

# DOWNLOAD PDF GOOD AND EVIL : THEOLOGICAL DEBATE ABOUT MARY

## Chapter 1 : Good And Evil: Theological Dispute Over Mary Â» Brill Online

*Chapter Summary. The debate over Mary's Conception, which began in the twelfth century, took as its basis the nature of sin, one of the main pillars of the Christian faith.*

If evil exists, no existent god is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. An omnipotent god could effortlessly prevent all evil. An omniscient god would know how to effortlessly prevent all evil. A benevolent god would want as little evil as possible. And omnibenevolent god would strongly, totally, infinitely, purely, unconflictedly want there to be no evil at all. A tri-omni omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent god would want to prevent all evil if he could; and he could; so there would be no evil. Therefore, if evil exists, tri-omni gods do not exist. The sources of unhappiness. By extension, we often use the word "evil" to refer to unhappiness itself. The sources of happiness. By extension, we often use the word "good" to refer to happiness itself. Evil is the punishment for sin. Sin and evil are often conflated because some evils gluttony, for instance are moral evils. That is, you can cause unhappiness by doubting or disobeying god. Wanting good rather than evil. Totally, purely, strongly, unconflictedly wanting good rather than evil, wanting all good and no evil. True omnipotence would have god able to contradict logic; he could make square circles. But, for a logical debate, we must assume logic is inviolable. Therefore, the omnipotence under discussion is punk omnipotence: Knowing everything, including the future. Knew, at the time of creation per Plantinga every decision that would ever be made in every possible world and every impossible world. And, being omnipotent, he had his choice of the infinity of possible worlds. He knew how each one would turn out, and could have chosen to create one of those that had no evil. Omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, as defined above. A world without unhappiness. A world with unhappiness. Plantinga says, and logic agrees, that in some possible worlds, people are happy all the time. An omniscient god would have known which ones those were. An omniscient god would have been able to create one of those goodworlds instead of a badworld. A benevolent god would have preferred the goodworlds. An omnibenevolent god would have totally, strongly, unconflictedly preferred creating the goodworlds. The fact that god did not create one of the goodworlds is proof that god, if he exists, is not tri-omni. A tri-omni god would prevent all evil. Therefore, if there is evil, there is no tri-omni god. Con may claim that his god is not really omnipotent, or not really omniscient, or not really omnibenevolent. These are common responses to the PoE, but they do not contradict or refute the PoE. The PoE says that if evil exists, then god is not tri-omni. You cannot refute the PoE by agreeing that god is not tri-omni. This is not a refutation of the PoE. The PoE says that if a tri-omni god exists, then evil does not exist. You cannot refute the PoE by agreeing that evil does not exist. Con may claim that his god is not bound by logic and rationality. Set aside the fact that this would be an admission that his religion is illogical and irrational, such a god is not the subject of this debate. You cannot refute the PoE by agreeing that the PoE is logical but god is not. These the five possible relevant responses to the PoE: God is not really omnipotent. God is not really omniscient. God is not really omnibenevolent. Evil does not really exist. Belief in tri-omni gods is not logical. None of them refute the PoE. But there are no other relevant responses to the PoE. Because the PoE has only those five elements. Therefore, in my experience, defending against the PoE usually amounts to making one of the above five concessions, and then denying it. But I still call him "omnipotent" because I like the sound of that word. Plantinga has raised the art of defending against the PoE to the point of near-opacity. Thanks to stubs for asking for this debate. I hope you surprise me. Thanks too to DDO, and any readers, voters, and commenters. In the DDO forum, I read some complaints about people who end debate posts by asking for your vote. I like people who say "Vote Pro," or "Vote Con. I sometimes get desperately confused particularly when Con initiates the debate and need all the guidance I can get. So, assuming that some of my readers are like me, I will continue to end my posts by saying Vote Pro. Report this Argument Con I would first like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as well as thank wiploc for setting this debate up with me. That being said, I was a little surprised wiploc decided to defend the logical problem of evil. That

## DOWNLOAD PDF GOOD AND EVIL : THEOLOGICAL DEBATE ABOUT MARY

is to say that evil and the Judeo Christian God can not exist together, not just that it is improbable, but that it is actually impossible. Wiploc assumes in his argument, not definitions that a a good being eliminates evil insofar as he can and that b there are no limits to what an omnipotent being can do. But why should the theist accept a or b? In response to a it is logically possible that God has morally sufficient reasons perhaps which God alone knows for permitting even horrendous evils. In response to b It is logically possible that God cannot create significantly free creatures who never sin. I would respectfully ask for a source for what my opponent has said Plantinga says. Usually I have no problem with people not including sources, but I only ask for it this time because I have a source in which Plantinga says, "it is possible that God could not have created a universe containing moral good or as much moral good as this world contains without creating one that also contained moral evil. And if so, then it is possible that God has a good reason for creating a world containing evil. Atheist philosopher William Rowe: No one, I think, has succeeded in establishing such an extravagant claim. I showed that my opponent made two faulty assumptions. He has to show that evil and God are logically contradictory. However, if it is even possible that God has morally justifiable reasons for allowing the evil that he does, than that is enough to defeat the logical problem of evil which is what my opponent wants to debate. Thank you and I look forward to hearing my opponents next argument. Eerdmans, , 31 [2]William L. Report this Argument Pro Thanks to stubs, for his civility, clarity, and interest in the topic. Perhaps we could have a follow-up debate on the topic of whether the PoE would still be compelling if we defined both unhappiness and lack-of-free-will as "evil. Or perhaps, after this debate, we can start a discussion thread on how Plantinga equivocates when he says god could create a badworld with free will, but not a goodworld with free will. I hope we can continue our discussion after this debate. This debate is halfway over. After this post, I get only one more. We must focus on our agreed topic. If god had the will and the power to prevent all evil, there would be no evil. An omnipotent god able to do anything except violate logic could prevent evil if he wanted to. By definition, an omnibenevolent god totally, strongly, unconflictedly, infinitely opposed to evil wants to prevent evil. An omniscient god would know how to prevent evil. A tri-omni god, therefore, would have both the will and the power to prevent evil. If a tri-omni god existed, there would be no evil. If evil exists, there is no tri-omni god. Anyone who believes in both evil and a tri-omni god is wrong. The five possible relevant responses to the PoE: Con chose moves 1 and 3. God is not really omnipotent: Con wrote, "[W]hy should the theist accept" that "

# DOWNLOAD PDF GOOD AND EVIL : THEOLOGICAL DEBATE ABOUT MARY

## Chapter 2 : The Concept of Evil (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

*The problem of evil is often called the problem of suffering, so, in discussion of theology, the word is often used the way I use it. Of course, the problem of evil doesn't depend on my definition. You can substitute any other definition, sensible or non-sensible, and the PoE is still bulletproof.*

Paul Draper Do the claims of evolutionary biology conflict with theistic religion? According to one very popular view about the relationship of science to religion, they cannot or at least should not because the proper relationship of science to religion is one of isolation. On this view, science and religion never conflict so long as each is properly conducted. For example, according to the well-known geneticist, Theodosius Dobzhansky, "Science and religion deal with different aspects of existence. If one dares to overschematize for the sake of clarity, one may say that these are the aspect of fact and the aspect of meaning. None of these suggestions, however, successfully drives an absolute wedge between science and theology. World pictures will inevitably influence what one takes the facts to be. Values, even if they cannot simply be "read off" nature, nevertheless depend on natural facts. And by definition a supernatural and theistic God can and does affect nature. This view, however, seems just as problematic as the isolation view. Although certain theistic creation stories, if taken literally, are logically incompatible with the claims of evolutionary biology, I know of no good religious or other reason why theists should take those stories literally, and many theists, including theists like St. So what, then, is the relationship between evolutionary biology and theism? In the second section of this e-book, two very different views are defended. Following a suggestion by Darwin, I argue that evolutionary biology makes the argument from evil against theism stronger by providing explanations of certain facts about good and evil that work very well on the assumption that naturalism is true but not on the assumption that theism is true. Alvin Plantinga, also following a suggestion by Darwin, claims that it is naturalism--not theism--that conflicts with evolution. He argues that naturalists have a problem, not because they believe in evolution--as suggested above, many theists also believe in evolution--but because they believe in blind evolution, in evolution that occurs without any prior supernatural planning or concurrent supernatural guidance. According to Plantinga, blind evolution is not likely to lead to reliable cognitive faculties, which means that naturalists who recognize this cannot rationally trust those faculties, and so cannot rationally believe anything at all, including naturalism itself. Table of Contents Notes [ 1 ] Cf. Mary Midgley, *Evolution as a Religion: Strange Hopes and Stranger Fears* London: Methuen, , p. Midgely does not defend the isolation view. Fontana, , p. Selected Readings, 2nd edition, ed. Oxford University Press, , p. For example, if Paul Tillich is right that God is not a supreme being or any other kind of being and so is not limited by the condition of existence! Another way to isolate both science and religion is to defend an extreme anti-realist position about science.

## Chapter 3 : Unity, Theological Debate, and Christ

*Scripture clearly refers to both spirit and body as realities, calling humanity to account for actions done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Cor. ) The repeated promises of God to judge evil in the world indicate that it is very real and will be judged.*

On this view we can more accurately, and less perniciously, understand and describe morally despicable actions, characters, and events using more pedestrian moral concepts such as badness and wrongdoing. By contrast, evil-revivalists believe that the concept of evil has a place in our moral and political thinking and discourse. On this view, the concept of evil should be revived, not abandoned see Russell and Someone who believes that we should do away with moral discourse altogether could be called a moral-skeptic or a moral nihilist. Evil-skepticism is not as broad. Evil-skeptics believe the concept of evil is particularly problematic and should be abandoned while other moral concepts, such as right, wrong, good, and bad, are worth keeping. Evil-skeptics give three main reasons to abandon the concept of evil: The monsters of fictions, such as vampires, witches, and werewolves, are thought to be paradigms of evil. These creatures possess powers and abilities that defy scientific explanation, and perhaps human understanding. Many popular horror films also depict evil as the result of dark forces or Satanic possession. Some evil-skeptics believe that the concept of evil necessarily makes reference to supernatural spirits, dark forces, or creatures. Evil-revivalists respond that the concept of evil need not make reference to supernatural spirits, dark forces, or monsters. The concept of evil would have explanatory power, or be explanatorily useful, if it were able to explain why certain actions were performed or why these actions were performed by certain agents rather than by others. Evil-skeptics such as Inga Clendinnen and Philip Cole argue that the concept of evil cannot provide explanations of this sort and thus should be abandoned. According to Clendinnen the concept of evil cannot explain the performance of actions because it is an essentially dismissive classification. To say that a person, or an action, is evil is just to say that that person, or action, defies explanation or is incomprehensible see Clendinnen , 81; see also, Pocock Joel Feinberg also believes that evil actions are essentially incomprehensible. But he does not think that we should abandon the concept of evil for this reason. Similarly, Cole believes that the concept of evil is often employed when we lack a complete explanation for why an action was performed. For instance, we might wonder why two ten-year-old boys, Robert Thompson and Jon Venerables, tortured and murdered two-year-old James Bulger while other ten-year-old boys with similar genetic characteristics and upbringings cause little harm? Cole believes that the concept of evil is employed in these cases to provide the missing explanation. However, Cole argues that the concept of evil does not provide a genuine explanation in these cases because to say that an action is evil is just to say either that the action resulted from supernatural forces or that the action is a mystery. To say that an event resulted from supernatural forces is not to give a genuine explanation of the event because these forces do not exist. To say that an event is a mystery is not to give a genuine explanation of an event, but rather, it is to suggest that the event cannot be explained at least with the information currently available , 6â€”9. Evil-revivalists have offered several responses to the objection that the concept of evil should be abandoned because it is explanatorily useless. Another common response is to argue that evil is no less explanatorily useful than other moral concepts such as good, bad, right, and wrong Garrard , â€”; Russell , â€” Thus, if we should abandon the concept of evil we should abandon these other moral concepts as well. Eve Garrard and Luke Russell also point out that even if the concept of evil cannot provide a complete explanation for the performance of an action, it can provide a partial explanation. For instance, Garrard argues that evil actions result from a particular kind of motivation. Call this an E motivation. Thus, to say that an action is evil is to say that it has resulted from an E motivation. This provides a partial explanation for why the action was performed. Bush made it more likely that suspected terrorists would be mistreated and less likely that there would be peaceful relations between the peoples and governments of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea and the peoples and government of the United States. But should we abandon the concept of evil

because it leads to harm when it is misapplied or abused? So why do they believe that we should abandon the concept of evil? An evil-skeptic might reply that we should abandon only the concept of evil, and not other normative concepts, because the concept of evil is particularly dangerous or susceptible to abuse. We can discern several reasons why ascriptions of evil might be thought to be more harmful or dangerous than ascriptions of other normative concepts such as badness or wrongdoing. Furthermore, it is reasonable to assume that evildoers not only deserve the greatest form of moral condemnation but also the greatest form of punishment. Thus, not only are wrongfully accused evildoers subjected to harsh judgments undeservedly, they may be subjected to harsh punishments undeservedly as well. For instance, some people believe that to say that someone performed an evil action implies that that person acted out of malevolence see e. Given this ambiguity, it might be unclear whether an attribution of evil attributes despicable psychological attributes to an evildoer, and this ambiguity might result in an overly harsh judgment. For instance, on some conceptions of evil, evildoers are possessed, inhuman, incorrigible, or have fixed character traits See Cole , 1â€™21; Russell , , and ; Haybron a and b. These metaphysical and psychological theses about evildoers are controversial. If evildoers have these traits, and thus will continue to perform evil actions no matter what we do, the only appropriate response might be to isolate them from society or to have them executed. But if evildoers do not have these fixed dispositions and they are treated as if they do, they will likely be mistreated. Thus, while most theorists agree that the concept of evil can be harmful or dangerous there is considerable disagreement about what conclusion should be drawn from this fact. Evil-skeptics believe that because the concept of evil is harmful or dangerous we should abandon it in favour of less dangerous concepts such as badness and wrongdoing. Evil-revivalists believe that because the concept of evil is harmful or dangerous more philosophical work needs to be done on it to clear up ambiguities and reduce the likelihood of abuse or misuse. Card and Kekes argue that it is more dangerous to ignore evil than to try to understand it Card and ; Kekes For if we do not understand evil we will be ill-equipped to root out its sources, and thus, we will be unable to prevent evils from occurring in the future. But his reasons for thinking that the concept of evil is dangerous are different from those discussed above. Nietzsche believes that the concept of evil is dangerous because it has a negative effect on human potential and vitality by promoting the weak in spirit and suppressing the strong. In *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic*, Nietzsche argues that the concept of evil arose from the negative emotions of envy, hatred, and resentment he uses the French term *ressentiment* to capture an attitude that combines these elements. He contends that the powerless and weak created the concept of evil to take revenge against their oppressors. Nietzsche believes that the concepts of good and evil contribute to an unhealthy view of life which judges relief from suffering as more valuable than creative self-expression and accomplishment. For this reason Nietzsche believes that we should seek to move beyond judgements of good and evil Nietzsche and Instead, she argues that judgments of evil often indicate a healthy recognition that one has been treated unjustly. Card also argues that we have just as much reason to question the motives of people who believe we should abandon the concept of evil as we do to question the motives of people who use the concept. She suggests that people who want to abandon the concept of evil may be overwhelmed by the task of understanding and preventing evil and would rather focus on the less daunting task of questioning the motives of people who use the term Card , According to this line of argument, it is hard to deny that evil exists; and if evil exists, we need a concept to capture this immoral extreme. A second argument in favour of the concept of evil is that it is only by facing evil, i. A third reason to keep the concept of evil is that categorizing actions and practices as evil helps to focus our limited energy and resources. If evils are the worst sorts of moral wrongs, we should prioritize the reduction of evil over the reduction of other wrongs such as unjust inequalities. For instance, Card believes that it is more important to prevent the evils of domestic violence than it is to ensure that women and men are paid equal wages for equal work Card , 96â€™” A fourth reason not to abandon the concept of evil is that by categorizing actions and practices as evil we are better able to set limits to legitimate responses to evil. By having a greater understanding of the nature of evil we are better able to guard against responding to evil with further evils Card , 7â€™”8. However, philosophers

have considered the nature and origins of evil in the broad sense since ancient times. Although this entry is primarily concerned with evil in the narrow sense, it is useful to survey the history of theories of evil in the broad sense since these theories provide the backdrop against which theories of evil in the narrow sense have been developed. Philosophers and theologians have recognized that to solve the problem of evil it is important to understand the nature of evil. One theory of evil that provides a solution to the problem of evil is Manichaeism. According to Manichaeism, the universe is the product of an ongoing battle between two coequal and coeternal first principles: God and the Prince of Darkness. From these first principles follow good and evil substances which are in a constant battle for supremacy. The material world constitutes a stage of this cosmic battle where the forces of evil have trapped the forces of goodness in matter. For example, the human body is evil while the human soul is good and must be freed from the body through strict adherence to Manichaean teaching. The Manichaean solution to the problem of evil is that God is neither all-powerful nor the sole creator of the world. God is supremely good and creates only good things, but he or she is powerless to prevent the Prince of Darkness from creating evil. For more about Manichaeism see Coyne and Lieu. Since its inception, Manichaeism has been criticized for providing little empirical support for its extravagant cosmology. A second problem is that, for a theist, it is hard to accept that God is not an all-powerful sole creator. For these reasons influential medieval philosophers such as Saint Augustine, who initially accepted the Manichaean theory of evil, eventually rejected it in favor of the Neoplatonist approach. For instance, the evil of disease consists in a privation of health, and the evil of sin consists in a privation of virtue. The Neoplatonist theory of evil provides a solution to the problem of evil because if evil is a privation of substance, form, and goodness, then God creates no evil. For instance, it seems that we cannot equate the evil of pain with the privation of pleasure or some other feeling. Pain is a distinct phenomenological experience which is positively bad and not merely not good. Similarly, a sadistic torturer is not just not as good as she could be. She is not simply lacking in kindness or compassion. These are qualities she has, not qualities she lacks, and they are positively bad and not merely lacking in goodness. See Caldera; Kane. See Anglin and Goetz and Grant for replies to these objections. Instead, Kant equates evil with having a will that is not fully good. According to Kant, we have a morally good will only if we choose to perform morally right actions because they are morally right. Kant, 4: There are three grades of evil which can be seen as increasingly more evil stages of corruption in the will. First there is frailty. A person with a frail will attempts to perform morally right actions because these actions are morally right, but she is too weak to follow through with her plans. Instead, she ends up doing wrong due to a weakness of will. Kant, Bk I, 24. The next stage of corruption is impurity. A person with an impure will does not attempt to perform morally right actions just because these actions are morally right. Instead, she performs morally right actions partly because these actions are morally right and partly because of some other incentive, e.

# DOWNLOAD PDF GOOD AND EVIL : THEOLOGICAL DEBATE ABOUT MARY

## Chapter 4 : evangelical virtues | Catholic Alcoholic

*Theological debates have arisen over the ways by which and the extent to which sin has affected the power to choose good over evil Pelagianism The theological views associated with the British monk Pelagius (c. c. ), who in theological debate with Augustine () argued for a totally free human will to do the good and held that.*

The theological problem of evil. Having a couple debates with two classmates, can you tell me what your scholarly response would be to this: Millard Erickson posits three possible solutions to the problem of evil. The first of these is "Finitism" which concludes that God is not omnipotent. I agree with Erickson, that finitism makes God something less than He claims. If God can promise to have ultimate victory over evil, yet unable to have that knowledge or power for certain, how can he be trusted? The second solution to evil in the world is espoused by Gordon C. It is difficult to perceive God would be acting in accordance with His own character if He authored sin, yet difficult passages beg the question. For example, Lamentations 3: This is a very Reformed view of sovereignty and while it helps explain the issue of evil, it diminishes the goodness of God. The third solution is a denial of evil. This view explains that what we perceive as evil is simply an illusion. There is a dichotomy between anything material and anything spiritual, and only spiritual realities exist. All material things are created in the mind, including evil, sickness, and death. Erickson explains the Christian science position as a failure because those who believe it still die. This is the weakest of all three explanations. Scripture clearly refers to both spirit and body as realities, calling humanity to account for actions done in the body, whether good or evil. I believe that by God giving freedom to humanity, as exercised in Gen. If God can promise to have ultimate victory over evil, yet unable to have that knowledge or power for certain, how can he be trusted? This idea does not view God as the author of sin, but as the ultimate cause of it. This view explains that what we perceive as "evil" is simply an illusion. Solution Summary This solution focuses on the concept of evil and how theology attempts to explain it and its consequences. Over words of original text.

## Chapter 5 : 10 Evangelical Virtues of Mary: Prudence

*Radio National's Encounter has just released the first in a two-part series on God, good, and evil. www.nxgvision.com was produced by Scott Stephens, and features interviews with John Milbank, Stanley Hauerwas, Susan Neiman, Marilyn McCord Adams, Kevin Hart, Richard Kearney - and I'm in there too, talking about Augustine's solution to the problem of evil.*

Rules of the Community Love Your Neighbor. Charity must be exercised above all else when participating in this sub. Ensure that your posts and comments are worded accordingly. There are different levels of argumentation, with some being higher and more acceptable and effective than others. The bottom three levels of argumentation according to the hierarchy posted in the "Helpful Links" section are forbidden in both posts and comments on the sub. That means there is to be NO responding to the tone of the argument, ad hominem attacks, or name-calling. When making a claim based on an authority, please cite the authority as specifically as you can with link when possible. Any act of trolling as determined by the moderators is unacceptable. We ask that you please use the user flair as well as the post flair while participating in this sub. And please do so honestly. Select the user flair that best fits with your belief system and if one does not exist, contact the moderators. After making a new post, please select the correct flair to mark it, so our subscribers know what kind of debate to expect. The mods may assign or correct flair as needed. Constant misuse of flair will be seen as an intentional violation of this rule. All posts, whether link or text, must be related to the discussion and debate of Catholicism as it pertains to this sub. Unrelated content will be removed. Avoid Using the Word Heresy. Please try to avoid using the word heresy, as well as its derivatives, when participating on the sub. It is too often used as a loaded attack without objective merit and this should necessarily be avoided in a charitable debate. As it pertains to official and agreed upon heresies ie: Arianism, the word is capable of being used. Any violation of the rules can result in the removal of the offending material, as well as discipline of the user, up to and including a permanent ban from the sub. Adhere to the letter and spirit of these rules.

**Chapter 6 : The Messiah - Christian Muslim Debate**

2) *Other have provided good answers to this question, but I'd like to add that evil does not have being in and of itself. St. Augustine defined evil as the absence of a good that ought to be present.*

Smith teaches philosophy at Calvin College. He is the author of *Speech and Theology*: This article appeared in *The Christian Century*, July 12, , pp. Copyright by the Christian Century Foundation; used by permission. Current articles and subscriptions information can be found at [www.christiancentury.org](http://www.christiancentury.org). SUMMARY Open theists contend that God cannot know the future of free moral agents not because God lacks the knowledge or power or cognitive ability, but because the future of such free agents does not exist as an object to be known. Theologian John Sanders lost his college teaching job recently because of his endorsement of "open theism" -- the view that the future is not determined by God. Just what is open theism? What is at stake in the debate about it? And why has the topic elicited such passion in evangelical circles? Open theism is grounded in a deeply pastoral concern about evil and suffering. Sanders begins *The God Who Risks* by recounting the death of his brother. Gregory Boyd, another proponent of open theism, closes *God of the Possible* with an extensive treatment of the pastoral implications of open theism in the face of tragedy. Open theism offers an answer to a longstanding question: If God is all-powerful and perfectly good and has complete knowledge of the future, how can God permit the evil and suffering we see on both global and personal levels? Since such a conclusion would be clearly contrary to scripture and Christian tradition, the open theist offers another account: Open theism does not, however, reject the claim that God is omniscient. Boyd states this very clearly: The issue is about the nature of the reality that God perfectly knows. More specifically, can the future actions of free moral agents be known before such free decisions are made? Open theists contend that God cannot know the future of free moral agents not because God lacks the knowledge or power or cognitive ability, but because the future of such free agents does not exist as an object to be known. The future is blank and filled in only after choices are made. One can anticipate an objection at this point: Why create a world of free moral agents if one of the possible outcomes is a world of domestic abuse and genocide? At the heart of the open view of God is a picture of God as a risk-taker. For God, evil and suffering are necessary risks that attend the creation of free moral agents who can relate to God in love. Unlike process theologians, open theists continue to assert creation *ex nihilo*, creation out of nothing. Creation is not a necessary emanation that God "needs" to be complete; rather, creation is a gratuitous act done primarily out of love and for love. God freely decided to create beings capable of loving relationships, and the necessary condition of such love is freedom. And the necessary risk of such freedom is evil. Evil and suffering, then, are contingent future possibilities, but precisely insofar as they are the effects of decisions made by free moral agents, they are part of a future that does not exist. In other words; they do not exist to be known, even by God. Indeed, the utter biblicism of open theism makes it a truly evangelical phenomenon. Sanders and other open theists take themselves to be coming to scripture without metaphysical presuppositions. One can understand why such a radical rethinking with such broad implications would generate intense debate, particularly for evangelicals who value faithfulness to scripture and theological orthodoxy. One of our first reactions might be to write off the whole debate as archaic and, worse yet, downright "scholastic. Indeed, I have found that parishioners are much more interested in "scholastic" questions than theologians are. The debate over open theism laudably pushes us to consider the nature of confessional language. It also raises important questions about human freedom, and perhaps even some political questions about freedom. Open theism pushes us to reconsider the way religious language works. Just what are we doing when we confess that God is good? What are we to make of the scriptures that describe God as repenting or changing his mind? Open theists, in contrast, take metaphorical language seriously. There might even be something post-liberal about open theism insofar as it seeks to let the language of scripture be that which governs the imagination. The underlying question is whether our language "hooks onto" God in some way. Are we really saying something about God? Or is God so wholly other that such

statements never really reach their target? Is our confessional language ultimately equivocal, with no real connection between what we say and who God is? Or is God "good" in the same way that we are good? Is such language about God univocal, such that God is conditioned by a general notion of goodness external to God? The latter, univocal notion of confessional language would seem to reduce God to little more than an idol: But the former, equivocal notion of theological language would disconnect us from any real knowledge of God, leaving us within a flattened realm where confessional language never makes it outside of the atmosphere of immanence. Ironically, then, both univocity and equivocity wind up in the same place, leaving us with religious language that merely bounces around the echo chamber of immanent reality, never being ruptured by transcendence or making its way out to transcendence. This is why a long theological tradition, embodied especially in Augustine and Aquinas, has suggested that confessional language is neither equivocal nor univocal but operates on the basis of analogy. And both emphasized that the paradigm for understanding this was the incarnation itself, whereby the transcendent inhabits immanence, really and fully, without giving up transcendence. The Word becoming flesh, piercing that atmospheric ceiling of immanence, is that which underwrites our words about God. This means that our confessional language both "hooks onto" God and is characterized by some slippage. God is given in such language and at the same time exceeds our metaphors. God gives himself to human understanding, all the while resisting comprehension. This translates into a confessional humility. As Augustine once explained it to his parishioners, "We are talking about God; so why are you surprised if you cannot grasp it? Let us rather make a devout confession of ignorance, instead of a brash profession of knowledge. We all would do well to take seriously the incarnational operation of language. Retrieving a sense of analogy is to confess that "in the beginning was metaphor. Open theism is the logical consequence of an Arminian understanding of human nature, free will and the effects of sin. Indeed, open theism assumes human freedom and seeks to extend the implications of this to our understanding of God. But what exactly does it mean to be free? Open theism, reflecting a contemporary consensus, assumes a libertarian notion of human freedom. This is what Isaiah Berlin famously described as a "negative" understanding of freedom: To be free is to be autonomous and self-determining, free to do otherwise. Freedom is freedom of choice. It is this understanding of freedom that is enshrined in liberal democracy. In this sense, open theism sees God as "making room" for human choice by granting space for human autonomy, even if that means that God takes the risk that we will choose badly, as we so often do. However, there is another trajectory of thinking about freedom in the Christian tradition. Augustine emphasized a "positive" understanding of freedom as empowerment: I am free insofar as I am able to achieve the good. What is valued is not autonomy, but a sense of dependence upon God -- even a participation in God as that which properly orients us to the telos that constitutes human flourishing. Given the complexities of this problem and the inadequacy of language, we ought to be humble about which approach we take. And we might do well to hold both models in some kind of dialectical tension. That said, we should also be attentive to the political presuppositions that might color our theological understanding, as well as the way our theologies of freedom might translate into some surprising political policies. Could it be that open theism, like modernity, flirts with idolizing freedom as autonomy? Open theists think that freedom of choice is a good that warrants human suffering. But is this not to almost make freedom of choice an end in itself? Might one not, in the vein of Ivan Karamazov, suggest that creation in that case was a pretty irresponsible risk for God to take? But what concept of freedom is at work here? Clearly, the rhetoric of the current administration -- which so reveres the ideal of a free market -- is predicated on a libertarian or "negative" notion of human freedom, as is the notion of freedom assumed by open theism. Though open theism is castigated as "liberal" by conservative critics, some of them are beholden to this same liberal notion of freedom. The open-theism debate could be instructive if it questions the assumption that freedom is to be understood in libertarian terms. The open-theism controversy offers an opportunity to revisit fundamental questions about our confessional language and, more important, about how to understand freedom in an age in which liberty is the banner under which an empire expands. It could be that the Son who makes us "free indeed" frees us, above all, from enslavement to libertarian notions of human

## DOWNLOAD PDF GOOD AND EVIL : THEOLOGICAL DEBATE ABOUT MARY

autonomy. That has consequences for both Christian worship and public theology.

## Chapter 7 : Faith and Theology: Radio programme: God, good, and evil

*1. Evil-Skepticism Versus Evil-Revivalism. Evil-skeptics believe we should abandon the concept of evil. On this view we can more accurately, and less perniciously, understand and describe morally despicable actions, characters, and events using more pedestrian moral concepts such as badness and wrongdoing.*

What are patron saints? I want to thank you for the information you provide on your site. I was born and raised Catholic. In my early twenties I fell-away and was driven to the occult. I was "born-again" about 10 years ago age 25 , but accepted the claims of the Catholic church, made a general confession, and returned. For the better part of the past 10 years, and escalating with each passing year, I had questioned my Catholic faith while reading scripture. Last year I found a good, biblical church, but still kept feeling drawn back to my Catholic faith. Anyway, I thought I would try to confirm some of my conclusions about what the bible teaches vs. In so doing, I came upon your website. I felt very bound, as a Catholic, to the church. I knew that I had more of a relationship with the church than I did with Christ; feeling constantly that my attention was being diverted away from Christ and to something else devotionals special prayers I found your website to be the first after many years of research that properly represents the Catholic faith and this, coming from a pretty knowledgeable, former, VERY devout Catholic. I see many misrepresentations of Catholicism among non-Catholics, but your site information is very accurate. I found, clearly and simply put, the inconsistencies of Catholic doctrine when compared with the Scriptures. This was such a blessing for me, as I was previously unable to verbalize the things I had conceived of in my own studies. Thank you for an honest representation of the Catholic faith, and a sensitive approach in attempting to reveal the truth, as God has revealed, in His Word. I hope that I can bless others with this new insight, and pray that it will more firmly ground me in my faith in God and His Word. Many thanks, and God Bless you and the ministry! I was born and raised Roman Catholic and maintained myself as a practicing Catholic until a couple years ago when I joined a non-denominational church and married a Protestant woman. I still maintain an affection for many of the Catholic rituals and traditions. And often my wife and I discuss some of the many disconnects between Catholic teaching and that of strictly the Holy Bible. I have gained a great understanding first-hand the great need for people to develop a true relationship with Christ, whether within or beyond the walls of the Catholic church. I was relieved to visit your website where you have addressed the many differences very fairly and non-biased. Other websites address the Catholic church with bigotry, bias, and contempt. You on the other hand appear to confront the issues with factual data, and a loving, Christian heart. And I am grateful.

**Chapter 8 : Debating hymns | The Christian Century**

*God and Evil: In the Theology of St Thomas Aquinas [Herbert McCabe] on [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Herbert McCabe was one of the most original and creative theologians of recent years.*

Appendix Ahmed and Hamdi Ahmed was employed at an office. As soon as the department was assigned a more difficult project, his boss always made certain that he himself was in a position to take all the credit. Besides, his current salary was somewhat higher than with most available jobs, so Ahmed remained with the company. Money was an important factor since he needed enough to be able to provide for his wife and three children. Ahmed was very proud of his children, especially Hassan, his oldest son, who was studying engineering at university. One day, something happened which changed the situation at work for the better. Hamdi, a little younger than Ahmed, was always in a good mood, very cheerful and easy to get on with. At last, Ahmed had found a friend at work. They began to eat lunch together and meet in the evening. Hamdi, too, was married, and God had blessed him with four wonderful children, two boys and two girls. Ahmed and Hamdi became good friends and they often visited each other at home. They loved to sit down over a cup of tea and just talk. The hours used to fly by, and they could talk about almost anything. Both Ahmed and Hamdi were deeply religious but they did not share the same faith. Ahmed was a Muslim, while his best friend, Hamdi, read the Bible regularly and was a follower of the Messiah Al-Masih. What surprised Ahmed most was that the more he got to know Hamdi, the more he came to respect his faith and his life with God. Ahmed realised that his friend enjoyed a close relationship with God, something which he himself had never experienced, and this made him curious. In one sense, Ahmed also believed in the Messiah, although not in the same way. One day, Ahmed, finally overcome by curiosity, decided to ask his good friend Hamdi about the Messiah. That decision led to many interesting conversations. What do you mean? You know, when God asked Abraham Sayedna Ibrahim to sacrifice his son. God sent a ram, which was sacrificed in his place. I am a sinner. I pray to God every day, I study his book and I serve him. But before God I am a sinner. Is there anyone perfect apart from God? But where is the sacrifice for my sins? The first time he saw the Messiah, he said: He came from God. He came from above. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. He came from heaven as the Lamb of God. The Messiah proved that he was the Lamb of God by living a perfect life before God. But since he came as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, he had to be sacrificed. This happened when, of his own free will, he gave his life in death. He rose from the dead and he ascended alive into heaven. And one day he will return to the world. I am under the power of death. But there is a sacrifice for my sins through the Messiah, the pure Lamb of God. Now, through his Lamb, God offers forgiveness for all our sins and eternal life in paradise janna. The Messiah bore the sin of all mankind, including yours, Ahmed. But there are some conditions. You must turn from your sin, confessing it, and receive forgiveness through my sacrifice for you. He says in the Bible: I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. But I want to hear more about the Messiah the next time we meet. So the Holy Book the Bible you believe in is corrupted muharraf and a mixture of truth and lies. Ahmed thought for a while but to his amazement realised that he had never heard anything but unfounded allegations. Believers would never allow anyone to even try to corrupt it. How could you even think that the true believers would have allowed someone to change the Holy Scriptures and produce a corrupted Bible? I believe in the God who created heaven and earth, the God who is omniscient and almighty. He who has given mankind his own Word also has the power to keep his Word from corruption. It was written over a period of approximately 1, years. The Bible is divided into two parts: The Bible was written in three different languages. Some were kings or statesmen, others were shepherds or fishermen. The Bible is a miracle from God, because in spite of the immense timespan and the many different people involved in its writing, the entire book holds together as a wonderful whole. How could they have known that? Noah Sayedna Noh worshipped God with a sacrifice. Abraham Sayedna Ibrahim worshipped God with a sacrifice. Throughout all history right up to the

present day, people have worshipped the living God with a sacrifice. The collective teaching of the law Al-Sharia on the meaning of sacrifice as a ransom for sin is clear from the following words of Scripture: Among these prophecies were predictions that when the Messiah came into the world he would be sacrificed as a ransom for our sin. Hamdi picked up a Bible and opened it. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. Crucifixion was a very slow and painful method of execution. After a while, the bones of the crucified person would go out of joint, and besides this, he would suffer from severe thirst. The prophet David writes: My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. It was invented much later and was used by the Romans during the time of the Messiah. He said about himself: It is very interesting. I need more time to think. But there is one thing I want to know. Where does sin al-khatiya come from, and how is it that all mankind has problems with sin? Can you explain that? In the Tawrah Pentateuch we read that after God had created the world and mankind, he placed man in paradise janna. There in paradise, man was completely pure and lived in a perfect relationship with God. But as you know, something happened which destroyed life in paradise. They were disobedient towards God and ate of the fruit. The result was devastating for mankind. Since sin entered the life of mankind, everyone became a sinner. Sometimes a person can perform some of the most noble and distinguished acts and then, the next minute, be involved in some the worst acts of treachery, perhaps even deceiving and defrauding his own neighbour. One minute, a person can be very loving and considerate, and the next minute, be filled with envy, selfishness, lust or some other characteristic related to sin. As you said, Ahmed, all mankind wrestles with this problem. Every religion deals with this problem. Every nation creates laws to control sin in its various outworkings. The worst of it is that people are not sinners because they sin, but they sin because they are sinners. He still tempts people so that we will continue to live in sin. It is because of sin that the world is like it is today. But man also died in a spiritual way when he sinned.

**Chapter 9 : God and Evil: In the Theology of St Thomas Aquinas: Herbert McCabe: Continuum**

*Evil so conceived, Noddings indicates, will require of us some rethinking of our moral categories, some transpositions in our notions of good and evil. Thus the caring and nurturing response to the situation of the elderly woman would be euthanasia, which has generally been looked on with moral suspicion.*

Is God Good By Definition? Some "divine command" theorists have held that the good is constituted by the content of divine approval--i. However, even amongst those theists who hold that the good is independently constituted--i. As a further matter of historical fact, one of the main motives for the development of non-realist meta-ethics has been the desire to give an adequate atheistic account of the nature of the good. Thus many subjectivist, projectivist, and error-theoretic accounts of the good were developed in the context of atheistic enquiries. Of course, atheistic accounts of the good can be realist--e. However, the question which I wish to take up is whether theistic accounts of the good can be non-realist. In fact, I shall argue that the traditional philosophical conception of God requires a commitment to moral realism. Despite the range of non-realist meta-ethics which have been developed, there is none which is compatible with theism. Consequently, there is a hitherto ignored argument against theism which emerges for assessment, viz: Ethical realism is a necessary consequence of traditional theism. Ethical realism is false. Therefore Traditional theism is false. In this paper I shall focus on 1. I shall not attempt to provide an argument for 2. However, I believe that there are independent arguments--i. Consequently, I believe that the argument of this paper makes a contribution to the case against theism. What I take to be the traditional conception of God has been expressed by Richard Swinburne. I take the proposition "God exists" I use "God" as the name of the person picked out by this description. For, in saying this, one is committed to the view that if, for example, i there exists a person without a body who is eternal, perfectly free, omnipotent, omniscient, very but not quite perfectly good, and the creator of all things; but ii there is no person without a body who is eternal, perfectly free, omnipotent, omniscient, perfectly good, and the creator of all things, then God does not exist. This seems to me to be an odd view to take; in the circumstances described, it seems to me that it would be more natural to say that God does exist, but that he is not quite as we imagined him to be. However, this is not a serious problem. What I think Swinburne ought to say is that we use the expression "person without a body God is the being, if any, which comes closest to satisfying this description. If two or more beings satisfy the description equally well, then--strictly speaking--God does not exist though perhaps certain gods do exist. I shall assume without further argument that the amended account does capture the traditional conception of God. The crucial point for what follows is that many theists have been committed to the view that it is a definitional or constitutive or necessary truth about God that he is perfectly good--and it is this view which I claim is incompatible with a non-realist meta-ethic. II Before I turn to the details of the argument, I wish to introduce an independent reason for interest in it. This reason arises in the context of a dispute between Michael Tooley and Richard Swinburne over the correct meta-ethical background in which to situate a discussion of the problem of evil. I need to establish a position on the status of moral judgements. I hold that they have truth-value; some are true and some are false. There could only arise an issue as to whether certain evils were compatible with the existence of a good God if goodness and evil were properties which belonged to persons, actions, and states of affairs, and judgements which affirmed or denied their existence had a truth value. Embedded in what is otherwise a very thoughtful discussion, these claims by Swinburne that the problem of evil arises only if moral judgements are either true or false, and only if goodness and evil are real properties of persons, actions and states of affairs, are rather jarring. Given that Swinburne holds that it is a definitional property of God that he is morally perfect, it follows immediately that a being which lacked the attribute of moral perfection could not possibly be God. However, as I shall now go on to argue, I think that it is plausible to suggest that Swinburne is perhaps unwittingly correct when he suggests that the problem of evil only arises in the context of the assumption of meta-ethical realism. III There are so many non-realist accounts of the nature of moral

properties that I cannot possibly hope to discuss them all. However, I think that the theories which I shall consider are representative. My aim is to make it appear plausible that there really are no non-realist accounts of the nature of moral properties available to traditional theists. First, let us consider the simple view that when a speaker says "x is morally perfect" what that speaker does is to express a maximal pro-attitude towards x. In general, the idea behind this view is that value judgements--"x is good", "x is admirable"--are expressions of pro-attitudes. In addition, the view also holds that the proper use of expressions such as "x is morally perfect" is to express maximal pro-attitudes about x--i. With minor changes, the following discussion should apply to all theories which hold that moral judgements are merely subjective expressions of attitudes or emotions. One difficulty which this view presents, to the theistic project of definition, is that there is an indexical element in the use of the expression "x is morally perfect": How, then, could such an expression be any use in the community-wide definition of a single object? This would seem to make as much sense as the supposition that the expression "object nearest to me" defines the same speaker-independent object no matter from which mouth it issues. Of course, this difficulty would be avoided if we all approved of the same things to the same extent. However, there is also a more important difficulty. If I adopt this sort of subjectivist emotivist meta-ethic, then I recognise that it is quite appropriate for one person to say that an object action, thought, etc. Moreover, I recognise that there is no good reason to suppose that there will be universal convergence in the application of the expression "morally perfect". Consequently, I recognise that it might happen that the theistic definition picks out a unique object in some mouths, but not in others. Of course, it might also happen that the definition picks out no object in any mouth. Should I subscribe to the theistic definition? Well, what reason do I have for thinking that my use of the expression "morally perfect" is one of the privileged ones which does in fact lead the theistic definition to pick out a unique being? Surely I should be guilty of a very unchristian hubris to think that I am especially privileged in this respect. Since even monotheists disagree in their moral judgements, the fact that I am a particular sort of believer cannot be enough! The conclusion which I draw from this is that if one subscribes to the theistic definition, then one should not also adopt a straightforward subjectivist meta-ethic. A more sophisticated subjectivist meta-ethic has recently been defended by Simon Blackburn see, e. Thus, for example, in "Just Causes" *Philosophical Studies*, vol 63, , pp. Then, the common subject matter of the debate is constituted jointly by the range of features and the range of responses. Socrates and Thrasymachus are both talking about justice because they are both responding to societal structures with attitudes of favour and disfavour. Perhaps the success of this response can be granted to the projectivist; but it is little help to the theistic project of definition. Suppose we agree that we shall hold that, by definition, God is morally perfect. Suppose further that we agree that we all mean by this that God possesses a set of properties which fall inside the limits imposed by idiosyncrasy on what can count as "moral perfection". Then the following will become a perfectly intelligible position: I believe that God exists, I believe that God is morally perfect, and yet I do not have the slightest disposition to regard God favourably. After all, for all I know, he may be utterly monstrous--e. Now, I grant that this position is intelligible. However, I also hold that it is one which no traditional theist would wish to adopt. If God is to be a suitable object for universal worship and adoration, then surely it must turn out not only that he is perfectly good according to the lights of each, but also that according to each he is perfectly good in a sense which *ceteris paribus* can motivate each to be disposed to regard him favourably. The final theory which I wish to consider--the view that evaluative moral concepts are response-dependent--can be viewed as a further attempt in this same direction. On a response-dependent view, it is an a priori truth about moral concepts that they satisfy the following constraint: So, for example, if moral goodness is a response-dependent concept, then it will be the case that an object is morally good iff it is such as to produce responses R in subjects S under conditions C. Now, in one sense, there is no barrier to the supposition that a response-dependent concept might be used in the definition of an object. Suppose--for the sake of an example--that colour concepts are response-dependent, so that an object is red iff it is such as to produce certain responses looking red in certain subjects not colourblind, mentally alert, etc under certain conditions good lighting, etc. It is clear that this description does succeed in picking out an

object--at least if the universe is finite and there is not a tie for largest red object--and it is also clear that the "indexical" difficulty which we found in the case of "object nearest to me" does not apply. Nonetheless, there still seems to be something wrong with the idea that this sort of concept should form part of the definition of God. After all, if we had different responses, our concepts would be different, and then--on this picture--it seems that our definition could only be satisfied by a quite different entity. Here, I imagine that everything else is held constant--so that the same form of words is used to express evaluative concepts, but the content of those evaluations differ because the relevant responses differ. Thus, I recognise a range of possible situations: Well, what reason do I have for thinking that our use of the expression "morally perfect" is one of the privileged ones which does in fact lead the theistic definition to pick out a unique being? I suppose that there are two sorts of answers which might be given at this point. First, one might try to argue on a posteriori grounds--i. This response seems to me to be on shaky ground. Doubtless, if God does exist, then it is reasonable to attribute some good actions, intentions, etc. Moreover, this attribution seems to be perfectly compatible with a response-dependent analysis of moral concepts. But it also seems to me that the evidence adduced in traditional presentations of the problem of evil does not support the conclusion that God is morally perfect. That is, the available evidence strongly suggests that some sort of a priori justification of the attribution of moral perfection to God is required. The second option which one might pursue is to try to argue on a priori grounds that God is morally perfect. But now, since it appears that there are no a priori arguments which turn on the actual content of our moral concepts, it seems that the same objection which we raised in the case of simple meta-ethical subjectivism takes hold. For example, if one were to argue that there is a priori good reason to suppose that the creator of the universe is perfect in every respect, one would not have provided any reason for thinking that God is morally perfect. A priori, it seems no less reasonable to suppose that some other range of responses would give rise to a concept of "moral perfection" which is truly applicable to God than it is to suppose that God is morally perfect. Surely we should be guilty of a very unchristian hubris to think that we are especially privileged in the pattern of responses to which we conform. After all, we are erring and fallible--and our patterns of moral response have undergone great changes across the millenia I suppose that one answer which a theist might give is that God has so arranged things that our responses are of just the sort which is needed in order to ensure that our definition does pick him out. However, this answer seems to conflict with other theistic views about freedom of the will--and, in any case, would seem to be an entirely groundless claim. Surely we have no evidence at all to support the view that a certain range of evaluative responses are just the ones which we need to make in order to bring it about that the theistic definition of God is uniquely satisfied by an object in our universe. In sum, then, the problem is that it seems that one could not really be justified in doing all of the following: For the putative fact that moral concepts are response-dependent seems to leave us with no good reasons for thinking that there is an omniscient, omnipotent, eternal being who is also morally perfect.