

**General Topics :: can anyone respond to this quote for me**

**can anyone respond to this quote for me - posted by bible4life (), on: 2010/10/24 21:58**

“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

I was commenting on a friend on facebook who basically said that Abraham Lincoln trusted in God though he lost three children to death, civil war was going on and he got shot in the head dead. I responded and a friend of his posted that what I have at the top and I tried to answer it but I would like to see someone else respond so I can answer back to him.

**Re: can anyone respond to this quote for me - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/10/24 23:02**

R.C. Sproul expounds on this dilemma here:

<http://www.christianity.com/ligonier/?speaker=sroul1>

My notes from the message:

1. What is evil? Evil isn't. It is nothing (no-thing).

It is not an independent force out there plotting to get you. It's not a substance, being, or status.

It is an action of something that is a thing.

It's understood 2 ways:

(1) by way of negation: It can only be seen against the backdrop of what is good.

Un-godliness, un-righteousness, in-justice, unholy. The opposite of the positive being affirmed. You can only understand it when you understand godliness, righteousness, etc.

(2) by privation (a lack or deficiency).

Something necessary and essential being absent.

What is sin? Sin is a want of conformity to God's law. Righteousness involves conforming; sin is a failure/a lack of conforming.

(3) It is however very real and its impact is very devastating, not an illusion.

Evil has been called the Achilles heel of Christianity, the supreme point of vulnerability.

The existence of evil is very problematic for the existence of God. We claim God is omnipotent and good.

How does evil exist? Either He is not good or is not all-powerful.

What kind of being could observe the pain and wickedness of His creation and not eliminate it? He must not be good. On the other hand, He is good and loving and wants to get rid of the cancer, but is helpless too.

2. Where does evil come from?

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I don't know. Augustine couldn't, Aquinas couldn't, Edwards couldn't.

A Theodicy is needed. (An intellectual reasoned defense of God for the problem of evil in the universe.)

Feel the weight of the problem. Think of your deepest pain you've felt. When you were misused, taken advantage of, humiliated. Think of starvation, murders, rapes. Think of Hurricane Katrinas and twin towers falling.

Look at Adam and Eve in the garden. Why did they sin?

Common answer is human free will is the source of evil, but this doesn't solve the problem. Before a choice is made however, a moral inclination is present. James 1. Where does the evil inclination come from?

The inclination is already sin (see Sermon on the Mount).

Another one is the devil made me do it. But if it were real coercion, it would be excusable and would not put the person in danger of the judgment the bible makes clear is so very real.

Another is ignorance: the devil tricked Eve. But then she would be innocent because of invincible ignorance. But God gave her the command and she knew to not to eat it.

It's an impossible possibility. It had to be possible because it happened. But we can't find a reason for it to happen and yet it did.

1. Metaphysical evil (spiritual imperfection) gives rise to physical evil (Katrina, disease) and brings to pass moral evil. The world was created less than perfect (for it could not be God) and from this point of weakness evil arises.

God can't create another God (perfection). By definition the second god would be a creation and not the Creator.

Meta gives rise to physical which breeds moral. This would alleviate guilt from sin however because it would be inescapable.

2. It is a sin to call good evil and a sin to call evil good. And that's a sin we commit every day when we try to justify all the ways we sin and blow it.

Evil is not good, but it is good that there is evil otherwise it wouldn't be in a universe created by a perfect God. Unless God has sovereign power over evil, He cannot fulfill the promise of Rom. 8:28.

And so while the Christian has difficulty explaining the problem of evil, the problem actually lies with the unbeliever:

For the question is not why is there evil (the absence of good) but why is there good?

Evil exists:

1. Because we are sinners in a fallen world. The question is why is there good. Doctrine of common grace.
2. To lead us to repentance (Luke 13:1-5) and grow/discipline us (Rom. 5, James 1, Ps. 119/Heb. 12)
3. To reveal the goodness/love of God. Joseph, Rom. 5:9, Day of Judgment (I don't know the origin of evil, but I do know the future of it)

-Rom. 5:21-The true believer will not abuse such a revelation.

-Sometime we need to change our definition of good in order to fit God's agenda:

-Look at the Cross: Is. 53:10, Rev. 13:8, Acts 4:28 cf. Acts 3:14-15,17

**Re: can anyone respond to this quote for me - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/10/24 23:32**

This quote looks to me like a carnal person trying to understand God and he cannot do it.

I would discard it as being worthless, of no value.

1Corinthians 2:14: NASB

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised

My understanding....  
ginnyrose

**Re: can anyone respond to this quote for me, on: 2010/10/24 23:40**

This is an argument atheists use which ignores the gift of free will. Love is possible because we have the ability to refuse to love. The ability to do evil is a gift, not to be used for evil, but it is the opportunity to freely do good out of genuine love. If God had not given us the ability to do evil then we would be like the animals which live by instinct, incapable of virtue. The ability to disobey God is a blessing because it allows us to freely obey God out of love.

If God prevented all evil then we would no longer be free.

If God merely prevented the harmful effects of evil choices (stopping bullets in mid air, etc), then evil choices would no longer be inherently incompatible with love. Thus there would be no such thing as an evil choice, therefore no freedom or virtue.

Atheists are people who know God exists...

"they knew God" (Rom 1:21)

"God hath shewed it unto them" (Rom 1:19)

"clearly seen, being understood" (Rom 1:20)

"manifest in them" (Rom 1:19)

...but don't like to think about him.

"they did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom 1:28)

This is what atheists know about God:

"the truth" (Rom 1:18)

"the truth of God" (Rom 1:25)

"that which may be known of God" (Rom 1:19)

"the invisible things of him" (Rom 1:20)

"his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom 1:20)

"the glory of the incorruptible God" (Rom 1:22)

"the Creator" (Rom 1:25)

Atheists know about the glorious, powerful, eternal, hidden, incorruptible creator. They just lie because they don't like to think about God.

They know God is morally good:

"knowing the judgment of God" (Rom 1:32)

God's law is written in their heart/conscience:

"the work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom 2:15)

"their conscience also bearing witness" (Rom 2:15)

"their thoughts the mean while accusing" (Rom 2:15)

Humoring silly logic games can be a waste of time because they have no excuse:

"they are without excuse" (Rom 1:20):

"we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them" (Rom 2:2)

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They know what they deserve:

"they which commit such things are worthy of death" (Rom 1:32)

So does God:

"without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb 11:6)

"the ... unbelieving ... and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev 21:8)

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2010/10/25 1:16**

thanks for the excellent responses.

**Re: can anyone respond to this quote for me - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/10/25 1:56**

God subjected himself, through his Son to the evil's of this world in His omnipotence. C.S. Lewis once said that "Only He who really lived a human life (and I presume only one did) can fully taste the horror of death."

Through His Son, God is able to deliver any who are willing to believe that He IS and He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him from the evil's of this world.

Evil entered the world through the devil into one man, so God sent a begotten son as a Second Adam to become Evil for us. Thus turning the weapon of the enemy against him. Thus he would be a faithful and compassionate high priest.

God is able...and not only was he willing, he dealt evil and death a greater deathblow on Calvary.

All of these vain questions are answered at the cross, and vindication for his actions and the silence before his accusations were met by his resurrection. The philosophical excuses of men are bruised at Calvary...

Run to the cross and regret nothing you have left behind.