

# Reasons to Believe

## Apologetics 101

### Small Group Discussion:

- What are some challenges that come to mind when you try to reconcile the idea of a God who is completely good and all-powerful with the reality of the existence of evil?

- How would you respond to someone who said to you ...

*That is your truth.*

*It is intolerant to not accept another's beliefs as valid.*

### God & Evil

➡ The Problem: God is all \_\_\_\_\_

God is all \_\_\_\_\_

Evil \_\_\_\_\_

↳ Therefore: God is not \_\_\_\_\_ or

God is not \_\_\_\_\_ or

God does not \_\_\_\_\_ or

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Evil does not \_\_\_\_\_

➡ The Problem with the Problem of Evil:

↳ If God does not exist, what do we \_\_\_\_\_ by evil?

➤ Understanding Evil:

↳ Evil is hard to define, but easily \_\_\_\_\_ :

- It is \_\_\_\_\_

- It is \_\_\_\_\_

- It is \_\_\_\_\_

↳ A common sense definition: that which is not \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ can exist without \_\_\_\_\_

- But, \_\_\_\_\_ cannot exist without \_\_\_\_\_

➤ The Origins of Evil:

↳ There are two types of evil:

- \_\_\_\_\_ evil

- \_\_\_\_\_ evil

## ➤ Why Does Moral Evil Exist?

↳ Moral evil is a result of our God given \_\_\_\_\_

- God is the cause of the \_\_\_\_\_ of freedom

- We are the cause of the \_\_\_\_\_ of freedom

↳ To create people capable of \_\_\_\_\_  
is to create people capable of \_\_\_\_\_

- God can make us \_\_\_\_\_, but God cannot make us do only \_\_\_\_\_

Some people think they can imagine a creature which was free but had no possibility of going wrong; I cannot. If a thing is free to be good it is also freed to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible. Why, then, did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having. A world of automata – of creatures that worked like machines – would hardly be worth creating. The happiness that God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely, voluntarily united to Him and to each other in an ecstasy of love and delight compared to which the most rapturous love between a man and a woman on this earth is mere milk and water. And for that they must be free.

C.S. Lewis – *Mere Christianity*

### ➤ Why Does Natural Evil Exist?

↳ Natural evil is a result of living in a \_\_\_\_\_

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Paul – Romans 8:18–21

↳ Some natural evil is a result of \_\_\_\_\_ free choices

↳ Some natural evil is a result of \_\_\_\_\_ free choices

↳ Some natural evil is a \_\_\_\_\_ of other good things

↳ Some natural evil may be a \_\_\_\_\_ warning

## ➤ Why Does God Not Deal with Evil?

↳ If God intervened every time someone did something wrong \_\_\_\_\_  
would be impossible

↳ \_\_\_\_\_ would cease

↳ \_\_\_\_\_ would become meaningless

↳ God has done something about evil through \_\_\_\_\_  
and will one day \_\_\_\_\_ evil

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."  
John – Revelation 21:1–4

↳ Just because we do not \_\_\_\_\_ why God allows what happens  
does not mean that God does not have \_\_\_\_\_ for it

With time and perspective most of us can see good reasons for at least *some* of the tragedy and pain that occurs in life. Why couldn't it be possible that, from God's vantage point, there are good reasons for all of them?

If you have a God great and transcendent enough to be mad at because he hasn't stopped evil and suffering in the world, then you have (at the same moment) a God great and transcendent enough to have good reasons for allowing it to continue that you can't know. Indeed, you can't have it both ways.  
Timothy Keller – *The Reason for God*

## Engaging in Apologetics

➡ Everyone must carry their \_\_\_\_\_ when it comes to the \_\_\_\_\_ of proof

➡ Don't be afraid to point out \_\_\_\_\_ of belief:

*We all need to accept each other's beliefs as equally valid (i.e., the "COEXIST" bumper sticker)*

-Question: "What do you think that \_\_\_\_\_ ?"

-Answer: "Everyone should accept each others beliefs."

-Response: "Do you \_\_\_\_\_ my beliefs?"

*Don't push your beliefs on me ...*

-Question: "Is it your \_\_\_\_\_ that one should not push their beliefs on others?"

-Answer: "Yes!"

-Response: "Then why is it okay for you to \_\_\_\_\_ your belief that 'people should not push their beliefs on others' on me?"

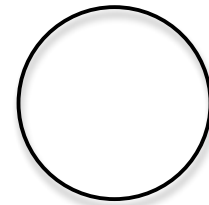
➡ Don't be afraid to share \_\_\_\_\_ you want to share your beliefs

➤ Pascal's Wager:

↳ Which game of chance makes most sense to play?

- One where you have \_\_\_\_\_ to gain and \_\_\_\_\_ to lose
- One where you have \_\_\_\_\_ to gain and \_\_\_\_\_ to lose
  
- The Christian has \_\_\_\_\_ to gain if they are \_\_\_\_\_  
& \_\_\_\_\_ to lose if they are \_\_\_\_\_
- The Atheist has \_\_\_\_\_ to gain if they are \_\_\_\_\_  
& \_\_\_\_\_ to lose if they are \_\_\_\_\_

➤ The Greatest Apologetic:



↳ Love is to be the defining \_\_\_\_\_ of the Christian

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."  
 Jesus – John 13:34–35

↳ Without love we are \_\_\_\_\_

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.  
 Paul – 1 Corinthians 13:1–3

↳ It is with our \_\_\_\_\_ that we will win peoples \_\_\_\_\_  
 & it is with our \_\_\_\_\_ that we will win peoples \_\_\_\_\_



**RESOURCES:****General Apologetics**

*Reasonable Faith* by William Lane Craig  
*On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision* by William Lane Craig  
*Mere Christianity* by C. S. Lewis  
*The Case for Faith* by Lee Strobel  
*The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller  
*Answers to Tough Questions* by Josh McDowell & Don Stewart  
*No Doubt About It* by Winfried Corduan  
*Scaling the Secular City* by J. P. Moreland  
*Handbook of Christian Apologetics* by Peter Kreeft & Ronald K. Tacelli  
*When Skeptics Ask* by Norman Geisler & Ron Brooks  
*The Questions Christians Hope No One Will Ask* by Mark Mittleberg  
*Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* by Gregory Koukl

**Biblical Apologetics**

*The Origin of the Bible* by Philip Wesley Comfort, editor  
*Why Trust the Bible* by Philip Wesley Comfort (available as a PDF download: [rose-publishing.com](http://rose-publishing.com))  
*The Christ Files* by John Dickson  
*The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* by F. F. Bruce

**Apologetics Relating to Jesus**

*More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell  
*The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel  
*Who Moved the Stone?* By Frank Morrison  
*Jesus Under Fire* by Michael J. Wilkinson & J. P. Moreland, editors

**Apologetics Online**

Stand to Reason: [str.org](http://str.org)  
Reasonable Faith: [reasonablefaith.org](http://reasonablefaith.org)  
Christian Research Institute: [equip.org](http://equip.org)  
Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry: [carm.org](http://carm.org)  
Christian Answers: [christiananswers.net](http://christiananswers.net)