



The Problem of Evil

with Dr. David Schenk and Richard Prensner

Q & A

Outline:

If God is allowing evil, isn't he implicitly approving of it?

- He is approving of the conditions that he has to put in place that would permit evil to occur.
- In order for some of the greater goods to be possible, he has to allow evil to happen. He still does not want evil to occur.
- If you allow it to happen, it will happen sometimes.
- Why couldn't he permit us to have the power to commit evil, but also have it so that we don't have the power to exercise it wrongly?
 - This would not be real libertarian free will.

Maybe God has to permit evil for some greater good, but why so much of it?

- The evil that he has permitted seems overabundant.
- God created us for virtues. Trial is a training ground for the virtues.
- This life is like an amplified boot camp for the beatific vision, for beholding God. When we get to heaven, it will be before infinite beauty, infinite perfection.
- Think of an infant or young child suffering? Not everyone needs the same quantity of training in the boot camp.
- We need to love and love fiercely, but also to be willing to lose all that we so fiercely love.
- Why are some people put through a boot camp if they will not be saved?
 - There is a way for them to make it through, but they don't choose it.
 - Why is it that they so stubbornly refuse the offer of salvation?
 - They are in love with something that they cannot let go.

If Bill Rowe gives good evidence against God's existence in his version of the problem of evil, then why isn't atheism correct?

- Throughout of all of natural science, you always go with whichever hypothesis which enjoys the best overall balance of support.

Why do you suppose so many skeptics are unsatisfied with the philosophical answers to the problem of evil?

- Understand the person who doubts before you can reach them. Listen to them more than talking to them.
- It is the better classical teacher who can affirm that these are good questions.



- Incredulity: The notion of God's existence feels crazy to some skeptics.
- Too many people expect philosophical answers to the problem of evil to take away their pain. It can explain why your pain is there, but it can't remove it. When you see the reason why your pain is there, it is less painful. Because I understand the necessity of the pain, I am a lot more willing to endure it. It's where our pain feels inexplicable to us that we object to it the most.
 - Show real sympathy and compassion for this pain.

In your own theory, you say damnation begins in love. Do you really mean that?

- Enchantment is always dangerous. There's nothing stopping it from going too far.
- We have to be trained into hatred of our own self-obsession. That way when we stand before the infinite, we won't rebel. We won't cling to what we wanted to cling to.
- What kind of love is fitting for us to give to God? Only a love that gets completely carried away is appropriate.
- One of the great loves that can bring down an angel is a love of justice (defense of the defenseless).
- We have to become partisan, but we have to be willing to abandon our partisanship.

On your theory, why does love have to be so perilous?

- It is preparing us for the infinite.
- Our love for God has to be an all or nothing deal.