

6. In what ways is the atheist's answer satisfying? In what ways is it not satisfying?
7. What evidence do we have that the world today is not as it should be?
8. Do you agree that free will is necessary for love? Why or why not?
9. How could love be worth all the pain and suffering that happens in the world?

Read 1 Peter 1:3-12 and Romans 8:18-30

10. How do these two passages deal with suffering?
11. What do they say is the end-result of trials?
12. Can you give an example in your own life of how suffering produced good?
13. How does it help to know God suffers with us?
14. How would you respond to someone who is questioning God because of the problem of evil?
15. In what ways do you "run toward suffering?"



“Jesus and the Problem of Evil”

Sermon Notes and Takehome

May 15th, 2011

“Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?” –David Hume

“Unless we wrestle with this question of pain and suffering, we not only cut ourselves off from understanding the central Christian mystery; we trivialize the gospel which meets the world at its point of deepest need.” – N.T Wright

“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved.” –Helen Keller

I could never myself believe in God, if it were not for the cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? –John Stott

Sermon Notes:

The basic argument:

- 1) If there is a _____ God, he could remove evil.
- 2) If there is a _____ God, he would remove evil.
- 3) Evil _____.

Therefore: either God is not _____, or God is not _____, or God is not there at all.

We must deal with both the _____ and _____ side.

Eastern Religions:

1. Suffering is an _____.
2. The doctrine of _____ and _____.

The problem: _____.

Atheism:

Atheism is intellectually _____.

The problem: We have no grounds to call suffering _____.

Evil actually suggests God does _____!

The Christian Answer:

1. The world today is not how it _____ be.

- God created the world _____.
- _____ is necessary for love.
- Love is worth the _____.

- God made evil _____, we made it _____.

2. Sin _____ all of creation.

- Relationship with _____.
- Relationship with _____.
- Relationship with _____.

3. Eventually, everything will be _____.

- God uses suffering to develop our _____.

In the meantime, God _____ with us.

Questions for Reflection and Application:

1. Have you ever struggled with the problem of evil? Was there a particular circumstance that triggered your struggle?
2. How do Eastern religions deal with evil?
3. What merit do you see in these answers? In what ways are they not satisfying?
4. Can you think of other ways people try to deal with the problem?
5. Do you think the issue is more intellectual or personal for most people?