

QUESTIONS ATHEISTS ASK: DID GOD MAKE EVIL?

David Halbrook

When God created man, there were no atheists but that has changed. Today, sometimes such people ask “If God created all things, then didn’t He create evil?”

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us (Deut. 29:29). We can only know what God has revealed. The universe reveals His existence by displaying His power, but anything else we want to know about Him must come from the Bible. Evidence proves the Bible is trustworthy.

God created beings who could choose to follow or leave Him. Before any chose to leave Him, evil was not a reality. The one who offers a choice between good and evil and identifies good, cannot be blamed if some choose evil. Is a schoolteacher who begins class at 9:00 at fault when students choose to come at 9:30? No, and neither can God be blamed for evil. Those who choose evil deserve blame.

God is good (Matt. 19:17). Satan, the father of lies, and rebellious angels await eternal punishment (Jn. 8:44; Jude 6). With whom will you spend eternity? (For further study of this subject, visit WWW.QVCOC.COM)

-- *Editor’s Note:* Occasionally, our *Arkansas Weekly* articles deal with questions that atheists typically ask, but these are questions anyone might have. So if you do not know someone who openly denies God’s existence, share our weekly article with *anyone*. The reminder of the existence of good and evil might raise a conversation you did not anticipate giving you an opportunity to give an answer (1 Pet. 3:15). “...we also believe and therefore speak” (2 Cor. 4:13).

We meet each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM.

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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PUTTING TRUST IN SOMEONE

Steven Deaton

How do you know if you trust in someone? Is it because you like them or think they are intelligent? Do you know you trust another because you agree with their opinions and outlook on life? Or, is trust realized in another way?

Consider this: you know you trust someone when you believe what they say and act on it when needed.

For instance, if I run to my neighbor’s house and tell him it is about to collapse, if he truly trusts in me, he will get his family out. However, if he doubts me (or thinks I’m crazy) he will object with questions, shut the door, or tell me to go away.

The issue of trust is no greater than when dealing with our relationship to the Lord. If we trust Jesus for salvation, we will believe and do what He says (Jn. 14:1). We will not object to or question His word. We will not shut the door or force Him out of our life. We will hear and heed.

Jesus tells us to believe and be baptized for salvation (Mk. 16:16). Through His apostle He commanded the Jews on Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). He sent Ananias to tell Saul what to do to be saved, which included arising and being baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). If we trust in Jesus, we will hear and heed His commands to be saved. We will not resist and state that we can do part of what He says, but not all. For example, trust in the Lord means we will not try to be saved by faith only (cf. Jas. 1:24). If we only take part of what Jesus said about having our sins forgiven, then we do not fully trust in Him.

We are commanded to assemble with the saints (Heb. 10:24, 25). It will strengthen and encourage us in our walk with God. The consistent pattern in the New Testament is first-day-of-the-week assemblies, that is, they gathered on Sunday: giving (1 Cor. 16:1, 2), preaching & the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7). Christians who trust in the

Lord's message to us, the New Testament, will not object to assembling with the saints. He will joyfully take time to worship God with fellow believers, understanding that in his actions he is not only praising God, but also building up the church (cf. Eph. 4:11-16).

Further, people will not argue that the Lord's Supper is not a weekly requirement. The only place in Scripture where the frequency of the communion is mentioned, it shows a first-day-of-the-week observance (Acts 20:7). Just as the Sabbath was to be remembered weekly, because it occurred every seven days, so it is with remembering the sacrifice of the Savior (Matt. 26:26-29). To illustrate with a secular example, think of Chick-Fil-A restaurants. They are closed on Sunday. Which Sunday? As the statement necessarily implies, every Sunday. Simple.

To trust in the Lord is to believe what He says and act on it—apply it. With this in mind, do you trust in the Lord?

[www.hebronchurchofchrist.com/bulletins/Hebron_Herald_November_2011.pdf]

FOR SALE

Kyle Campbell

“And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.” Gen. 25:30-34

I have thought a lot about Esau over the years: the birthright, the blessing, the stew, the sacrifice of long-term gain for short-term gratification, the desire to regain what was bartered, the tears, and the rejection.

It is not, as the saying goes, a pretty picture. I have also thought a lot about the fact that we face the same challenges as God's children. Temptations arise because the devil is always active. The flesh acquiesces to the mind's desire. The family name is sullied. Our birthright or blessing as His children is casually sold.

The “stew” may take a variety of forms: virginity is lost, a drink is taken, an angry, hurtful word is spoken, a fist strikes, gossip is repeated, a mate is forsaken, a child is abandoned, a lie is told, or the conscience is ignored. The damage done often cannot be undone.

Yes, we can be forgiven (1 John 1:8-10). Through repentance and confession, we can save ourselves from an eternity in hell, “*Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*” (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). Thank God that is true. But remember two points. First, the consequences of our deeds may well last a lifetime -- our lifetime and the lifetime of those we affect. Second, our Father deserves something better from His children. www.lawofliberty.com/articles/Resources/forsale.pdf

Are you concerned about the future of the church?

How About A Check-Up For 2012

- I am attending every service I am able to attend.
- I feel a sense of responsibility for the spiritual well-being of other Christians.
- I pray for all the members of the congregation, especially the elders.
- I can be counted on to support the efforts of this congregation.
- I am really concerned about those who are lost.
- I really want to teach others the truth.
- I am engaged in a diligent personal study of the Bible.
- I am diligently adding virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love to my faith (2 Peter 1:5-7).
- I urge and bring my children to attend those classes designed especially for them.

Knollwood Reminder Jan. 1, 2012

Psalm 40:4-10

Blessed is that man who makes the LORD his trust, and does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; my ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require.

Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart." I have proclaimed the good news of righteousness in the great assembly; indeed, I do not restrain my lips, O LORD, You Yourself know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great assembly.

- How often do you consider the wonderful works Jehovah has done for you?
- Do you delight to do His will and is His law within your heart?
- Are you hiding or declaring God's faithfulness and salvation?