

KNOWING WHAT GOOD IS

Religion says you cannot know that what is morally right is right unless you believe in a God that morality comes from and is based on. People ask questions. Are our morals basically uniform all over the world? Are morals innate? Are they part of what we are? Is a sense of morality necessary to be truly human? The answer is yes. So there is no need to involve God and it is inhuman to try to. To say that morals come from God is to create a God of the Gaps. In other words, "I don't know what makes moral moral therefore it is God." That is not an argument. The conclusion does not follow. It is a trick. If you base morality on that the end result will be hypocrisy not morality.

Religion says that "God does not adhere to external ethics. He does not create ethics arbitrarily. No ethics are an aspect of his very nature. They are grounded in his character."

But which of these three would be the best if you had to choose one?

Religion says that since God is all good and all powerful he does not make evil. All that happens is that good things aren't as good as they could be. Evil does not really exist for evil is really just good that is not good enough and falls short.

The theodicy, defence of God's behaviour, says that because evil is a form of good, we need an authority to tell us what good and evil are. It would be so easy to mistake evil for good and they are so close most of the time. The authority is God and/or his religion. The theodicy instead of doing anything to make us good, requires us to bend the knee to religious authority and let Bibles and popes and nuts tell us what to do if we wish to do what is good.

If evil is distorted good and God exists then God is absolute good. Any good that is not done only - some say primarily - to please God is really evil. It falls short of the goodness of honouring God the source of all good. Some say we should do good entirely for the honour of God. Others say that we should do it mainly for him. That is not an option. If God is really so great and is perfect good and the source of all things, then to honour anybody else even a little in addition to him is depriving him of his due. If you advocate a God who wants merely to come first in your heart then you advocate an idol.

Everything anybody does is evil for nobody loves God with their whole self. Atheists and Agnostics are evil incarnate despite the good they do for it is false good. Those are the implications. The theodicy is not out to help us or console us but to cripple us with self-hatred and disgust and a strangulating sense of failure.

The theodicy claims that God cannot make a person sick. It explains that he makes only the goodness that is involved and the sickness is a falling short that he is not responsible for, for he has not made it. It says it would be wrong for us to do what he does for we are moral agents and he is not one of us and owes us nothing. So we cannot give a person sickness and excuse ourselves on the ground that sickness is a good thing that is in wrong place and the wrong time. The believers say it would be wrong for us to do that for we would be responsible for the sickness. So when we do it, we are responsible. And when God does it he is not responsible. This doctrine makes no sense.

What the doctrine is doing is trying to give us an evil god to worship and to obscure that evil.

Another way it obscures the evil of belief in God is this. If God can do what they say he does - eg cause sickness and still be good then clearly he can exempt us from moral obligations. They say he is not a moral agent and we are. He is boss so he can exempt us. Christians usually boast about the great example God incarnate as Jesus Christ set in his "holy" life. They claim that it shows he was God. Others hold that if Jesus went about decapitating babies he could still be considered to be God. They could say that since God owes us nothing he can treat us as he wants and since he makes only the good in evil not the evil itself he cannot be called evil for doing so! Anybody can claim to be a prophet who got an exemption. The doctrine implies that you can believe you are not a moral agent until you get a revelation from God saying you are. You may have a conscience but conscience doesn't make you a moral agent. Having a good voice does not mean you are singer or should be one.

The Church cannot tolerate that logic. In that sense, the doctrine puts social control and ethical boundaries entirely under the jurisdiction of the Church. The Church must claim that God has given it a Bible or vision saying its subjects are moral agents. So those outside the Church must be despised and hated. And if the Church does not command that we can be sure that it doesn't need to.

Good is stronger than evil if evil is just misplaced good. It would follow then that we should only see the good not the bad or that if we do see the bad it hardly registers with us for we must overwhelmingly see the good. And even more so if God is goodness itself for that makes goodness far more special, infinitely special. And also more so when all good falls short of

what could be better. The best mathematics course in the world could still be better. Because it is so hard to know what is really better, it makes it hard to decide between what is right and wrong. The doctrine that evil is misplaced good makes it so hard to tell them apart and even at times impossible is a threat to life as we know it. You have to see the assassin as evil and as to be opposed with violence if necessary if you are to defend yourself. If you just keep trying to see the good in him and his gun you will soon have a bullet in your head. One can have so much positive thinking that one might not see evil looming or fail to recognise evil anymore.

Jesus told us to hate sin so much that we would rather have an eye gouged out than use the eye to sin with say by looking lustfully at someone. He makes this hate good though it is horrible and evil. His teaching that we should not be as positive about evil as the theodicy would require certainly implies that he rejects it. To reject the theodicy is to contradict the idea of an all good God. Jesus believed it was good for God to be an autocrat. His idea of goodness was dangerous.

Everybody makes mistakes so it is possible for a killer of dangerous people to think he does right. It is true that an act could be objectively right or wrong. But that doesn't mean you are morally good or morally evil if you commit the act. It depends on your perception and intentions. The theodicy is no help in determining good and evil for it puts them so close together that it is very hard to tell them apart. It is not intended to help us so it is evil itself. Human behaviour and doing right is more important than defending a God people make up.

A baby girl dies at seven months of meningitis. Was this bad? Yes. Was God bad for letting this happen? The theodicy says no. It would say, "The baby existed and had seven months. That was good. The child's death strictly speaking was just a form of good that did harm. There was no real evil in it. The child and its parents should be grateful it had existence at all for God is not bound to keep it alive or even make a child in the first place". How could you know what moral or any good is with a doctrine of savagery, with a doctrine as cold and harsh as that? People have been manipulated to feeling warm with God. The God belief is unfriendly and nasty. A person who lives to adulthood saying a child should be grateful for what time it got is certainly arrogant and nasty considering they didn't live just seven months. The church pews should be empty.

The theodicy implies that good is real and that it is a power. Some say, "But good is merely a judgement we make on things. When we see two items we judge that as two. But two as two doesn't exist. Good exists only in our heads." Good intent only exists in us. But it does not follow that good is nothing more than an idea. If pink exists only in our imagination it remains true that pink exists. We make it real in our heads.

Anyway the theodicy says that good is a real power and that evil is not a power but just a falling short of good. Now if good is a power, it is only a pile of powers put together under the one heading. Each act we do is done for complex reasons and some of these are better than others. Good is not one power. Love, a form of good, is better than kindness which is a form of good as well. It is not love to be kind to a tyrant in saving his life so he can torment his nation. So you have good that isn't as good as other good. So kindness is regarded as fully good despite being inferior to the good of love. Evil then must be a form of good as well. Powers that are meant to be good but which are really evil are still powers.

Even those who say evil is nothing but good in the wrong place or not real still insist that it must be eradicated. They still say it is abhorrent. They make a fuss about evil not being a power and stress that its not a power. But who cares? Evil whether a power or not is still as bad as ever. When we do something very evil we are doing our best to bring about evil the power. If we can't bring about evil the power, that doesn't stop us wishing we could or doing the nearest we can get to making it. We would bring about evil the power as long as we didn't have to endure it. That would be an evil power in itself and to deny that is to deny that evil exists at all or that anything should be classed as evil. It is to deny that there is a difference between good and evil. It is hypocrisy to say a good God can't create evil power but that he can allow good to fall short of what it ought to be so that evil is not a power but a non-power, an abstract. It solves nothing. Its a scheme to hide how evil evil is. The God concept is evil for requiring that.

Evil the power can serve no purpose for God for evil is by definition opposition to good and is useless. Some religion says that if God brings good out of evil, he is only using existing evil that should not be and is not inferring we should do evil so that he or we may bring good out of it. To them, God is not inferring that evil has a purpose - it does not. But God gives evil a purpose when he starts trying to make it a force for good. God knew that the evil would take place and as creator enabled it to take place through his creatures so he must have had some purpose for it. The notion that there is no honesty or compassion unless there is dishonesty and callousness so evil is necessary for good certainly does say evil has a purpose. And if God brings good out of evil, it does not matter if evil has a purpose or not.

If God's purpose is good and if evil is just good in the wrong place then it follows that in so far as it is good then it is the divine purpose. Suppose it was good for Jack the Ripper to kill syphilitic prostitutes for it saved married men catching diseases from them. Then that was God's purpose.

If God cannot use evil as a power to bring good out of it, that is because he cannot bring good out of it but only in spite of it

for it is total evil and blackness. But if he cannot use it then he cannot use evil as a negation to do this either. Why? Because even if evil were not a power, evil is still as much to be opposed as if it were a power. If the theodicy is saying evil isn't so bad because it isn't a power then it shows callous disregard for human suffering and degradation. And it is saying that. It even makes out that evil is merely misplaced good so a good God can't have a problem with allowing it to happen!

Evil is not a power they say. Well true evil has to use good and corrupt it to be truly evil. If evil was just evil and didn't try to warp good, it would not be very successful evil. It would be like an evil ant trying to kill an elephant by beating it with its feet instead of trying to poison something the elephant would eat. It would be stupid rather than evil.

If evil is not a power but a lack then it follows that it is better to think like the Christian Science cult that evil is not there at all and is only an illusion than to think its a power. Christian Science prevents compassion because if you don't believe suffering people really suffer, as the cult commands, then you are hard-hearted. The view that leads to the best and strongest compassion is the notion that evil is concretely there and is a power. To suggest that evil is not a power but a lack is to imply that Christian Science is not as bad as thinking evil is a power. It is to give a cautious welcome to lack of compassion. The lack of compassion is there at the back of the mind of the believer that evil is not a power but a lack. Its there by implication.

Evil is a power. To deny that is to deny that we should have the concept of evil at all. And any concept of good either! When you are in the depths of depression you experience evil as a power. For religion to say it is not, is only going to stunt your efforts at recovery.

Conclusion

Religionists want people to be obligated to love and worship God and the less religious of them want people obligated to love others. This shows that their ultimate motive is to use religion to achieve power. The doctrine of God has bad implications. Do we want that doctrine to maybe inspire atrocities? It can and does happen. Abandon faith in God.