

Evil is a Powerful Argument FOR God

(March 28, 2020)

Many are asking the question, If God exists, why is there evil? Why are there viruses? Why is there sickness? Why is there death? Why doesn't God answer every prayer? Let me point out that I actually think that one of the best arguments for God is evil. Yes, evil is an argument for God. In fact, let's unpack this here today. Think about all the assumptions you have to make to even ask the question, if there's a good God, why is there evil? What assumptions are you making when you ask that question? I'm gonna list 20 assumptions you're gonna make when you ask that question. Now, some of these overlap with one another. But these twenty assumptions are sort of underneath the question, If God exists, why is there evil?

Assumption number one, the universe exists. In order for you to say that evil exists, and that you exist, you have to assume a universe exists. You're in the universe in order to ask this question. Of course, you can ask a further question, Well, the universe had a beginning, so why does it exist? If it had a beginning, seems it must have had a beginner. A spaceless, timeless, immaterial beginner. We've been through this many times on this program. So, you've got that assumption right there. The universe exists.

Number two, another assumption when you ask the question, if God exists, why is there evil? The second assumption is, you exist. You have to exist to ask the question. I had somebody at a college once, not too long ago ask, well, prove that you exist. I said "Well, I have to exist to say it, to even ponder the question. It's self-evident that I exist. Self-evident that you exist to you. So, you're making an assumption that you exist."

A third assumption you're making is, other human beings exist, when you ask the question, if God exists, why is there evil? Because I can almost guarantee you that when you're considering the question, if God exists, why is there evil? Why doesn't he stop the evil? You're thinking about somebody else doing evil. You never think about yourself doing evil, or you rarely do. I don't. Whenever I ask the question, why doesn't God stop all evil in the world? I never think of myself. I never say, why don't you stop me God. I'm always thinking, why doesn't he stop

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Hitler? Or why doesn't he stop that other guy? Or that other gal? I never think, why doesn't he stop me? In fact, if God were to stop evil tonight at midnight, would you still be alive at 12:01? I wouldn't. No, you would neither. Yes, God has given us the free choice to do good, but also it gives us the free choice to do evil, as well. But you're assuming other human beings exist when you ask the question, if God exists, why is there evil? Where do human beings come from?

The fourth assumption you're making, consciousness exists. You have to be conscious to even think about the question, if God exists, why is there evil? To even ponder it, you have to be conscious. Now you know, many atheists deny that consciousness exists. Daniel Dennett has famously said that consciousness is an illusion. One wonders if he was conscious when he wrote that or said that. Of course, consciousness exists. You have to be conscious to even think about the question, does evil exist, or if God exists, why is there evil? You have to even be conscious to even consider the question, what is consciousness? So, it's self-defeating to say it doesn't exist. As soon as you asked the question, you're proving it exists.

The fifth assumption you have to make when you're asking the question, if God exists, why is there evil, is that truth exists. Truth is necessary. By the way, where's truth grounded? Hmm, Augustine said it was grounded in the nature of God. Seems like he's right. You know, there was truth before human beings exist? It has to be grounded in a mind somewhere. Before there are any human beings on the earth, there was truth. There were trees, say, before there were human beings. Was the statement, there are trees on the earth, was that true? Even though there were no human minds to even think about it. Was that before there were human minds on the earth? Of course. Truth exists. What's truth grounded in? Well, it seems to be grounded in a mind, but it's not human minds. Human minds didn't exist when there was just rocks on the earth, or just trees on the earth. So, you're making that assumption when you ask the question.

A sixth assumption you're making is, that you can know truth. Because if you're asking a question, you're assuming that you can, first of all, know that evil exists. You can know what this concept of God means. You can know what existence is. You're making assumptions that you can know truth to even ask the question. Because in order to ask the question, you have to know certain things about reality, namely, that there's something out there known as evil. So, you have to assume that you can know truth. Not just that it exists, but that you can know it. And when people say, you can't know truth, what are you gonna say? Well, of course, how do

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you know that you can't know? People are making truth claims all the time, while denying truth exists. It's obviously self-defeating. To say there's no truth is a truth claim. People say there's no truth, you're going to ask, is that true? People say, you can't know truth, you're going to say, how do you know that you can't know? Oh, you're just playing word games with me. Is that a word game? No, these aren't word games. This is just logic. And if you can't use logic, you can't know anything. You can't make any claims. Logic is just part of the fabric of reality. It's part of the fabric of reality because it's grounded in God's nature. See the program we did a few weeks ago on this, Does Logic Apply to God? Can't go any further here.

A seventh assumption you make when you say, if God exists, why is there evil? The seventh assumption is, that free will exists. Why are you assuming that? Because you have to be able to freely follow the evidence where it leads, if you're asking a question, and you want an answer. And you also have to assume freewill exists, because in order to make the question even coherent, and not just determined by the laws of physics, you have to have the ability to ask a question based on evidence that you can ascertain with your mind, which I'll get to in a minute. And you have to freely come to that conclusion, or certain conclusions, in order to even formulate the question. You also have to assume free will exists, because if you're going to say evil exists, and people do evil, you have to assume that they have free will. Otherwise, they're not morally responsible for evil, because they're not doing it based on making some sort of moral choice. They're just doing it based on the fact that they're programmed by the laws of physics. Well, if they're programmed by the laws of physics, then they're not really doing evil. No more than, say, a lion is doing evil when he tracks down a gazelle and eats it. He's not murdering the gazelle. He doesn't know anything about murder. He doesn't have any moral accountability. He's just doing what lions do in the food chain with gazelles. But if a human being tracks down another person, kills it, and eats it, and we go, that's morally wrong. Because a human being has free will and can follow the evidence where it leads freely.

So, when you're asking a question, if God exists, why is there evil? Or, why doesn't God stop evil? Or, evil disproves God, or any of these kind of claims you make, or questions you ask, you're assuming you have free will, and other people do, as well. Where does free will come from? If we're just molecular machines, we don't have free will, but that's what the atheists say we are. Free will, like consciousness, and many other things, seem to be grounded in a mind. We'll get to that later.

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The eighth assumption you're making when you ask a question, if God exists, why is there evil, is that your senses are reliable. You need to have reliable senses to know whether something that is either good or evil has actually happened. How do you know good and evil unless your senses can tell you something about something going on outside of your skull that actually is good or evil? You have to have senses to be able to understand that something has happened that's either good or evil. So, your senses have to be reliable in order for you to even conjure up the question, what is evil? Without senses, you wouldn't know good or evil. You wouldn't know anything. So, these are all assumptions that you're making when you're asking a question. And some atheists are trying to ask this question to try and get rid of God. It doesn't work, friends. It actually shows God does exist.

And we'll get to more after the break. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. We're going to be back with a lot more right after this, so don't go anywhere. Back in just two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, can you help me with something? Can you help me get this podcast before more people? Not only tell your friends about it but go up to iTunes and put a five-star review on the, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. If you do that, it will help us move the podcast up the charts so more people will hear it. Thank you so much for partnering with me on this.

If you're gonna ask the question, if God exists, why is there evil? Or if you're gonna make a statement like, evil disproves God, you're making a lot of assumptions. And I'm gonna list at least 20 of them. So far, I've listed eight assumptions you're making when you either, ask a question, or make a claim related to God and evil. And, as we'll see in a little bit, these things don't disprove God. They actually show God does exist, especially at a time now when people are contemplating evil much more acutely because of what's going on with the virus. They're considering their mortality, which in many ways is a good consequence of this because people kind of skip through life not thinking about their mortality and never giving God a second thought. But this kind of makes God come to the front burner. And eternity come to the front burner. What happens if I get this disease and it takes me down? Where am I going? We'll get to more of that in a little bit.

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But let's talk about the ninth assumption you're making when you make a claim about God and evil, or you ask a question about God and evil. You're assuming that your mind tells you accurate truths about the world around you. This is something atheists claim you don't have. You don't have a mind. You just have a brain and it's driven by the laws of physics. Well, again, why should you believe anything your brain thinks? You need a mind and your mind is supposed to be able to give you accurate information about the world around you. What best explains that? Not molecules in motion, not just the laws of physics, but the fact that you're a soul with a body. You're a soul with a body. And you can follow the evidence where it leads, because fundamentally, you're immaterial with a material body. You have an immaterial mind, an immaterial soul, yet you have a physical body and they interact. And if you can't trust your mind, then you can't even know that evil exists. You can't even know there's things outside of you that are good or bad. You can't do science. You can't trust your mind, because you need your mind in order to ascertain the evidence and interpret the evidence. So, you need to have a mind, which is best explained by a great mind, then just molecules in motion.

The 10th assumption you're making, is the fact that human beings are objectively valuable. Because if you're going to say that, say a virus, which kills people, is a bad thing, you're assuming that human beings are a good thing, and that they're valuable, and we ought to do whatever we can to try and help them live. But how are human beings subjectively valuable if there's no God? It's just your opinion against somebody else's opinion. And why should human beings flourish and not, say, roaches? You're making assumptions that only make sense if someone like God exists. Because you know, the atheist way is this, as Richard Dawkins has famously said, very accurately, by the way. If the atheist worldview is true, this is the truth. Here's what he says. "In a universe of blind physical forces, and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky, and you won't find any rhyme or reason to it, nor any justice. There is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, and no good. Nothing but blind, pettiness, indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is and we dance to its music."

If we're just replication machines, and there is no justice, there's no reason, there's no rhyme to anything, there's no purpose, there's no evil, there's no good, you can't ask questions about good and evil, because as Dawkins just pointed out, there is no such thing as good or evil. And

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human beings are not inherently valuable. Now, he says that philosophically, in one sense, but then he doesn't really live that way. He does think human beings are valuable. You can't live atheism. Nietzsche tried it; he went mad. He was really the only consistent atheist out there. Or one of the few, anyway. He knew the implications of atheism. Everything was meaningless, there is no right and wrong, there's no purpose to life. So, Dawkins will say all that, but he doesn't actually live that way. So, when you're claiming that evil disproves God, or you're asking the question, if God exists, why is there evil? you're assuming that human beings are objectively valuable.

Number eleven. You're also assuming that health and human flourishing are objectively good. Why are they good? What do you mean by good? What does that term even mean?

You're also, number twelve, assuming an objective purpose to human life. You can't tell whether something's good or bad unless you know what the purpose is, the purpose of life. Just as we've said before in this program, you can't know that your quarterback throwing a touchdown, is better than your quarterback throwing an interception, unless you know the purpose of the game. If there's no purpose to the game, touchdowns and interceptions are meaningless. Only if there's a purpose to the game, can you say a touchdown for your team is better than your quarterback throwing an interception. So, there's got to be a purpose to human life to say that some things are evil, some actions are evil, or some outcomes are evil. You can't say that if there's no purpose.

The thirteenth assumption you're making is that, you can know that purpose, whatever that purpose of life is. Because there could be purpose, but if you didn't know the purpose, you couldn't say that a particular outcome, or particular action was evil, unless you knew what the purpose was, and you knew that that outcome, or that action frustrated the purpose of life.

Number fourteen. When you're assuming that evil disproves God, or you're asking the question, if God exists, why is there evil? you're assuming that evil exists. Well, of course. In order to even mention evil, you have to assume it exists. You have to assume there's things like injustice, and immorality, and suffering, and viruses which cause bad health and death. You're making assumptions that evil exists, but if evil exists, that leads to assumption number fifteen.

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And assumption number fifteen is, good exists. A standard of good. Why? Because in order to know what evil is, you have to know what good is. Because evil does not exist on its own. Evil only exists as a lack in a good thing. In fact, back in the 400s AD, Augustine had a problem. His problem was this. He said, "God created all things, evil is a thing, therefore, God created evil". And he knew there was something wrong with that syllogism. There had to be something wrong with one of the two premises, or that conclusion followed that God created evil. But he knew that God didn't create evil. He knew that God wasn't evil. God was the standard of good. And he puzzled over that syllogism until he finally realized that the second premise was false. What are the premises again? First premise was that God created all things. That's true. Second premise. Evil is a thing. That premise is false. Evil is not a thing. Evil is a lack in a good thing. It's a privation in a good thing. Evil is like cancer. If you take all the cancer out of a body, you got a better body. What happens if you take all the body out of the cancer? You got nothing. It doesn't exist. There's nothing there. Evil can only exist in a good thing.

Now a virus is metaphysically good, meaning it's morally neutral. A virus only creates a bad situation when, this particular virus, some viruses are necessary, and we'll get into that in a later program. But, necessary for life, I should say. This particular virus degrades health. Covid-19 virus degrades health in human beings. Now when we say that that happens, we're assuming human beings are valuable and a degraded health is a bad thing. So, we are making assumptions when we even bring that up. But it's a bad relationship between a metaphysically good thing, this Covid-19 virus, in the sense that it's...there's morally, ontologically...how do I explain this? A virus alone, detached from a human body, is morally neutral. If the virus is on a doorknob somewhere, it's morally neutral. It's only when you grab the doorknob, and then touch your face, and it gets in your body, does that virus cause a problem. Even though itself, it's just morally neutral. It's just a little entity, a little living entity. But it only exists as a bad thing in a good host. If there's no good host, it's morally neutral.

So, you're assuming a standard of good in order to have evil at all. Put another way, the shadows prove the sunshine. In order to have shadows, in other words, in order to have evil, you have to have good, you have to have sunshine. Oh, you can have sunshine without shadows. You can have good without evil, but you can't have shadows without sunshine. You can't have evil without good. So, if you're going to assume that evil exists, you're also presupposing that good exists. But good, in an objective way can only exist if God exists,

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because what we mean by good is his nature. There is no objective good outside of God's nature. It's just your opinion. Your subjective opinion and you the subject. There has to be an unchanged standard of moral goodness, outside of humanity, in order for us to say its objective, and that's God's nature.

A sixteenth assumption you are making, or I am making, when we say, evil disproves God, or if God exists, why is there evil? is that human beings have moral obligations, and some of us are not following them. In fact, all of us are not following them, to a certain extent. We have obligations to do good, right. Now, people are saying, you have an obligation to stay home and not mix with other people. You have a moral obligation to do that, because if you don't, you might be carrying the virus. You don't even know you're carrying it, and you might give it to a more susceptible person, and they pass it on to others and you know, it's gonna be trouble. They might pass it on to an elderly person and that person could die. So, you have a moral obligation to not interact with people in a very close manner. Social distancing. That's what people are saying. A moral obligation. Well, how can you have a moral obligation unless you have free will, unless there's a moral standard, unless human beings are inherently valuable. All of these things are assumed when you say there's a moral obligation. Or when you even say there's evil, you're making assumptions.

Another assumption you're making, number seventeen, is that things ought to be different than they are. This shouldn't be happening. People shouldn't be getting sick. People shouldn't be dying. That's not right. Well, as soon as you say not right, you're presupposing something is right. If you're saying things ought to be different, then there must be someone to set what ought to happen. In other words, there's a direction, a purpose, an ideal situation that's not being lived up to. Well, who has set up this ideal situation, this oughtness, if there's no God? It would be just one person's opinion against another. So, when you're assuming there's evil, and things aren't going the way they should, you're assuming there's a standard beyond humanity that has set all this up.

We'll get to it right after the break. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek. Don't go anywhere.

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Two weeks ago, on March 15, I had the privilege of preaching the last sermon at one of my favorite churches in America. It's Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills, just to the east of Los Angeles about an hour. And that was just before the lockdown occurred. The Monday after that, I guess it was the 16th, the president came out and said, okay, we got to stop these larger gatherings. And this is a big church. I mean, they have anywhere from 5000-8000 people come in there on a Sunday. And so, my friend, Pastor Jack Hibbs, wonderful man. Actually, I gave the sermon, but he gave a wonderful invitation. And we had more than 110 people come forward over the three services. Some were coming to Christ; others were re-dedicating themselves. And I think it illustrated that in this time of uncertainty, people are certainly more open to the gospel.

But you know, the topic of that message wasn't even the gospel. That wasn't the center of the message. The topic was the new religion in America. What's that? I've talked about it many times. It's the religion of sex. And the followers of the new religion say that, if you love them, you will approve what they do. In other words, love requires approval. If you're going to say you love me, you have to approve what I do. Now, are they right about that? Does love require approval? Well, the entire sermon is on our YouTube page. You can watch it. Our YouTube channel, CrossExamined YouTube channel. So, I'm not going to go into the contents of it. It was a full sermon. So, you can you can watch it for yourself.

But obviously, it dealt into this issue of sex. And there's a lot more than even I could say in the sermon period, about this very controversial issue of sex. It affects a lot of lives, today, quite obviously, and many people in the church don't talk about it. Pastor Jack Hibbs does, I can tell you that, but many people in the church run from these issues, because they're not quite sure how to deal with them. And actually, Wednesday, April 1, we're going to offer a new course from Dr. Sean McDowell. The course is called, it's an online course obviously, it's called,

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Addressing Homosexuality with Clarity and Compassion. Now, Sean is going to do most of the teaching, but I will also interact with students during one of the zoom sessions we have. We have several zoom sessions, and I'm gonna be on one of those zoom sessions. And you want to sign up before we fill up. I think there's only five spots left. And it starts this week. It starts April 1, but you can sign up probably all the way up to the first zoom session, which I think will be April like sixth maybe. Anyway, April 6 or 7. But you want to sign up early as you can for, Addressing Homosexuality with Clarity and Compassion, with Sean McDowell.

And then the next week, we've decided to do all this because of this quarantine, this lockdown. We said, look, a lot of people are at home, they can't work, their kids are at home, they're not going to school. So, beginning April 6, which is next week, we're taking advantage of the daytime access and the quarantine. In other words, people are going to be at home, so we want to serve them as best we can. Serve you as best we can. So, we're going to run two courses, and we're going to do them at half price, 50% off. One is called, Why I Still Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. That's the course we run the most, based on our book, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. I'll be instructor for that. Over four weeks, we're going to do eight zoom sessions, live sessions, to answer your questions. And we're also going to do, Fearless Faith. That's with detective J. Warner Wallace, myself, and Dr. Mike Adams. Again, they're both 50% off. Check all that out.

And then I have an announcement, as well that, I'll save for the next segment, that I think you're going to enjoy, as well. We're doing a new live stream and I'll tell you all about that. But I want to get back to our topic today. Don't forget about those online courses. In order to enroll in them just go to crossexamined.org, click on online courses. You'll see them there.

I want to go back to our topic, which is the question, if God exists, why is there evil? and how many assumptions people make when they even ask the question, or if they try and make the claim that evil disproves God. My contention is that evil is one of the strongest arguments for God. And I'm getting to why here in a minute. But all of the assumptions that you make, when you even ask the question, we've gone through seventeen of them.

Let me go to number eighteen. When you're saying that there's evil out there, you're assuming this universe is designed. Otherwise, you couldn't even detect evil. When things fall short of the

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way they ought to be, we're claiming, hey, that's evil. That's not right. But that assumes there's a design to the universe and that this is a fallen world. That things ought to be different, but they're not. So, you're making that assumption, when you say that there's evil in the world.

Number nineteen. The assumption you're making, when you're saying, you know, God should stop evil, you're saying that God has a moral obligation to stop evil. Well, first of all, God doesn't have obligations, but consistent with his nature, God will stop evil. But the question is, when? God has already created a plan, and put it into action, to one day ultimately quarantine evil think. Speaking of quarantines, we're in quarantine right now. One day there'll be an ultimate quarantine of evil. That's in a place called hell. But you're assuming, when you say, well, if there's a good God, why doesn't he stop evil? You're assuming that he should stop evil. Well, how do you know that? Well, because you're assuming that he's good, and he's powerful, and he's loving. Yeah, but those are all assumptions you're making. No, I think they're good assumptions. Don't get me wrong. But does that mean that he has to stop it right now?

Parents have an obligation to stop evil, don't they? But do the parents sometimes allow their kids to go through difficulty for a good reason? Oh, yeah. In fact, speaking of vaccines, people saying, oh man, if we only had a vaccine for this, everything would be fine. Well, not necessarily. Sometimes vaccines can cause trouble, as you know. But generally, yeah, you're right about that. If we had a vaccine, fewer people would be infected with this. But when you take your kid to get a shot, to get an immunization, the kid's wondering, daddy, why are you, or mommy, why are you allowing this doctor to shoot me with this. This hurts. Why? For greater good. The greater good later. The kid doesn't understand it at the time. The parent does. In fact, there are many things parents do, or if they're not doing, they should do, that creates some pain and suffering in their kids' lives for a greater good.

Think about homework. Who wants to do homework? Who wants to slave over learning something? Well, you might not want to slave over learning something. But if you didn't, if you relieve the suffering of your child by saying, you don't have to do your homework, or you don't have to do your homeschool now, then you're not going to give your child the ability to achieve the good of learning. There's some pain you have to go through in order to get the gain of learning. If you don't do that, you're not a good parent. So, sometimes you have to apply some kind of discomfort, some kind of pain and suffering, to get a greater good. Well, if that's true in

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our life, from parent to child, might it be true from God to us? Yeah, in fact, it's talked about. Go to Hebrews 12, go to Romans 5, go to James 1. There's plenty of places this is spoken about in the scriptures.

And the twentieth assumption you're making on this question, is God has the power to stop evil. You're making an assumption. Is it a good assumption? Yeah, it is a good assumption, but you're still making the assumption. Tim Keller has said something brilliant on this, as he normally does. When you're complaining that God doesn't stop evil, here's what Keller says, and I'm paraphrasing him. "If you think God is infinite and can intervene to stop evil, you must also acknowledge that the same infinite God has reasons you don't know about for not intervening in the way you like." In other words, if he's an infinite being, he knows all things. He might have reasons for not intervening right now the way you want him to intervene, if you're going to say, he's [unintelligible] powerful enough to know reasons why he shouldn't step in right now.

So, those are just twenty assumptions I thought of that you're making when you're bringing up the issue of God and evil. And these assumptions, many of them can't be explained by atheism. They can only be explained if God exists, because most of these assumptions can't be explained by materialism, and most atheists are materialists. And think about this. Atheists, not only don't believe in God, they really don't even believe in human beings. You say, what do you mean by that? Because much of what makes us human beings, atheists deny. As we said, they deny mind. They said, we just have a brain. They deny consciousness. They say it's an illusion. They deny free will. They say, we're just molecular machines. They deny objective morality on one hand, and yet on the other hand, they say there's too much evil in the world.

Well, you can't have it both ways. If there is objective morality in the universe, God exists. But in order for you to say that there's evil in the world, you have to assume God exists, because you have to assume that something immoral has been done. But there's nothing immoral that's been done if there's no God, because there's no morality. You have to assume that we have a mind, that we have consciousness, that we have free will, that morality exists, that human beings are objectively valuable, that there's a purpose to life. These are all assumptions that the atheists don't have in their worldview. They deny these things, expressly deny them. Even if they try and say atheism is not a worldview. They say, oh, there's no mind, there's no

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consciousness, there's no free will, there's no morality. And yet they're claiming God's evil. Look, it's inconsistent.

Sam Harris, the famous atheist, denies we have free will. He also denies that he exists, and that you exist, because he denies the self. He says we don't have a self. Now, if you've been listening to this program long enough, you know that that's completely self-defeating. Why? Because which self said there is no self? What is it Sam Harris? If he doesn't exist, how is he making claims like this? And which self said he has no free will? Did that non-self say it freely? If not, why should anyone believe it? In order for anyone to make claims, either for or against God, you have to assume you're a self. You have to assume you have freewill and can follow the evidence where it leads. You have to assume you're not just a molecular machine, a moist robot. You have to assume certain moral categories, and certain values, and purposes, if you're going to make claims related to morality, value, and purpose. You have to assume those things.

The question is, what worldview best explains those truths? Atheism doesn't. Atheism expressly denies them. Only the Christian worldview can explain evil. Only the Christian worldview can explain what's going on with regard to the virus. Only the Christian worldview can explain why there's murder, and theft, and rape. And only the Christian worldview can ultimately solve the problem. No other worldview can, and I'll explain why after the break.

You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Our website is crossexamined.org. [Crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). And my name is Frank Turek. And see you in just a couple of minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, is a listener supported radio program and podcast. If you like what we do, would you please consider going to crossexamined.org and giving us a tax deductible donation? 100% of your donations will go to ministry, zero percent to buildings. Thanks so much.

CS Lewis said, almost everything well. And I can't say it better than Lewis said it, so let me just quote what Lewis said. Because everything, I'm not quoting him yet, I'm about to. But everything we've been talking about here in this broadcast, in this podcast, assumes we have a mind. Assumes that we can rationally discuss things and we can ascertain truths about the real

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world and draw valid conclusions. Lewis says, if atheism is true, we shouldn't be able to do that. Here's what he says. Follow this. I've said this about three months ago on the podcast, but this quote is so good. In fact, this is really what the chapter in my book, *Stealing from God*, is all about; the chapter on reason. But Lewis puts it better than I ever could.

Here's what he said, check this out. "Suppose there were no intelligence behind the universe. In that case, nobody designed my brain for the purpose of thinking. Thought is merely the byproduct of some atoms within my skull. But if so, how can I trust my own thinking to be true?" Are you with him so far? Good. He continues, CS Lewis, here he goes. "But if I can't trust my own thinking, of course, I can't trust the arguments leading to atheism, and therefore have no reason to be an atheist, or anything else. Unless I believe in God, I can't believe in thought, so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God." Boom. He's right on. Obviously, if you can't believe, or if you can't have the ability to think, if your mind was not designed, why should you think anything's true, including atheism? You can't use thought to disbelieve in God. You can use thought to believe in God, because you're assuming that God is what's behind your brain, behind your mind, behind thought. But if atheism is true, you shouldn't believe that. And it's self-defeating to say, everybody's a molecular machine, except me. I'm Mr. Atheist. Even though I'm claiming everybody's a molecular machine, I'm going to exempt myself from that statement. And I'm going to believe that I have a mind that can follow the evidence where it leads. I have free will and I can make these rational judgments. That's one of the problems atheists have. They exempt themselves from their own theories.

But let me go back to the problem of evil, because that's really what this is all about. Christianity is the answer to the problem of evil. No other worldview can explain it. Eastern religions generally deny evil exists. They say it's an illusion. Now, we know that evil is not an illusion. It's real. Even though it's not a thing, it's a lack in a thing, it's still real. Islam treats good and evil as the arbitrary whims of Allah. You know, God is not essentially good, as in Christianity. Whatever Allah decides, is good. And there is no certain way to ensure that you're going to be protected from evil, unless you die in jihad. Otherwise, you're at the complete whim of Allah, whether you're going to make it into paradise, or not.

Christianity, on the other hand, claims that, although God's creatures started evil, through the illicit use of our free choice, God enters the bloodstream of humanity to take evil upon himself.

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And by trusting in what he's done, you've accepted what he's done. And God, therefore, will bring you into His presence and will not quarantine you in a place called hell. Why? Why does God have to quarantine people? Because some people don't want God. Some people want to stay in their sin. Some people want to do their own thing. God will not force you into heaven against your will. If you don't want Him now, you're not going to want Him in eternity.

Now, you might ask yourself the question well, why would God allow certain evils? We know why God allows evil in general. Because he's given us free will. And if it gives us free will, that's the only way we could love. But it also opens up the possibility for evil. So, we know why evil exists. But why does God allow certain evils like viruses? Well, we might not be able to answer why God allows a particular evil to occur, but we can answer why God allows evil in general to occur. Why can't I answer why a particular evil occurs? Because I can't see the end from the beginning. He hasn't revealed it to me. And if he did reveal it to you, or me, it might change our behavior in such a way that the outcome that God was getting, by allowing this evil to occur, doesn't occur. Doesn't happen. Because there's something known as the ripple effect. What's the ripple effect? Every event that happens ripples forward to affect trillions of other events into the future. There's a domino effect. One person does something and that affects many others. We know this from viruses, right? One person sneezes, another person gets sick, passes it on to others. There's a ripple effect, in other words. There's a ripple effect for good, there's a ripple effect for bad. And why God allows certain evils that we can't completely see the outcome for, we don't know, but we know that there's a ripple effect. And maybe this brings about a great good, at some point, that we can't see.

Now we see this in the scriptures. We see, for example, that in the Old Testament Joseph, the Old Testament Joseph, not the New Testament, Joseph, the Old Testament, Joseph. Well, we could talk about the New Testament Joseph, as well, but let's just stay in the Old Testament. What happens to him? Well, he's sold into slavery by his brothers, because he's dad's favorite, the brothers are jealous. so, they sell them into slavery. He winds up in Egypt. He goes through a lot of difficulty there, a lot of pain and suffering. He's unjustly accused, he's thrown into prison, but somehow, he works his way out of there, and he makes it makes his way up to, I think, the third highest official in Egypt. And he puts aside a lot of grain in the position. Then his family, the very family that sold them into slavery, they leave Israel and come to Egypt to escape a famine. And Joseph sees them. And what does he say to them? You dirty rats, you're

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going to pay for what happened. No. What does he say to them? What you meant for evil, God meant for good, the saving of many lives. In other words, the evil that Joseph's brothers perpetrated on him, actually rippled forward to help them later.

Now, rarely do you see something like that. Well, maybe it's not rare, but it's probably more often, than not, you don't see the ripple effect. But in this case, you see the ripple effect. You see how an evil later brought forth good. And so, what we can do is, we can trust God when we can't see where the ripple's going. Because we know that God is good and that he can bring all things together for good to those that love God and are called according to His purpose. Even if we can't see how every single event ripples forward, we know that God is God, and he can bring good from evil. He doesn't say, all things are good, by the way. He says, all things work together for good. Sure, there's a lot of evil out there. And some of the evil can bring forth good. Just like going through homework can bring forth the good of learning. Just like going through danger can produce courage. Just like going through obstacles can develop perseverance. Or how someone suffering can develop compassion in somebody else. Or how tribulation can bring forth patience, or adversity character. Or difficulty right now can cause us to look to God as our solution.

As Lewis said, "Sometimes you only look up when you're on your back". Well, there's a lot of people on their backs now, tragically. But that may be a good thing for them eternally, because they're turning to the real purpose they're here to begin with, and that is God Himself. To know God and to make Him known. So, if everything went well all the time, we might never look to God in our fallen state. But God sometimes uses pain to get our attention. Lewis also said that, pain is God's megaphone to arouse a deaf world. Well, some people are getting woken up. In fact, even in the Wall Street Journal yesterday, there was an op-ed about, could this bring about a great awakening? Let's pray it does. As we pray for people to heal, let's pray it brings about a great awakening.

Now, there's a lot more we can talk about. Maybe in the next program, we will. But I need to say this, that we're going to try and bring hope to people. Look, there's only two things you can have in life; you can have either hope or despair. That's it. Either have hope, or you have despair. Well, we want to bring hope. So, starting Monday, March 30, this Monday, at 11:30am (ET), we're going to be doing a live stream, and we're going to do it every weekday, Lord willing,

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every weekday during this coronavirus season. A live stream on our Facebook page, on our CrossExamined.org YouTube channel, and our crossexamined.org website. A live stream called, Hope One. We're going to try and bring hope to people. Our first guest this Monday is going to be Natasha Crain. She's going to join me and give you hope and help in parenting and teaching your kids during this lockdown. I'm gonna have Craig Hazen on Wednesday. Craig wrote a nice little book called. Fearless Prayer.

I'm still working on some other guests. Sometimes it won't be a guest, sometimes it'll be just me. I've reached out to John Lennox. Want to have him on. Gonna have J. Warner Wallace on. I'll have some others on. Dr. Dan. We're going to have him back on. He's going to give us a medical update on the coronavirus. Hope to have him on, as well. We're just trying to arrange all this at this point. And we're going to take your questions. So, for an hour, every weekday from about 11:30am-12:30pm (ET), we're gonna be live online answering your questions. That's in addition to running the courses that I mentioned earlier; Why I Still Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, and, Fearless Faith. And also, Sean McDowell's course, Addressing Homosexuality with Clarity and Compassion. So, go to crossexamined.org to see all this. Click on online courses for the courses. And just go to our website to see the live stream. Obviously, the live stream is completely free. And we'll be taking your questions via Facebook or YouTube every day. And we hope to bring you hope every day. Again, the show is called, Hope One, and it begins this Monday, March 30, 11:30am (ET).

Now there's a lot more, friends, that we can talk about. And maybe next week we'll talk more about this issue, or we'll talk about it during the Hope One live program, If God, Why Evil? But remember, there are so many assumptions that are made and these assumptions, these realities, only make sense if God exists. If there's a being out there who's spaceless, timeless, immaterial, moral, personal, intelligent, who created and sustains the entire universe, then these moral categories, that are assumed whenever you asked a question about God and evil, these moral categories are assumed they're best explained by God. And so, we'll talk more about it in future shows. All right, I'm Frank Turek. Great being with you. Don't forget about, Hope One. Don't forget about the online courses. See you next week. God bless.

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