

I. Section 6.2 - When Bad Things Happen to Good People: God as Trouble Maker

A. The Problem of Evil

1. Evil seems to exist.
2. If God were all-knowing, he would know that evil exists.
3. If he were all good, he would want to eliminate evil.
4. And if he were all-powerful, he would be able to eliminate evil.
5. Why so much evil?

B. The Argument from Evil

P1: There is unnecessary evil in the world.

P2: If there were an all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good being, there would be no unnecessary evil in the world.

C: Therefore, there is no all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good being.

C. Ontological Defense

1. The ontological defense says that good could not exist without evil.

Criticisms

D. Knowledge Defense

1. The knowledge defense says that evil must exist in order for us to have knowledge of it.

Criticisms

E. Free Will Defense

1. The free will defense tries to justify the existence of evil on the grounds that it's necessary for free will.

Criticisms

F. Ideal Humanity Defense

1. The ideal humanity defense tries to justify the existence of evil on the grounds that it improves the human race.

Criticisms

G. The Soul-Building Defense

Criticisms

H. The Finite-God Defense

1. The finite God defense tries to justify the existence of evil on the grounds that God is powerless to prevent it.

Criticisms

I. The Leap of Faith

1. Kierkegaard realized that the existence of God is contrary to reason. Belief in God, then, requires a leap of faith.
2. Russell looks askance [doubtfully] at belief based on faith because he maintains that the less evidence there is for a belief, the less likely it is to be true.
3. Kierkegaard seems to believe that, under certain circumstances, believing something to be true can make it true. But this leads to a contradiction because different people could believe different things.
4. Clifford claims that it's immoral to believe anything on faith.
5. James disagrees, claiming that when a choice between beliefs must be made, it's permissible to believe on insufficient grounds.
6. Although James claims that believing something to be the case can make it the case, the examples he gives do not bear this out. It is not our belief that brings it about but our actions.