

## **NECESSARY EVIL IS SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE IMMORAL IF WE HAD A CHOICE AND ALL LIFE IS RIDDLED WITH IT**

### *Government*

Paine wrote that society is a good thing and even the best government is a necessary evil. He described tyrannical government as an intolerable evil.

Paine was one of the first to suggest that government should look after the poor and the sick. It is interesting that a somebody who was not even a proper believer in God and an opponent of Christianity had to do that. The Roman Catholic Church never said it despite it having had centuries to do so.

Logically if a good government is a necessary evil, then bishops and priests who govern religion are not a necessary evil because the state can function and work without religion.

### *Love*

Love is about what is best for another person or yourself.

It is a necessary evil because it involves giving up something for yourself for another. There is more. It risks you being used by a fake. It risks you doing what is bad for a yourself or another person as you wrongly think it is the right thing.

Love demands that you help others and that you help with the right intention. What comes first the intention or the action? Sensible people say it is the action. An intention helps nobody - it just helps you think better of yourself. Love is a necessary evil in so far as it is about intention.

Love is a necessary evil.

The notion of loving the sinner and hating the sin teaches that you must love the sinner in spite of the sins they commit. A Christianity says all are sinners, it follows that this is yet another way that Christian turns love into a necessary evil.

If you oppose evil, you must be a good person. Whoever does not oppose evil but who lives a good life is not really good. He or she has a bad dark heart.

So you must hate evildoing and sin. But this means hating the evildoer or sinner for the problem is not the evil or sin but the kind of person doing the bad things.

So you must conclude that hating the bad action with the agent though terrible is actually better than not giving a toss about evil at all.

Love the sinner is a necessary evil. Hate the sin is also a necessary evil. Which one is the stronger necessary evil? It will be the hate for hate is naturally troublesome. The sinner is blamed for creating necessary evil for somebody else. That is an additional judgement on the sinner.

Everybody has faults. Religion says everybody is a wrongdoer or sinner.

So clearly love is a necessary evil when directed a good person. It is an unnecessary evil when directed at a sinner!

If you have to choose one or the other, saint or sinner to love, who should it be? The saint obviously.

Which is better? "People should help their friend and Amy is my friend so I will help her" or "Amy needs help and I will help". Obviously the latter is the right course. She is valued more by being helped not because she is a friend. She is valued so much that it does not matter what her connection to you is. Thoughts like this show that the idea that love is part of the moral law is bizarre. The moral law stunts love for it is about obligation.

Good and love have a deceptive side. They look right even when it is caring at the expense of somebody else or love that hurts people while it and favours some. Being caring and loving is not enough to make you really good.

### *Relationships*

If our relationships in general are reasonably good and positive we will be happy. Happiness comes from the kind of relationships we have. Love of family and friends is based a lot on delusion - you see them as better than what they actually are. You look at their faults with foggy glasses so that you cannot see how serious the faults are. Relationships are necessary evils in so far as they involve delusion.

### *Happiness*

Necessary evil is not something to be celebrated. You do not rejoice when your father dies and leaves you loads of money even though it means you can now pay for food to stop your children starving to death.

If virtually everything is a necessary evil then happiness is a sin or it is wrong. It is feeling fantastic about all the necessary evil in your existence. It is forgetting how bad it is.

### *Evil*

When we label someone as bad or evil, Rosenberg claims, it invokes the desire to punish or inflict pain. It also makes it easy for us to turn off our caring feelings towards the person we are harming. It makes it easy for us to pretend we don't really want to hurt the evil person. That is bad for when you stand face to face with the person you may attack them. It is easy to imagine you forgive them when you don't see them around.

Judging somebody as evil is reckoned to be necessary otherwise you will treat the child-killer the same as the loving young mother.

### *Self-sacrifice*

Even if self-sacrifice is good, the part of it where it means ignoring your needs is not good. If you take care of your needs it is not because they are your needs but because of those who need you and you are no good to them dead. If your needs do not matter then it is irrational to say anybody's does.

Self-sacrifice is a necessary evil assuming it is better to be self-sacrificing than not.

"I want it for her not for me", is a contradiction. You said you want - you need to be fulfilled by seeing her get it.

Self-sacrifice is a necessary evil for it is impossible to be totally honest.

Religion says that God hides to a large extent. This is so that we might sacrifice ourselves in love for him without being totally sure he exists.

### *Self-centredness*

Self-centredness is when you have so many problems you cannot stop thinking of yourself. It is obviously a necessary evil when it cannot be helped. Or if we are all self-centred it is just the way we are.

### *Selfishness*

If selfishness is a necessary evil then we are destined for a very unhappy and insecure existence.

### *Judgment*

Judgment is declaring that a person has done right or wrong in the moral understanding of these terms.

The alcoholic does not mind too much if somebody tells him to look after his health for his own sake. But if you tell him to look after himself for the sake of his family or children he will thump you. People will judge but will do their best to hide it.

The person who praises you and who avoids saying anything that reflects badly on you is in fact judging you indirectly. They have to judge you to leave out the bad stuff. They want to give you the illusion that they are non-judgmental. They are hypocrites. When you are praised and take no joy in it it is probably because you realise that the praise was artificial and latently barbed.

Judging is not nice but it is a necessary evil for you cannot treat the humanitarian and the tyrant as deserving the best in life.

### *Law*

This is a necessary evil for the same reason as authority, perception, morality, mercy and punishment (and just about everything else!) is.

A law that penalises lawbreakers too lightly is not much of a law. A law that doesn't penalise them at all is not a law. It is advice but not a law.

A law demands obedience of you. When it tells you to be good, it tries to make you good instead of letting you be spontaneously good. It threatens punishment if you disobey.

Law is the friend of order and not goodness. It will never be as good as it tries to pretend.

Laws are about protecting something which is why they are about fear. Law is a necessary evil and cannot be something to rejoice in.

### *Perception*

We can swear we know somebody and then find out their terrible secrets. Then we see that we didn't know them. Our perception of them led us astray. We need perception and we cannot help forming judgements about who or what is good or bad. Perception is a necessary evil for it need not be correct.

### *Life*

Life is a necessary evil for everything associated with it is. Life is about us making our own version of goodness regardless of there being real goodness. We only want real good when it suits us. It is about us not goodness. And human existence on earth has not been good for the earth or the creatures on it. And surely it is better to have a world without man than a world with man who has a nuclear button?

### *Testimony and Evidence*

Testimony is a necessary evil when though the person could be lying or wrong we have nothing else to depend on. Otherwise it is an unnecessary evil to depend on it.

We know that we believe many things on testimony that we mistakenly think is true. We trust testimony not because it is great but because a lot of the time it seems to be telling the truth.

Evidence can point you to the wrong conclusion.

We have to take a risk and risk hurting people through our faith in testimony and evidence.

To believe in X because testimony says it is correct is a necessary evil because testimony is sometimes right and because it can happen that testimony is all you have. You accept it because you have to for these reasons and this "have to" makes it a necessary evil in itself. It is reluctant acceptance.

### *Opinion*

An opinion is not a belief. Opinions are conclusions thought out at least a tiny bit but open to dispute. They are only provisional until you get further light and so they ask for a challenge.

People get attached to their opinions and try to silence challengers by saying, "I have a right to my opinion". If I have to silence you is it really my opinion or more than that? Or am I the bigot who puts too much value on her or his opinions?

People hang on to bad opinions. It is hard to reconcile somebody having the right to their opinion to them not being

allowed to have a bad opinion to act upon. If you view a baby as the offspring of Satan your opinion will not be harmless - it makes you want the child destroyed and will lead to action. If you are the child's parent and you take good care of the child, the fact remains that the child will sense your bad opinion of her or him and be damaged.

An opinion is little more than a guess so it is hard to respect or accept somebody having a nasty opinion. Such guess or an opinion means you are forming an idea of somebody when you don't have enough data on them.

If you have a right to your own opinion then why? Is it because you can't be stopped from having it or because opinions are sacred in themselves regardless if they are right or wrong?

If it is because you are going to have an opinion anyway then it is nonsense to speak of a right to it. It is going to happen anyway and you don't need to talk about rights as if you need some protection for thinking.

If it is because all opinions are sacred then the whole world will go crazy. One opinion is not as good as another.

The force of facts can be lost in a world that is too fond of opinion and which assumes that somebody only has an opinion that x is true when they actually know it is true. Opinions can lead to trouble. They suppress truth unless you are eager to discard them when you get better light.

An opinion is not intended by you to be the truth but reflects the fact that you always have to think something and must be ready and open to think about new data and even change your opinion.

### *Belief*

There is a saying that belief divides and doubt unites.

Belief is something some people develop because they don't want to know the truth.

It can blind and mislead those who do want to know the truth.

Belief is not certainty and so is fraught with dangers and risks. But belief can easily be adhered to as much as a certainty would be. There are people who treat their beliefs as certainly true or as fact based when they are not.

### *Trust*

Some say you need to trust people you do not know well to see if they are worthy of that trust. It depends. It is not a reason to trust everybody you meet whom you don't know that well. If trusting strangers is needed it is a pity it is.

Religion says you need faith in God. Let us assume that you really do need this faith. Then trust in God is a necessary evil. It is a feeling. If your head tells you to trust God you will not do it unless you feel trust for him. So the feeling of trust in God matters more than God. It is your idol. God is not really your God, your trust is your God.

Nobody really trusts God as a personal friend. They see the trustworthiness of others or they feel they should take a chance and trust them. They think they see God in those people's hearts and lives and assistance and that triggers a sense of something that they imagine is God.

To believers trust is what matters not God so it is not that God is the necessary evil but trust is. Insisting upon faith in God would be an unnecessary evil for if trust is so good then it doesn't matter what anybody trusts as long as it is something.

You might have the right to feel trust for God no matter what happens to you but you do not have the right to feel this way about things that happen to anybody else. If there is no God to help your cancer-stricken friend what right have you to encourage her to depend on God?

### *Hope*

When things go really bad we can hope that good may arise because of it or in spite of it. Hope means you are telling yourself that good can arise from it or in spite of it. Hope can be in your head not your heart. You can tell yourself things will not be horrendous forever but you may not feel it.

Hope does not mean that the good will really happen. It only means that being too negative risks making sure it will not happen.

Hope is really what the fuss about God is all about.

But it is obvious that an atheist can have hope too. Hope because it is based on uncertainty and will evoke some fear is a necessary evil.

You don't need God for hope. Hope in God is an unnecessary evil.

Hope that the better will overcome the worst in spite of the worst is the most important and confident form of hope. Hoping the evil will churn out good risks not really caring about the evil and condoning it.

Real hope is based on the knowledge that things can work out better than you'd expect. The best hope trusts in natural causes to make this possible. Hoping something supernatural will intervene or push nature in a better direction is not acceptable. Why? It means you are not trusting in nature alone so you fear nature and need to imagine that the supernatural could get involved. This is a placebo for your fear. But it is not in any way logical. The supernatural might not benefit you or those you love. The plan is for the best but you cannot arrogantly assume that helping you or your loved ones or even your country is really for the best. There are other considerations. You do not need to bring the supernatural into it.

People hope that their loved ones will live beyond death. People should hope that those who seemed to have an unhappy life may have had a better one despite appearances. That kind of hope makes you more anxious to help others have better things. Helping increases your hope and puts it into practice. It reinforces. Earth life comes first. Theories of the afterlife are just possibilities and possibilities don't count. If they did, the possibility that aliens would kidnap you would stop you walking in the country.

### *Tolerance*

Tolerance is putting up with something bad. It means putting up with it for you cannot stop it happening and in the hope that when the person gets away with whatever it is that he or she will think twice.

Tolerance implies intolerance of intolerance. For example, if we should be tolerant of gay people we have to be intolerant towards those who would persecute or discriminate against them.

Tolerance is a necessary evil for acceptance would be better but is not possible. And intolerance is never a good thing even if it is ever necessary.

Unnecessary occasions that invite possible intolerance should be avoided. Religion is one such occasion. If tolerance is a necessary evil it should be tested as little as possible.

### *Punishment*

Punishment is needed to make the law a law. The threat of punishment is used to get you to obey the law. Punishment is a necessary evil. Somebody suffers. And it is the criminal who gets caught who suffers while worse walks away free. There could be worse than the convict being celebrated as a pillar of society. You can punish somebody and feel awful that you have to do it. There is no inconsistency. And you should. That again is another necessary evil.

The good deeds of a criminal can never condone his crime. One way a really good doctor who has saved millions of lives should get away with it if he murders one person but another way he should not. We have to punish him as a necessary evil for we cannot create a world where people do good as a license to do evil. If he dies without being tried then if there is a Heaven he should be in it because punishment should only be needed in a world like ours.

### *Mercy/Forgiveness*

Mercy and forgiveness require you to judge the person as deserving and entitled to punishment. Then you decide to not punish or not have them punished. Punishment is a necessary evil and to abandon it therefore an unnecessary evil. But sometimes there are too many crimes to punish or too many people and you have to let it go. Letting them go unpunished is a necessary evil then. But it is not mercy because it is forced. Mercy is something freely given. It is letting the person off though they can easily be punished. If punishment is a necessary evil then mercy is not a necessary evil. Mercy pretends to be about setting the person free to do better but it is actually about refusing to do the right thing by society.

### *Reputation*

Scenario a: A person attributes a huge good work to a person who may not have done it and without knowing if that person

has done it.

Scenario b: A person attributes a crime to someone without being sure.

If you have a choice between a and b what must you choose? Most choose a. But surely if the good matters more than the bad it should be b! If seeing the good is what counts then what else could it be?