh, Esse, Ex 3:14

- "Problem" of evil

The Ultimate Answer to the Problem of Evil



John 18:37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

1. It is impossible for us to understand the problem of evil or its solution—at least accurately or in any depth—apart from **metaphysics, philosophy, Bible doctrine**, all working in tandem under the ministry of **God the Holy Spirit**.
 - a. **Metaphysics** is the study of Being. This gives us an understanding of reality of beings, essences, non-essences (Evil), categories, and the Ultimate Being of God (especially His aseity, simplicity, and impassibility—all of which were established in the early orthodox councils). It is unfortunate that Catholic priests have a better understanding of the nature of God, and the Trinity than most Protestants. Catholics do a lot better job of talking about God than Protestants and Protestants do a lot better job of talking about the spiritual life. Metaphysics also enable us to go beyond anthropomorphizing God. Some of the metaphysics will include technical classifications of things.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- b. **Philosophy** gives us the tools of reason so we can make important distinctions between logical or illogical arguments. This study will include an examination of the positions of the world's greatest philosophers and metaphysicians on the problem of evil (J.L. Mackie, Leibniz, Marilyn Adams, Alvin Plantinga, Eleonore Stump, Thomas Aquinas). Apart from understanding these arguments, we do not understand the issues and default to clichés that only reveal that we do not get it. There will times when you will be very confused even *after* Bible class. This is normal as the believer moves into metaphysics—reality as such.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- c. **Bible doctrine** provides the only path of Truth. BD will not only enable us to stay on the right path, it will provide the answers to the various existential and theological issues. It is Bible doctrine that enables us to go from Exodus 3:14 and John 8:58.
- d. **The Holy Spirit** provides us with the divine illumination to see and the capacity to appreciate spiritual truths of God and the problem of evil. He enables us to grasp Esse, and non-esses, as well as the nature of good, evil, and God.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- e. **Going from the dots and the whole picture.** As we take in the information you will have many questions. Think of the information as dots. The more dots we create the more you will be able to make connections. Apart from more dots you cannot see the whole picture. If you get confused just keep focusing on the dots. But apart from this process you will not understand the issues and objections, you will not appreciate the arguments. We need to be educated about these things. So when you talk about the problem of evil, you are aware of the dialogue on that topic. If you do not know what the metaphysicians are saying then you really do not know about the problem of evil—except for superficial pithy sayings like “God allows evil to teach us things.” Yet, you really do not really know the nature of God, evil, or things.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

2. Discussion of the problem of evil begins with logical propositions. It is asserted by atheists (cf. David Hume and J.L. Mackie) that the problem of evil *proves* there is no God. Instead of merely piling up evidence in the cosmological and teleological arguments, they assert that the problem of evil *logically proves* that there is no God. Logic is the most powerful tool because logic is true regardless of the time or place. Logic forces one to take the problem of evil and God seriously!!!!

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

3. J.L. Mackie's thesis is that theism is positively irrational because the theologian believes in two contradictory propositions to be true when in fact they both can't be true simultaneously. There cannot be the God of Christianity and evil too. They both can't simultaneously be true, yet the theologian says that they are. Mackie thinks that is nonsense to believe that there is a holy omnipotent God who exists and yet evil exists at the same time.
4. The logical problem has been answered by Plantinga, and we will have to be somewhat familiar with his defense and other defenses.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

5. However, just because one can show that there is no logical contradiction, it does not mean that one can provide a *theodicy*.
6. It is one thing to handle the charge of irrationality, it is quite another to explain why “innocent” suffer. Consider as Lucretius (98-55 B.C.) put it “*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?*”

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

7. Logical exercises. The importance of your having logic antennae up.
 - a. If evolution is true then that proves that there is no God.
 - b. If multiverses are true then that proves that there is no God.
 - c. If the earth is 4.54 billion years old then that proves there is no God.
 - d. If the universe is 13.75 billion years old then that proves there is no God.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- e. I only believe in science.
- f. Science is the only rational means of discovering Truth.
- g. Physics is complete.
- h. The universe created itself out of nothing (or mathematical points).
- i. You finally *convinced* me that logic is important.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- i. No one can know truth.
- j. That's true for me but not true for you.
- k. Reality is not real (Pyrrhonism, Eastern mysticism).
- l. I can't believe in an uncreated eternal God, eternity does not make sense to me.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

8. J.L. Mackie's famous argument:
 1. God is all powerful.
 2. God is all loving.
 3. God is all knowing.
 4. Yet, there is horrendous unspeakable evil in the world.

9. How can one hold to all four? Seems like there is a great incompatibility here. One could hold to 1, 2 and 4, or 1, 3, 4. But how all four? If 1-3 are true, then from whence is evil? Popular answers: The Fall; Satan, then why did God create Satan? Freewill defense; but why did God endow creatures with freewill in light of 1-3? Could God create freewill creatures who would not fall? If not, then you deny 1. If yes, then what do you do with 2-3? However, it must be noted that there really is no inherent *formal* logical problem with 1-4. It is all how you define the terms.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

10. What we will need to do is to show logical compatibility of p (God is all-knowing, all-loving, all-God, all-powerful) = q (horrendous evil in the world) is to bring in r (?) with p . Either one has to deny something in p or add and r to make p logically consistent with q . What is your r ? We will look at all of the options and put it all together. Most will not say what r equals or use some pat answer. If p and $r = q$ then there is no problem. The freewill defender's r is what this discussion is all about: Plantinga's r will be the freewill defense; the Molinist's r will be in other possible worlds; Aquinas' r will have a radical different metaphysical nature; the Voluntarist's r will be in the capriciousness of God; Hicks' r will be in soul-making, Libertarians' r looks altogether different, and the Fideist's r something else, et al.

$p \ r = q$

r (?)

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

11. Overview of the various *logical* arguments on evil and God.
 - a. The problem on the *origin* of evil.
 1. God is absolutely perfect.
 2. God cannot create anything imperfect.
 3. But perfect creatures cannot do evil.
 4. Therefore, neither God nor His perfect creatures can produce evil.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

- b. The problem on the nature of evil:
 - 1. God is Author of everything.
 - 2. Evil is something.
 - 3. Therefore, God is the Author of Evil.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

c. The problem of the persistence of Evil.

1. If God were all-good, He would destroy evil.
2. If God were all-powerful, He could destroy evil.
3. But evil is not destroyed.
4. Therefore, there is no such God.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

d. The Purpose of Evil.

1. An all-good God must have a good purpose for everything.
2. There is no good purpose for some suffering.
3. Therefore, there cannot be an all-good God.

e. The Avoidability of Evil.

1. If God was free, He could have avoided this evil world.
2. If He was all good, He would not have desired this evil world
3. But God has permitted this evil world.
4. Therefore, no such God exists.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

12. The problem of evil cannot be solved apart from understanding Esse, essences, metaphysics and the true nature of evil (non-esse). Once one understands the nature of Esse and essences there is no problem of evil. Esse is crucial when it comes to understanding God and evil. As we will see, evil is something that lacks esse (existence) in some respect. Evil is privation, more on this later.

13. Understanding Esse means understanding the basics of metaphysics and theology. They are tethered together. They all hang or fall together. The reason that contemporary Christian is such a mess in regard to the nature of God is because of loss of classical theism. One cannot understand anything substantial on an empirical level (Mortimer Adler). Conceptualization must be developed. Great harm to understanding God is due to emphasis on empiricism and lack of metaphysics.

Problem of Evil-2, Introductory Matters

14. Contemporary Christianity has rejected the Classical Theism and this has resulted in God increasingly becoming anthropomorphized (cf. comments in the media, in churches, and bestsellers). They believe that have to make God like man before He is meaningful. Contemporary view is that God is only different in degree than man. God is but a Big Man.