

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL - INTRODUCTION (Video 5:00)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How would you respond to this objection: “If God is all loving, why would he create a world with so much evil in it?”
2. What are some of the most egregious examples of evil that you have experienced or observed in your lifetime?
3. Do you know anyone who has not experienced evil?
4. Why are we as human beings so hurt by the evil that happens to us?
5. Why don’t human beings get used to evil happening to us? Why does it seem to intrude on our lives and shock us?
6. Why do we human beings cause and perpetuate so much evil in the world?
7. How would you respond to this objection: “If God is all loving and all powerful, like you Christians say, then why does evil persist? Either God is all loving, but he’s not powerful enough to stop evil, or he is powerful enough to stop evil, but he is not all loving and doesn’t care to stop evil. However, if God is both all loving and all powerful, evil wouldn’t exist.”
8. Have you ever asked an atheist what their answer is to the problem of evil? What did they say, or what do you think they would say, based on their belief that no God exists?
9. Why do you think it is necessary for every person, no matter their worldview, to answer the problem of evil?
10. Discuss how worldviews other than Christianity answer the problem of evil (i.e., Hinduism, atheism, Islam, etc.).

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week have a discussion with a non-Christian friend and ask them these questions:
 - 1) Do you think evil exists?
 - 2) Where do you think evil came from?
 - 3) Can evil be stopped?
 - 4) How do you personally cope with evil on a personal level?
2. Read “Why the Problem of Evil Is Still a Problem” by Alan Shlemon:
<https://www.str.org/w/why-the-problem-of-evil-is-still-a-problem>

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL - WHAT IS EVIL? (Video 10:46)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. From a Christian perspective, how do we know the difference between right and wrong?
 - See Genesis 3:1–5, Romans 2:14–16, 1 Timothy 4:1–2, 1 Peter 3:16.
2. Can non-Christians know the difference between right and wrong? Why or why not?
3. Why do objective right and wrong need to exist before we can recognize evil?
4. How does the existence of evil prove relativism is false?
5. How would you respond to this objection: “I believe that every person creates their own morality and as long as you aren’t hurting anyone, you do you.”
6. Where do right and wrong come from on an atheistic worldview?
7. How would you respond to this objection: “Morality is part of human evolution. Our sense of right and wrong has evolved within humanity, aiding in our survival as a species. There is no God who determines right and wrong. Each culture has their own sense of right and wrong, and that is just part of how morality continues to evolve in different groups.”
8. How does the existence of evil prove atheism is false?
9. Logically, there is no standard of morality for the relativist or the atheist...yet they experience evil and are disturbed by it. Why?
10. How is the existence of evil in our world evidence for God’s existence?

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read “Evil as Evidence for God” by Greg Koukl:
<https://www.str.org/w/evil-as-evidence-for-god>
2. This week read “Encountering a Relativist” by Tim Barnett:
<https://www.str.org/w/encountering-a-relativist>

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL - WHAT IS EVIL? PART 2 (Video 9:01)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. How would you define evil in your own words? (Don't just give *examples* of evil, give a *definition* of evil.)
2. How can a shadow or a donut hole be used as an illustration to explain the Christian view of evil? What other illustrations can you think of that could help convey this idea?
3. How would you respond to this objection: "Christians believe that God created everything in existence. If God is the Creator of everything, then God created evil, because evil is a thing."
 - Read Genesis 1:4, 1:12b, 1:18b, 1:25b, 1:31a. How can these verses help you establish that God did not create evil?
4. According to Scripture, can God commit evil? Could God create evil? (See Numbers 23:19, Psalm 5:4, Titus 1:2, James 1:13-14, 1 John 1:5.)
5. Read Genesis 3:1-24.
 - *Digging Deeper*: There are two types of evil in this world:
 - o Moral Evil: Evil that is committed by free moral agents (murder, adultery, theft, lust, lying, etc.)
 - o Natural Evil: Evil that occurs from the natural order and is not brought about completely by free moral agents
 - There are four types of Natural Evil:
 - a. Type 1:** Evils that are started by human agency, then spread by nature (forest fires started by humans, certain birth defects like Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, etc.)
 - b. Type 2:** Disorders caused by genetic malfunction (blindness, deafness, misshapen limbs, mental handicaps, etc.)
 - i. Read John 9:1-3. How does this passage show Jesus' view of natural evil?
 - c. Type 3:** Natural disasters not started by human agency (fires started by lightening, earthquakes, droughts, pestilence, famine, tsunamis, etc.)
 - d. Type 4:** Diseases that result from bacteria or viruses (cancer, the flu, bubonic plague, etc.)
6. Reread Genesis 3:17-19, then read Romans 8:19-23. What do these passages teach about the origin of Natural Evil in our world?
7. According to the Bible, where did Moral Evil and Natural Evil come from?
8. With these things in mind, how would you respond to this objection: "I can't believe in a God who would create a world with childhood leukemia, earthquakes that kill thousands, and pedophiles."
9. Read Genesis 3:16-19. What does this passage show us about how God intended for this world to operate? How did the Natural Evil resulting from the curse affect man's rulership of the earth?

ACTION POINTS:

1. Take some time this week to think through how much of your time and money is used to mitigate evil from happening to you. What would it be like to live in a world without evil?
2. This week read "Would We Know Good without Evil?" by Amy Hall:
<https://www.str.org/w/would-we-know-good-without-evil->

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL - WHY IS THERE EVIL? (Video 9:59)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. God is all loving and all powerful, yet evil exists. The question that we must deal with is, Why does God allow evil? Have you ever asked this question? What answers did you come up with?
 - *Digging Deeper:* In this video, Jon Noyes says, “Moral freedom is something good, but the good thing God gave us also makes a bad thing—evil—possible.”
 - o God chose to give human beings moral freedom, which is why Adam was told not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - Some have asked why God created that tree in the first place. The reason is because removing the possibility to do evil (removing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) would remove moral freedom from Adam and Eve. It seems that God wanted human beings to have moral freedom, even with the risk of them using their freedom poorly.
2. Why do you think God created us with moral freedom? What positive abilities does moral freedom give us that we wouldn't have without it?
3. Does God have good reasons for allowing evil to exist for now? What are they?
4. Read the following verses and discuss how God is using evil for our good.
 - James 1:2–4, 2 Corinthians 1:3–5, 2 Corinthians 4:16–18, John 16:32–33, Romans 5:1–5, Romans 8:16–18, 1 Peter 4:12–16
5. How does our knowledge of evil help us to know God better?
6. Read the following verses and discuss how God is using evil and our response to it as potential for rewards in eternity. Discuss the reward mentioned and the requirement for the reward.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:10, Matthew 6:1–6, Mark 10:40, Romans 8:16–17, 1 Corinthians 3:13–15, Colossians 3:22–25, 2 Timothy 4:7–8, 1 Peter 5:1–4, Revelation 2:10, Revelation 2:17, Revelation 2:26–28, Revelation 3:21
7. How has God used evil in your life to teach you that sin is bad and destructive?
8. How has God taken the evil that has happened to you and used it to bring about good in your life already?
9. How does the knowledge of your own evil/sinfulness make you appreciate the love of God and the salvation he offers?

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read “A Good Reason for Evil” by Greg Koukl:
<https://www.str.org/w/a-good-reason-for-evil-1>
2. This week read “Evil and the Cross” by Amy Hall:
<https://www.str.org/w/evil-and-the-cross>

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL - CONCLUSION (Video 10:22)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What has God done about evil in the past?
2. What is God doing about evil in the present?
3. What will God do about evil in the future?
4. How can you play a part in restraining evil in your family?
 - See Ephesians 5:22–6:4.
5. How can you play a part in restraining evil in your church?
 - See Titus 2:1–15.
6. How can you play a part in restraining evil in your government?
 - See Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Timothy 2:1–4.
7. Discuss the many ways that Christianity has benefited the world culturally.
8. Read John 1:1–18. What does this passage say Jesus' mission was?
9. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21. What does this passage tell us that Jesus did about our personal evil?
10. Read Isaiah 11:1–11. What does this passage say the kingdom of Jesus will be like in the future?
How will evil be dealt with?
11. What are you looking forward to the most about the day that evil is abolished for good?

ACTION POINTS:

1. This week read “Why We Need the Local Church” by Jon Noyes:
<https://www.str.org/w/why-we-need-the-local-church?>
2. This week watch “Submit to Authority in Love” by Jon Noyes:
<https://www.str.org/w/submit-to-authority-in-love>