

“Good philosophy must exist, because
Bad philosophy exists, and has to be answered.”

C.S. Lewis

APOLOGETICS CLASS

Topic #1:

Introduction to Apologetics - Definition and Uses

The Socratic Method – 3 Good Questions

Topic #2:

The Historical Argument

The Canonization Process

Topic #3:

Answering the Charge of Bible Contradictions

Topic #4:

Ethical Relativism and How to Answer It

Postmodernism

Topic #5:

The Problem of Evil: The Deductive and Inductive Problem of Evil

Evil Used as an Argument of God’s Existence

Topic #6:

The Moral Argument – One of the best philosophical arguments for the existence of God.

Stalin and Murder

Topic #7:

Worldview Analysis: The criteria that make up a good worldview will be presented.

Analysis of Theism and Secular Humanism

Answering Anti – Christian Quotes

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Definition of Apologetics:

Why Apologetics is Important:

1. The Bible tells us to be prepared to give an answer- 1 Peter 3:15 – “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason (apologia) for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.”

2. It’s a form of missionary activity- It speaks the language of a lot of people in our culture.

3. Apologetics shows that Christianity is not a blind faith-

In an apologetic discussion with a skeptic, this is a good way to define faith: Faith is trusting in an object of person that exists.

4. Apologetics has a role to play in effective evangelism-

“We can both testify personally to the immense practicality and even indispensability of philosophical/apologetic training for Christian ministry. For many years each of us has been involved, not just in scholarly work, but in speaking evangelistically in front of various groups. Again and again, we have seen the practical value of philosophical studies in reaching people for Christ. From questions dealing with the meaning of life or the basis of moral values to the problem of suffering and evil and the challenge of religious pluralism, people are asking profound philosophical questions that are much more difficult to answer than to pose. They deserve a thoughtful response rather than pat answers or appeals to mystery. The conventional wisdom says, “you can’t use arguments to bring people to Christ.” This has not been our experience. The fact is that there is tremendous interest among unbelievers in hearing a rational presentation and defense of the gospel, and some will be ready to respond with trust in Christ. To speak frankly we do not know how one could minister effectively in a public way without apologetic training.” (William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland)

Apologetics helps create a plausibility structure in seekers minds that is fertile soil for God’s regenerative power.

5. Apologetics strengthens your faith-
6. Apologetics enables you to defend Christianity-
7. Apologetics gives people reason to investigate Christianity sooner-

THE SOCRATIC METHOD

(three good questions that will aid you in apologetic discussions)

1. How do you know that? (_____)

2. What do you mean? (_____)

3. What is your point? (_____)

THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT FOR CHRISTIANITY

-INTRODUCTION:

I. THE GOSPELS RECORDS ARE FOUND TO BE TRUSTWORTHY HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS, PRIMARY SOURCE EVIDENCE FOR THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

For classical history, the world does not possess the original writing of anything. What we possess is copies of those originals, and these copies are the materials that historians have to work with in order to learn about classical history.

THE THREE MAIN TESTS OF RELIABILITY EMPLOYED IN GENERAL HISTORIOGRAPHY THAT ARE USED TO DETERMINE THE HISTORICAL RELIABILITY OF MANUSCRIPT COPIES:

A. THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC TEST: An analysis of the textual tradition by which a document reaches us.

Textual Criticism-the discipline of studying the differences between the known manuscripts of the New Testament in order to determine the exact wording of the originals through the use of established principles.

1. Number of manuscript copies:

Caesar's Gallic Wars	_____
Homer's Iliad	_____
The New Testament (see Addendum #1)	_____

2. Time Gaps:

Aristotle	_____
Sophocles	_____
The Average	_____
The New Testament (Ex. The John Ryland's papyri)	_____

“No classical scholar would listen to any argument that the authenticity of Herodotus or Thucydides is in doubt because the earliest MANUSCRIPT COPIES of their works which are of any use to us are over 1300 years later than the original.” (F. F. Bruce, Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegetics at the University of Manchester, England.)

-The Dead Sea Scrolls reveals how successfully original documents can be preserved over time through careful copying.

3. The Completeness of the Whole:

Tacitus	_____
Livy	_____
N.T.	_____

Sir Frederick Kenyon; former director and principal librarian of the British museum, and second to none in authority for issuing statements about manuscripts concludes:

“The interval then between the date of original composition and the earliest extant evidence, becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established.”

-So concerning the question of manuscript evidence, the new testament is easily the best attested ancient writing in terms of the number of manuscript copies, the period of time between writing and the earliest copy, and the completeness of the whole.-

-This first test tells us that we have an accurate reconstruction of the original gospels from the manuscript copies we possess. This test does not show that the Gospels/NT are inspired by God.

B. THE INTERNAL TEST: Once we are confident that we possess an accurate reconstruction of the originals, then we need to look at these documents to see what they have to say, and to determine if we have a reconstruction of a story or of actual historical events.

**Aristotle’s Dictum: *“You are to give a document the benefit of the doubt, unless it discredits itself.”*

1. Written by eyewitness or associates of eyewitnesses: Lk. 1:1-4, 2 Pet. 1:16, 1Jn. 1:2-2., Jn. 19:35

2. Luke's historical accuracy:
 "Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness"-
 Sir William Ramsey (Renowned archeologist)
3. Internal consistency of the documents:
 Ex. -Calvin
4. The flavor of the N.T. books:

OTHER REASONS WHY THE INTERNAL CONTENTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCUMENTS ARE MOST LIKELY RELIABLE:

5. Most of the N.T. written by A. D. 70: (TIME magazine article: Addendum #2)
6. The genre of the gospels is not mythical:
7. Pro. And Antagonistic Witnesses:

“And it was not only friendly eyewitnesses that the early preachers had to reckon with; there were others less well disposed who were also conversant with the main facts of the ministry and death of Jesus. The disciples could not afford to risk inaccuracies (not to speak of willful manipulation of the facts), which would at once be exposed by those who would be only so glad to do so. On the contrary, one of the strong points in the original apostolic preaching is the confident appeal to the knowledge of the hearers; they not only said, “We are eyewitnesses of these things” but also, “As you yourselves also know” (Acts ii 22). Had there been any tendency to depart from the facts in any material respect, the possible presence of hostile witnesses in the audience would have served as a further corrective.” (F.F. Bruce)

8. We underestimate an oral society:

Concerning the Jewish custom of memorizing-a good pupil was like “plastered cistern that loses not a drop”

9. The apostles died for what they wrote about:
10. Heretics never changed the words of Christ. They only added to them.

C. THE EXTERNAL TEST: Does external evidence outside the New Testament confirm its statements?

1. Archeology (see Addendum #3):

The archeological evidence we have is, as scholar Edwin Yamauchi says, “but a fraction of a fraction of the possible evidence” The Stones and the Scriptures, 146. *Only a fraction of what was built or written has survived, only a fraction of what survived has been surveyed, only a fraction of what has been surveyed has been excavated, only a fraction of what has been excavated has been examined, and only a fraction of what has been examined has been published (Yamauchi, 146-160)*

2. Ancient Non-Christian sources:

“Just from 17 non-Christian sources, a composite picture of the life and person of Jesus, His teachings, death, resurrection, the spread of Christianity and the persecution of Christians can be formed outside the New Testament.” (Dr. Gary Habermas)

3. Early Church Father’s writings:-

4. Confirmation of Authorship:

-Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (A. D. 130): disciple of the Apostle John. John told him Mark wrote down everything in his Gospel that the apostle Peter mentioned to him about Jesus’ ministry. Also, Papias mentions that Matthew recorded the oracles in the Hebrew tongue (Aramaic).

-Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons: a student under Polycarp who was in turn a student of the Apostle John. Irenaeus said that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were the four gospel writers.

II. **IN THESE RECORDS, JESUS EXERCISES DIVINE PEROGATIVES AND CLAIMS TO BE GOD IN HUMAN FLESH. HE RESTS HIS CLAIMS ON HIS FORTHCOMING RESURRECTION.** *(It’s important to point out that we are not jumping the gun here. We have first established that the gospels are historically reliable documents. Now we can take the contents of the gospels seriously, and listen to what Jesus had to say about Himself, and see what acts He performed.)*

A. He forgave sins

B. The Greek word “Kyrios”

C. Well just because someone says that he is God, doesn't mean that he is!" True, therefore our alternatives are:

1. Jesus was a liar
2. Jesus was a lunatic (see Addendum #4)
3. The apostles were liars/lunatics

In Matthew 12: 38-40 and John 2: 18-20, Jesus states that His upcoming resurrection is the sign that He has the authority to say the things that He said.

III. IN ALL FOUR GOSPELS, CHRIST'S BODILY RESURRECTION IS DESCRIBED IN MINUTE DETAIL. CHRIST'S RESURRECITON EVIDENCES HIS DEITY.

A. The resurrection best explains the empty tomb.

1. The Romans:
2. The Jews: (Mt: 27:62-66)
3. The Disciples:
4. The Swoon Theory:

B. There were *eyewitnesses to the risen Christ. (Eyewitness testimony is exactly the kind of evidence that is trusted in courts of law.)

1. Over 500 people plus the apostolic band, plus the women-(I Cor. 15: 3-7)
2. The conversion of the eyewitness Saul of Tarsus (the Apostle Paul)

“The chances of Saul of Tarsus converting to Christianity while on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians is about the same as the Pope going to Japan on Labor Day weekend and coming back a Buddhist! The only way to credibly explain the cause of his conversion is that something supernatural must have encountered him on that road – he must have encountered the risen Christ!”
(David Spiegel)

*notably, women are claimed to be the first eyewitnesses of the risen Christ.

C. The resurrection accounts for the disciples bold behavior, and the subsequent spread of the early church. *“The Christian movement could not have originated had the earliest disciples failed to believe in Jesus’ resurrection.”* (William Lane Craig, two earned doctorates in Philosophy and Theology, author and lecturer.)

D. No credible naturalistic explanation to account for all the evidence.

E. The strategy of Dr. Gary Habermas in Habermas-Flew debate:

Some concluding apologetic points or questions concerning the resurrection:

A. The resurrection evidences Christ’s deity

1. He conquered death:
2. No one else is in a better position to tell us who Christ is, other than Christ Himself, since no one else has ever resurrected from the dead
 - a. “Maybe Jesus was some space creature or evil demon tricking all of us, and wasn’t God after all!

“We must make our decision on what is plausible, not what is just possible.”

B. “Come on! A resurrection! That is still hard to buy!!

1. Part A & Part B-The resurrection and anti-supernaturalism:

C. What about all those other religions?-listen to the one who has demonstrated to be the most qualified to speak.

D. Well, I wasn’t there!

IV. **IF CHRIST IS GOD, THEN HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH IN ALL AREAS:**

A. The Bible:

B. Salvation, Heaven, Hell, Sin, Life in all areas, even all the controversial ethical issues: “So make sure that you quote Jesus!!”

WATCH FOR THESE TYPES OF REBUTTALS TO THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT:

1. They will question how much we can know of history:

ex: JFK's assassination

2. Lessings' Ditch

3. Jesus didn't write:

HABERMAS'S STRATEGY

The Core Facts Concerning the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

These core facts are agreed upon by practically all critical scholars who deal with this topic today, whatever their school of thought (liberal or conservative), or discipline. In other words, critical historians, philosophers, theologians, and scripture scholars who address this subject usually accept this factual basis. At least eleven events are considered to be knowable history by virtually all scholars, and a twelfth* event is considered to be knowable history by many scholars. (Gary Habermas)

1. Jesus died due to the rigors of crucifixion.
2. Was buried.
3. Jesus' death caused the disciples to despair and lose hope.
4. *Although not a frequently recognized, many scholars hold that Jesus was buried in a tomb that was discovered to be empty just a few days later.
5. At this time the disciples had real experiences that they believed were literal appearances of the risen Jesus.

Because of these experiences,

6. The disciples were transformed from the doubters who were afraid to identify themselves with Jesus to bold proclaimers of his death and resurrection, even being willing to die for this belief.
7. This message was central in early church preaching and
8. Was especially proclaimed in Jerusalem, where Jesus had died shortly before.

As a result of this message,

9. The church was born and grew,
10. with Sunday as the primary day of worship.
11. James, the brother of Jesus and a skeptic, was converted to the faith when he also believed he saw the resurrected Jesus.
12. A few years later Paul the persecutor of Christians was also converted by an experience that he, similarly, believed to be an appearance of the risen Jesus.

Except for the empty tomb, virtually all critical scholars who deal with this issue agree that these are the minimum known historical facts regarding this event. Any conclusion concerning the historicity of the Resurrection should therefore properly account for this data.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK ANYBODY WHO IS SKEPTICAL OF THE BIBLE'S RELIABILITY AND THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY:

1.) Where do you specifically find the New Testament documents not meeting the tests of historiography? According to the criteria historians use to determine if a document is historically reliable, where do you see the New Testament documents not meeting these criteria?

2.) What is the central evidence for Christianity?

3.) What are the core facts surrounding the resurrection questions that the majority of scholars from both sides agree and do not dispute?

4.) Where do you find the evidence for the resurrection to be inadequate? Just how would this evidence not hold up in a court of law under the method of jurisprudence?

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANONIZATION PROCESS

The milieu of the early church:

1. Was this book/letter written by an apostle?

2. Was this book/letter written by an associate of an apostle?

3. Were other churches using this letter?

4. Was there any internal content, teaching, doctrine in this book/letter that was known to contradict what Jesus taught?

5. Did this book/letter appear to have the stamp of inspiration on it?

What about all those “secret councils”?

THE CHARGE OF BIBLE CONTRADICTIONS/DIFFICULTIES

1. "I would not be a Christian if the Bible contradicted itself!"

A contradiction is a serious thing. It would violate one of the three laws of logical thought.

2. Make sure there is an understanding on what the definition of a contradiction is.

A contradiction: "Affirming and denying the same thing, in the same respect, and at the same time."

3. Ask them to show you one in the Bible.

4. Most do not understand what they are reading. Lack of hermeneutical knowledge is part of the problem.

Hermeneutics-the science of interpretation

"That's according to your interpretation!"

5. Jesus believed that the Bible was trustworthy, so we seek to harmonize.

6. Critics of the Bible read it unlike they read other literature, including their own.

7. Appeal to our track record.

8. Apparent difficulties actually argue for the authenticity of the Bible events documented.

9. Bible authors report the same event from their own angle.

10. Lots of books written on the subject.

11. The Church has never been afraid of difficulties.

12. Difficulties never affect major doctrines.

ETHICAL RELATIVISM

I. Ethical absolutism/objectivism- affirms that moral values are independent of individual opinions and ascribes to them an abiding and fixed reality common to all.

- A. Absolute- for all people, in all places, throughout all time. Normative for all
- B. Objective-moral values have their own status, quite independently of our individual emotional responses.
- C. Absolute and objective moral values do not make different demands on different people or societies. If you disagree with these morals, then you are mistaken. All we do is recognize them, we don't control them. They concern right and wrong.
- D. Example:
- E. Bumper stickers!

II. Ethical relativism-denies any absolute or objective moral standards which are common to all, and affirms rather, that the individual (a person, community, society, etc.) is the source and criterion of moral judgments. The criterion of truth or falsity of moral claims is the individual- their perceptions, opinions, experiences, inclinations and desires. Values are private, individual, or subjective and dependent on the individual. No such thing as a non-ethnocentric standard by which to judge actions.

A. Common phrases- "If you believe an act is right, then it is right for you. If you believe an act is wrong, then it is wrong for you." "Morality is left up to sheer personal preference, the opinions of people." "Premarital sex is wrong for you, and right for someone else." "How dare you say I'm wrong!" "We should not judge." "A man is the measure of all things." (Protagoras) "Abortion is immoral in Ireland because the Irish believe it to be immoral and morally permissible in Japan because the Japanese believe it to be so." "Who's to say what's right or wrong?"

B. Key point about ethical relativism- Saying morals are relative is the equivalent to saying that there is no universal moral standard! There is not the right way just several different ways. An opposite alternative is just as "right".

1. Ex: two versions of 6 inches!

III. Why are people relativistic? (Bloom)

A. People perceive the existence of moral differences/disagreements between cultures.

1. Fundamental differences- Diversity/Disagreement does exist in basic moral principles between cultures.
2. Superficial differences- Agreements exist in basic moral principles between cultures. The differences/diversity are at a more superficial level- in the unique application of those basic moral principles due to the unique cultural circumstance or, in judgments based on those principles. "Diversity more widespread in application, than in principle."

B. People are skeptical about whether a "law-giving" God exists. Relativism becomes a position of humility. "I certainly can't tell people how to live!"

IV. Analysis of ethical relativism:

A. Use "reduction ad absurdum"- his philosophical move shows that people are more absolute than they think when it comes to moral standards. This move is also the best way to show that this philosophy has troubling implications and therefore can't be an ethical philosophy we should adhere to.

B. Since relativists deny that an absolute moral standard/ruler exists, they cannot condemn, as objectively wrong, anybody, for any kind of action. (When they condemn certain actions as wrong, they are actually appealing to God's standards!)

C. Saying "all truth is relative" is self-referentially incoherent or self-defeating.

D. Respect and tolerance does not mean we must commit to ethical relativism and not make judgments.

E. Refuting this theory is crucial for Christian theology.

POSTMODERNISM

(Relativism taken to the extreme)

Postmodernism- a contemporary interdisciplinary movement stressing the wholistic, pragmatic, historically relative, theory laden character of judgments and knowledge.

Modernism- refers to the concepts of universal rationality, objectivity, development of science and goal of historical progress through these newfound human powers.

14th-17th centuries-Renaissance
17th-19th centuries-Enlightenment

Main Tenants:

1. Due to your culture or frame of reference, there is only social constructions, only interpretations and not an objective, correct way to view reality.

“THE DEATH OF TRUTH”

2. Empiricism has shown us to be skeptical about whether we are seeing the world in a correct way. We cannot prove that the ideas in our minds correspond to the way the world objectively is. As a result objective rationality (everyone coming to a correct consensus) is impossible!

Thus, meta-narratives or worldviews are not true. They are just “interpretive fictions” imposed on other. People have always forced their “view” of the world on others! Even “western” logic does not have universal validity!

Strengths of PM:

1. Worldviews do exert an influence. Humans can and do cut up the world differently. It's important to be aware that we bring our experiences to the “table of facts”
2. PM'st thinking has opened up creative alternatives in “matters of taste”.
3. New opportunities for Christianity.

Major weakness of PM-The philosophy of PM itself is a social construction and should not be seen as anything but a “useful fiction” and therefore it is not objectively true.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

The Problem of Evil: Some believe that the existence of evil and the existence of God are logically incompatible or that the presence of evil makes God's existence unlikely.

I. The evil in this world does not negate the God of the Bible.

A. The deductive form of the argument- "It is a contradiction to claim that a perfectly good, all powerful being exists and yet admits that evil occurs." (John L. Mackie)

Premise 1.)

If God is all-powerful, he could remove evil.

Premise 2.)

If God is all-good, he would want to remove evil.

Premise 3.)

Evil exists.

Premise 4.)

A good God won't allow evil for a minute.

Therefore,

God is either not all-powerful or all-good, or both, or does not exist.

Response,

The above argument is not valid. The premises can be shown to not necessarily infer the conclusion.

1. The temporal/historical solution-

2. Hidden premise- There should be a 4th premise (the hidden premise) like: *God is opposed to evil so that good always eliminates evil as far as it can, and since there is no limits to what God can do, He would eliminate evil completely. or If God exists and is a being who is good, all-knowing, and all-powerful, then there would be no evil in the world.* Mackie assumes that God would not have reason to allow any evil. If the, above mentioned God exists, then there would be no evil.

3. Theists respond to the hidden premise with three theodicies.

Theodicy- The attempt to justify God permitting evil to occur in the world. Aims to produce an account of why god actually permits the evils in the world. To offer a possible morally sufficient reason God has for permitting evil in the world.

- a. The Greater Goods Defense (The First Theodicy) The evil which God permits is justified because allowing that evil allows for the achievement of a greater good or the prevention of a greater evil. God does not allow unjustified evil to occur. (Other theists would allow for the possibility of senseless evil acts by human agents.)

One- Some evils are necessary to achieving certain good ends.

Two- The good that is achieved outweighs the evil.

Three- The same or greater amount of good could not have been attained by any means that did not involve the presence of these evils.

- i. Example of a category of "Greater Good"- Soul Making (John Hick's Irenaean theodicy) Certain moral good such as courage, compassion, fortitude, forgiveness, and forbearance are human traits and are responses that enrich us as human beings which would not be possible if there were no evil in the world. In alleviating, resisting, and overcoming evil, not only do we help those around us and make the world a better place, but we also make ourselves better persons in the process.

- b. The free-will defense (The Second Theodicy) Evil stems from our free-will being misused. The world is a better one if there is free-will, but the existence of free-will necessarily makes possible the existence of evil. The value of free-will justifies the evil it can produce.

- i. Free-will is a two edged sword-God can't guarantee that significantly free creatures will always do what is good without depriving them of their freedom.

- ii. But isn't he omnipotent?!-Misconceptions about the concept of omnipotence:

“His omnipotence means power to do all that is intrinsically possible, not to do the intrinsically impossible. You may attribute miracles to Him, but not nonsense. There is no limit to His power. If you choose to say “God can give a creature free will and at the same time withhold free will from it,” you have not succeeded in saying anything about God; meaningless combinations of words do not suddenly acquire meaning simply because we prefix to them the two word “God can.” It remains true that all things are possible with God: the intrinsic impossibilities are not things but nonentities. It is no more possible for God than for the weakest of His creatures to carry out both of two mutually exclusive alternatives; not because His power meets an obstacle, but because nonsense remains nonsense even when we talk it about God” (C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain)

iii. Genuine moral actions require genuine free-will.

- c. Natural order defense (The Third Theodicy) God has placed us in an orderly, predictable environment that is a theater of the moral life. A consistent natural order is necessary for free will to operate within. If the natural order is sporadic, and unpredictable-deliberation and action is severely hampered, and moral freedom does not exist. In order for there to be free choices, whether these choices are good or evil ones, there has to be a fixed, reliable order of natural causes and effects. Free-will has to operate in a stable, predictable environment so that deliberate moral choice is possible.

i. “Well, why doesn’t God at least turn a murder’s bullet into a marshmallow before it hits its victim? Theists response-the natural order defense.” (The Third Theodicy)

- d. Summary of the three theodicy responses- God has good reasons for creating morally free creatures and for placing them in an orderly universe (a necessary condition for the exercise of significant freedom), and for placing them in a challenging environment that provides opportunity for soul making.

B. The evidential or inductive form of the argument: A different strategy, a less forceful claim. It is conceded that the above deductive argument fails and that it is possible that God and evil can co-exist, however the occurrence of evil (mere fact, quantity, or purposeless or gratuitous evil), constitutes powerful evidence against God’s existence. Evil makes God’s existence improbable or implausible.

1. “It seems quite unlikely that all the instances of intense human and animal suffering occurring daily in our world lead to greater good, and even more unlikely that if they all do, an omnipotent, omniscient being could not have achieved at least some of those good without permitting the instances of suffering that lead to them. In the light of our experience and knowledge of the variety and scale of human and animal suffering in our world, the idea that none of these instances of suffering could have been prevented by an

omnipotent being without the loss of a greater good seems an extraordinary, absurd idea, quite beyond our belief.” (William Rowe)

2. “If you were all-good, all knowing, and all-powerful and you were going to create a universe in which there were sentient beings—beings that are happy and sad; enjoy pleasure, feel pain, express love, anger, pity, hatred— what kind of world would you create? Try to imagine what such a world would be like. Would it be like the one which actually does exist this world we live in? Would you create a world such as this one if you had the power and know-how to create any logically possible world? If your answer is “no” as it seems to be, then you should begin to understand why the evil of suffering and pain in this world is such a problem for anyone who thinks God created this world. . . . Given this world, then, it seems that we should conclude that it is *improbable* that it was created or sustained by anything that we would call God. Thus, given this particular world, it seems that we should conclude that it is *improbable* that God—who, if he exists, create the world—exists. Consequently, the belief that God does not exist, rather than the belief that he exists, would seem to be *justified by the evidence* we find in this world.” (James Cornman and Keith Lehrer)
3. Response – Most attempts to answer the inductive problem of evil involve the three theodicies mentioned above which were relevant to the deductive problem of evil— the *greater goods*, the *free-will* and the *natural order* theodicies.

II. God is removing evil and suffering in stages (Robert Morey).

III. Evil is actually evidence for the existence of God!

- A. “Evil does not negate the existence of God, it requires his existence.”

The complaint against evil is that its presence is objectively wrong. If there is no God, “who sez” it’s wrong, it’s just painful. God is needed to provide the authoritative standard that declares that suffering is wrong. If you deeply believe that suffering is wrong, that it is evil, then God must exist in order for your value assessment of evil (its “wrongness”) to be correct.

IV. Instead of where is God, where is man?

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

One of the best philosophical arguments for the existence of God.

I. The Moral argument for the existence of God: Argues for the existence of God based on the existence of an absolute, objective morality.

Premise 1.)

If there are objective and absolute moral standards, then God must be the basis of these standards.

Premise 2.)

There are objective and absolute moral standards.

Therefore,

God must be the basis of these objective and absolute standards.

A. Premise 2) Humans everywhere experience objective and absolute morality.

1. Objective-something is wrong independent from our feelings on the issue. The “wrongness” of the act is not dependent on our opinions or feelings.
2. Absolute-something is wrong for all people, in all places and throughout all time. It is normative, it is the norm, it is the standard for all.

B. Premise 1) If God does not exist, then a person cannot explain why murder, rape, or torturing babies for the fun of it would be objectively and absolutely wrong. *These things would only be painful and subjectively wrong.*

C. Why is the above statement true? Because of the logical implications of a chance universe.

1. Humans would be accidents.
2. No final authority would exist. (Sez who!)
3. All there would be is lots of different, subjective, non-binding standards. Each one no better or worse than the other.

**D. Stalin will illustrate the logical implications of a chance universe in relation to morality. Theists actually want Stalin to demonstrate that if there is on God, then murder, etc. would be permissible. Theists are banking on the conviction that most people will not want to accept a philosophy that logically implies the permissibility of murder or other heinous acts.

1. if you know and agree that murder, rape and torture is wrong, then don't be an atheist, because the logical implications of atheism permit these acts. Atheism can't ground the very things you believe about certain actions!
2. In evangelism, attempt to plant this seed with a seeker: If atheism is true, then murder is not wrong!
3. Since, every person knows murder is objectively and absolutely wrong, hopefully they will have some serious concerns about atheism. Also, since they know the existence of God explains why murder is wrong, they just might give belief in God some serious consideration.
4. "What are you more sure of: that we got here by chance or that murder, stealing, lying and torture are wrong?"

A WORLDVIEW IS:

I. Definitions

A. A set of presuppositions which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of the world. This set of presuppositions affects the way we think and act about all aspects of our lives.

B. A cognitive network of beliefs, attitudes, habits, memories, values and other elements that conditions and renders meaningful the world in which we live.

C. General, overall accounts of what reality is like.

II. Criteria of a Good Worldview

A. Comprehensiveness: a worldview should “gobble up” reality.

How well does this worldview explain the orderliness of the universe, the makeup of human being?

How does this worldview answer the big questions? “How did I get here?”, “What am I here for?”, “What happens to me after I die?”, “Who am I?”

B. Logical Coherence: Is this worldview internally consistent? Do any of its assertions contradict with other assertions. Does its central tenants fit together in a consistent, non-contradictory manner?

C. Evidential Viability: What evidence is there to back up this particular worldview? Also, how well does this worldview easily incorporate the brute facts of the world?

D. Existential Viability: How well does this worldview address basic human needs?

ADDENDUM #3

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,...Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. *Luke 3:1-3*

ADDENDUM #4

A HISTORIAN'S APPEAL

Of the eminent soundness of Jesus' teachings, few have been able to give credence to the idea of mental aberration. Indeed, the psychiatrist J.T. Fisher has asserted recently what many others have implicitly convinced of:

"If you were to take the sum total of all authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists on the subject of mental hygiene-if you were to combine them and refine them and cleave out the excess verbiage-if you were to take the whole of the meat and non of the parsley, and if you were to have these unadulterated bits of pure scientific knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount. And it would suffer immeasurably through comparison. For nearly two thousand years the Christian world has been holding in its hands the complete answer to its restless and fruitless yearning. Here...rests the blueprint for successful human life with optimum mental health and contentment."

But one cannot very well have it both ways: If Jesus' teachings provide "the blueprint for successful human life with optimum

(J.T. Fisher and L.S. Hawley, *A Few Buttons Missing* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1951), P. 273