

FREE WILL DEFENCE FAILS: WHY GOD WOULD BE EVIL IF HE EXISTED AND WHY IT IS EVIL TO WORSHIP HIM

Free will defence: God is not to blame for our evil. We are. He gave us the gift of free will but we are not meant to abuse it but to love freely and voluntarily.

RESPECTING FREEDOM IS NO EXCUSE

All agree that we only choose what we think is good. When you do evil it is because you have some kind of good goal. Alarming, if you steal a bike you have two goals, one to do what you will and the other to take the bike. It is alarming for the latter can be a goal in its own. Random pointless violence is a good example.

We maintain that God could have made us free but without sin and suffering being part of the deal if the inability to choose evil for itself is free will as the world says. In other words, we can be free and we can love without the ability to sin. You know that all the evil you do is because you are not having the right thoughts all the time to press the right buttons in you. It is like when somebody provokes you and when you respond with violence. They could do it another time and you won't respond because someone close to you died recently and you see better that violence is evil because of it. If you had the thoughts the first time he provoked you would not have attacked. Memory is faulty and it prevents you from calling up the thoughts that will stop you from doing bad. Ignorance and bad memory are the causes of evil doing and its root, fear.

The book Religion is Reasonable by Fr Thomas Corbishley states that the person who has the highest freedom is the person who cannot do wrong because he or she is free from the weakness that leads to evil and evil is imperfection (page 27). If weakness leads to evil then it follows that to some extent we lose control of ourselves and so it is impossible to see how anybody could commit a mortal sin, reject good completely and thereby deserve endless torment in Hell, though Catholics and Muslims and many Protestant cults teach that they do. Even if the rejection is partial, force has had a part to play in the rejection so we were not totally free. We are never totally free when we sin. St Augustine said that to be able to choose evil is to be less free than you would be if you could only choose good (page 28). The Bible agrees for it sees sin as slavery and Jesus said whoever sins is a slave to sin. But this shows the fundamental incoherence of the users of the freedom defence. Nobody wants to be a slave and if a person was informed how to avoid it the person would listen. God could stop us doing evil simply by informing us.

Why does God create the evil impulse and not fix it? I don't create my desire to murder for money - it just happens. A God who does not make sure we will only choose good is really an evil God and is opposed to our complete freedom and wants this religion to be. God made the weakness that causes sin and the sin would not happen without the weakness so he is forcing a person into the situation that leads to sin. This is not a God but the devil.

When we see evil as good we choose it. We can prove this by experience (page 64, Arguing With God). We do anything we do for some good end. From this it follows that evil is insanity. It is not seeing what is there because of a disordered perception. Religion admits that sin or evil is insanity (Handbook of Christian Apologetics, page 303) and says this is why people stay in Hell forever. It is like a man falling in love with a statue of a woman and not the woman he should fall for. But if this is true then a person thinking about committing wrong and who then does the wrong may be the same as a person who decides to go mad and it happens. The choice of the person who went mad seemed to make him mad but in fact the madness was not caused by the choice but by other disorders in the person. It was the way the person was. Sin could be the same. It is an error to argue that we are responsible for the insanity of sin for we think before we do it for that is begging the question. The insanity exists the moment you decide to think about committing a sin for that is a sin itself.

The past life we have must cause us to see the evil we do as good by programming us to mistake it for good. This proves that it is logically possible for us to have free will and do only good and how it is done is by ensuring that we will only have the experiences that will promote good in us. When we do evil thinking it is good we might as well be doing real good. Technically, we should be rewarded for evil as for good especially if the religious principle that morality is about what is right and wrong in itself and not about consequences is correct.

Our choices are programmed by our past. God could program free agents to do good. It is making them freely choose good. If this is really removing freedom then we don't have freedom anyway for we cannot change what the past makes us to be. Even when we change it is because the past programmed us to change one day under the right conditions. There is no contradiction. It is like giving a free agent a curry knowing that she or he will eat it. It would be a contradiction to say that God forces us to be freely good in any other sense.

The idea of free will to sin is incoherent for if you are insane your free will has broken down. There is no need for free will

without the power to sin and it cannot exist without sin so free will is incoherent. It is a shameless lie.

The defence agrees with reason that the will only chooses what is thought to bring happiness (page 2, Moral Philosophy). We know this to be true. So-called altruism and living the doctrine that I must love my neighbour as myself is really self-indulgence and just self-love in disguise. When my only concern is my happiness there is no sense in a God letting me and other people make at one another like cats hungry to bring mice to a lingering death. When all each of us can do is look for happiness there is no point in suffering. When a Mother Teresa helps the poor because it makes her happy or content then there should be no poor and she would be as well soaking up the sun on a planet of paradise. There is no meaning in suffering then. The defence is incoherent. It only makes more sense if it forbids wilful pleasure and urges repentance for the pleasures that cannot be helped.

Religion says free will is needed for love. The need for free will does not permit God to let the innocent suffer. God could make each person hallucinate their life in this world and the people in it. That way the person could be as evil as possible and no innocent human person gets hurt. They think they live and wreak havoc in a world that does not exist. If God exists then your life, your friends and your enemies are unreal, all is a long dream sequence. This arrangement means that God is able to do all that can possibly be done to ensure that you are formed in holiness. If other people exist in your life that makes it more awkward for him and he is forced to do what is best for the majority which is often detrimental to the individual. God could and would prevent you from thinking your earth-life is an illusion like we can be free and forget many things. He would if it is one so it is not for you can think it. If people are real then he unnecessarily allows us to harm them meaning he wants to punish them through us which permits us to maim and kill as long as we intend to be instruments of the wrath of God. Belief in God forbids compassion and love so the free will defence is evil. It contradicts itself in claiming to be for love and it is not.

The free will defence is a superstition. Religious people make God attractive by convincing the naïve that he wouldn't rape, molest children, murder and steal or anything like that. The Christian says that the apostles realised that Jesus Christ was sinless for he did none of these things. But some people lose their alleged free will and do these things. Their minds might snap and they might be on drugs. If I program a robot to kill the man next door I am a murderer. If I program it to rape I am a rapist though I didn't use my body to do it. The body parts I use to commit crimes with are as much my machinery as my robot. There is no difference between using my hand to kill and using a stick to do it. God is a rapist and all those other things. Christians might say that he does them for a purpose. If that is true then their absolutist ethics are fraudulent. Absolutism is the doctrine that certain degrading actions are always evil and wrong. It says there is never any reason for rape or murder. The absolutist has to condemn God as a sinner and refuse to pay homage to him. Absolutism, if true, is the only true code of proper behaviour but few absolutists know what they are talking about. Humanists do for they hold that anything that degrades self-esteem is always bad. The fact that mad rapists hurt women proves that this manifestation of evil cannot be reconciled with the goodness of God.

If one says that Jesus Christ would have been a sinner if he raped or murdered and allows these acts for a purpose then one is being hypocritical.

That people can say they like God when they have an "explanation" namely free will for his allowing evil is disturbing. You should never condone what looks bad but take it at face value as bad. It is easy to condone free will when it is other people who are doing the suffering. What about little animals that suffer?

If the defence were true we would be free all the time and not go crazy or anything like that. If God has free will and is incapable of sin as religion says then he would help us be like him - always free and never bad.

Christianity says we are all sinners. If we always have a sin then we cannot do good unless we repent the sin for the attitude, "I hold on to my sin as I do this good" is really about doing good when it suits you and it is the suiting you that matters not the good. If we are all sinners what use is free will then? Christianity says nobody is free from sin this side of Heaven. God would appear to every person and refute this belief if it is wrong for it stops Christians having free will. He could have stopped the Christian Church from being the largest cult in the world so he is either bad or impotent.

To choose God instead of yourself though you are certain you exist and are less certain that he does is to sacrifice your being and not just your pleasure and the more uncertain you are that God exists the bigger the sacrifice. God must want the being more than the suffering though sacrificing the being entails suffering. It is better for God to have a person than to have a person's suffering. The person is useful to him and precious and the suffering is not unless he is vindictive. The free will defence says that love is sacrifice implying that God wants the suffering and not the person for he could have the person without making the person suffer unduly as offering yourself to God does not feel all that bad. If God put force fields round us so that we could not harm we could still choose evil and will it would happen though it cannot harm others or ourselves. We could still mature for maturity is only intelligence. Religion likes to say that if we don't have the power to harm we cannot mature (page 41, The Case Against God, Gerald Priestland, Fount, London, 1984). The person cannot sacrifice very painfully so if the person offers themselves to God that is the best that they can do and it counts as a sacrifice

for that reason. The persons can give themselves to God without using much suffering to do it. If he valued the person and not suffering he would accept the offering. He values the person's will to suffer more than the person when he hasn't made things that way. So much for his unconditional love. He did not give free will because he loves us at all.

The Church teaches that God did not intend for us to suffer at all but we started it (Question 19, Radio Replies 2). This tells us that we can be virtuous without suffering because God doesn't want people to suffer. Suffering must be intended for punishing us for abusing free will. Even if suffering is necessary to restore us to virtue, we consented to this treatment by requiring it by sin and so deserve the suffering we get. The free will defence has sinister implications or maybe you might introduce the view that God does want us to suffer innocently which is just as bad or worse. The problem arises then about what God would have to do if nobody ever abused their freedom. Some would say they would still need to suffer for their alleged growth in virtue.

The Church counsels that we must always look on the best side whenever a person does wrong. We must give the benefit of the doubt whenever possible. Then why does it accuse criminals and sinners of being immoral and not amoral? Amoral means that you don't see why you should be moral for you see no logic in it. The amoral person might confess to immorality and might be amoral in motive in doing so as well so there is no way of being sure. The Church knows that she may as well deny the existence of free will. So she sacrifices people and their reputations for her dogma. That is what she aims to do. The free will defence is undoubtedly an effusion of odium.

FWD DENIES THE REAL MOTIVE

The Free Will Defence is a charter for self-righteous hypocrisy.

When I sacrifice, I do what I want to do under the circumstances. Therefore it is not a sacrifice for I am after gratification. I crave the pleasure and nothing else. The person who does things for God or mammon is really doing them for herself or himself. The will does not deliberately choose good or evil but only goes for gratification that happens to be good or evil. A person's programming can be changed by the environment we create so that he or she will go after gratification that is wholesome for others as well which explains why some people are good though they used to practice evil. This disproves the free will defence for if sacrifice doesn't really happen as regards motives then it follows that we cannot give our will to God for it is focused on ourselves.

But it will be objected that though we are principally after gratification that we still know if what we are doing is evil or if it is good so I should not say that the free will defence is proven false by this fact. But if I am principally after gratification then that is the reason I am doing what I do and the good and evil thing is only like a side-effect. Also, when gratification is so powerful and is the cause of my good and evil actions and thoughts then it follows that if it is compatible with free will then God should make sure that it leads me only to do good. When it runs my life anyway it should run it for the sake of good. But when all my will really goes for is gratification it is nonsense to say I have free will. If all I do is to please myself then there is no point in God giving me the will and power to hurt other people for free will presupposes the power to please God or to displease him but I am not concerned about him at all. I am concerned about how I feel and not him. The doctrine of God implies that free will is true so what Christians are doing is assuming that God exists and bending the evidence to fit it instead of making sure free will is possible first. This is only about God and not people. They should not be willing to hurt people over a belief.

If you believe in God you have to deny that gratification is what free will is all about. You have to say that good is self-denial, doing good for others and for God and not giving a toss about yourself and this good must hurt yourself. You have to believe that love is sacrifice so suffering is to be sought and when it is found it is to be welcomed. God gave us free will for his own sake not ours for would you complain if you didn't have it but thought you did and were happy all the time? Too many Christians because of these corrupting doctrines look at human suffering and instead of having real compassion they fake it and just focus on how they are going to salvage God's good name. That is callous when he only did it for himself.

If the will is just after gratification then how can it be insane for one to do evil for it is sane to look for gratification and evil is just another form of it? The answer is that the gratification sought in evil is insane for evil breeds evil and pain for you. It is because it is an insane way to look for pleasure that it is insane. You think evil will make you happy but it cannot. The good commanded by religion is really evil for real happiness comes from loving yourself and putting yourself at the centre of your universe a view that religion bitterly opposes.

Finally

Blaming human beings not God for evil is ridiculous and callous and dangerous. Blaming implies, "I want to punish you with disapproval." The free will defence is intrinsically vindictive. The free will defence is begrudging. It would be a case of, "Its a pity you have to have free will in order to love because you can and might abuse it." The God who gives you free

will is not your true friend. Free will would be a necessary evil. And we are not allowed to celebrate necessary evil.

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