



Philosophy of Religion Course Companion

For AS and A Level Year 1 AQA Religious Studies (Component 1A)

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been created specifically to prepare students for the AQA Religious Studies AS and A Level Year 1, Component 1: Section A: Philosophy of Religion examination. It contains sections on all of the topics covered in this section at AS and all parts of the specification are examined in depth. I have aimed this resource at students and believe that it is accessible and can be used both inside and outside the classroom to support learning.

How to Use

I use this resource every day as part of my teaching. It allows me to set independent learning tasks for individuals and groups. You may decide to photocopy individual sheets relevant to a topic or task you want to cover in a particular lesson, or you may want to give students the whole thing to help them with revision.

Specification Information

This resource is directly related to the AQA specification Section A: Philosophy of Religion. Every part of the AS specification is covered in detail, with subheadings dealing with different issues raised by each of the following topics:

- Arguments for the existence of God
- Evil and suffering
- Religious experience

Update V1.1 September 2018

Corrected references to Aquinas' Third Way argument as a priori on pages 9–10

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ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE

What do I need to know for this section?

- ♦ The design argument Paley's analogical argument and Hume's criticisms
- ♦ The cosmological argument Aquinas's Third Way: the regument from conticriticisms of Hume and Russell.
- ♦ The ontological argument Anselm' > or, gument and criticisms of Gau

Anything else?

- The ba γ hε ι a. guments in observation or in thought
- ♦ The str caucher and weaknesses of the arguments
- ♦ Their status as 'proofs'
- ♦ The value of these arguments for religious faith
- The relationship between faith and reason in these arguments

Starter Activity

 Come up with a list of things within nature which you think are truly remark examples of beauty within the world, such as a spectacular sunset, or of co Paley's example of the ordered way in which planets rotate around the sun

Introduction to arguments for the existence of God

Arguments for God's existence can either be **inductive** and **a posteriori** or **deductive** argument is one which uses evidence in the world gained in the senses (**a po** to form an argument in which God's existence see and be a highly likely, or highly example, we can use the complexities of in an argument in all of the part of allow us to see, in order to suggest it is seems highly probable that the eye down was the work of an intelling and intelling a property of the world. However, as the conclusion that God exist this type of the argument and yet still look to the part of the world. However, as the conclusion that God exist this type of the argument and yet still look to the part of the world.

An **a priori** argument is one which does not rely upon evidence gained through thusing reason and rationality. Such arguments are **deductive** as they lead to a logical accept the premises, or building blocks, of the argument, then we must accept the conclusion would involve a contradiction. For example, the ontological argument the greatest conceivable being, and part of being the greatest conceivable being in the greatest conceivable being unless you exist in reality); therefore, God **must** examing of the word 'God').



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THE DESIGN ARGUMENT

This argument is an a posteriori argument which means that it has its *basis in our observations of the world*. Supporters of the argument, such as William Paley, argue that when we look at the world, we see evidence of order and purpose. It is argued that this order and purpose is so remarks' (e't o is cannot be the result of chance, and this case is likely that an intelligent designer exists and after the world with this order and purpose. The support gument is **inductive**, which means that the world ighly likely that God exists. If we accept that there is order and accept that things which have order and purpose in the world have a designer, the accept that the world itself had a designer: God.

William Paley's analogical design argument

William Paley put forward his version of the design argument in his book *Natural* 1802. Natural theology is a branch of theology which argues that God is best undworld he created. Natural theologians, like Paley, argue that we can understand sexamining what he created. In the case of the design argument, examining the or reveals God's omnipotence, omniscience and benevolence.

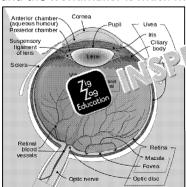
At the time Paley was writing, the most popular method of arguing for the existence of God was through **analogy** – in this case, comparing the world to a man-made object, and arguing that 'similar effects has milar causes'. Paley stated that, as man-made objects 'ave'd signers who are responsible for order and purpose containing the world watchmaker analogy is the world watchmake

Paley's argues that if you came across a stone, you would just think that it has been there for ever and think nothing more of it. However, if you came across a wyou would see that it is intricately designed and put together so that all the parts together. You would infer from these intricacies that the watch must have been designed for a purpose by a watchmaker.

Paley believed that the conclusions from this analogy are obvious -

If we must argue from the watch to a watchmaker, we must argue also from

The watch and the world both have **order** (regularity) and **purpose**. These two th intelligent designer. The only difference between the watchmaker and the worldmaker are both designers. However, the world is much and the worldmaker is much more intelligent than the worldmaker, so they are di

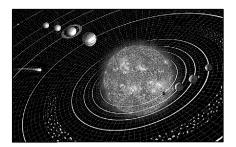


Design of Parpose

everything in the world was designed for a purpodesigned for the purpose of telling the time. He eye. The eye has lots of intricate parts which we Paley believed that the eye works because it had designed with the purpose of giving us sight. The

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Design qua regularity

The second part of Paley's argument is Desi the order of the universe suggests a design astronomy as well as Newton's laws of mot in the universe. He stated that the ordered and the way they are held in their orbits by about by chance in must, for Paley, be the univers ar. I of its parts – God.

Points to note about Paley's sir ut me design argument

- It treats the wer's semantical object, which is comparable to things which is comparable to the world fit together. 2. \mathfrak{P} in the universe, i.e. because it has been created by God). The \mathfrak{m} argument is Design Qua Regularity and Design Qua Purpose;
- It uses the principle of 'similar effects and similar causes'. The backbone of the same of like the watch and so the world must have been created as the watch was cr
- 4. It is concerned with **proportion**: the maker of the watch and the maker of the there is a huge difference between them, just as there is a huge difference in is a matter of SCALE. The unknown designer of the world is like the known de worldmaker is infinitely more intelligent, skilled, etc. because the world is so

The relationship between faith and reason in this argument

It is clear that Paley was motivated to write his version of the design argument du wanted to show others that faith could be grounded in our observations of the na interpretations of these observations using our human reason. There is quite a lo as he uses biological understanding of the complexity of in uman eye in his arguments and Newton's laws of physics and motion in his ar suffer to f design qua regularity stress that science, reason and rationalit consider us with evidence that there writing before the publication of Vary it work On the Origin of Species (which w clear to him that either to and purpose of the world was a complete fluke, er it wiven what Paley and his contemporaries knew about t seem reaso anat they concluded that it seemed incredibly likely that a design provided the world with its order and purpose. In fact, Paley's work was thought scientifically sound, that every Cambridge University undergraduate up until the Paley's Natural Theology. Therefore, it seems that Paley believed that reason con the natural world could lead to faith in a designer God.

The philosophical challenges of David Hume

Lots of philosophers have questioned the validity (truth) of the design argument. The main opponent is the Scottish empiricist David Hume (1711–1776). Hume's arguments against the design argument are found in his book, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, which was published 23 years before Paley's version of the argument.

Hume writes his book in the form of the location or dialogue between three characters. The borowed from Greek philosophy. The three the sters are Cleanthes, Demea and Philo. They all dis 79 bc the design argument and Hume uses the character Pleasure voice his own strong criticisms.

Empiricism The philo stance th only know somethin

Empirical Evidence through

have exp

1. The uniqueness of the universe

- ♦ Hume attacks the use of analogy in the design argument.
- He feels that man-made objects are too different to the universe to allow between them.
- We have no experience of the origins of the universe, so we cannot say universe.
- ♦ The universe and the supposed cause of the between human objects and a unique universe. (God) are unique -

2. The diversity of cause's aradion

Even if work in that because the effects (the universe and human objects) designed the cause of the universe) must also be similar. The order in different explanations – we could think of any fanciful explanation we wish—suppose that one of these explanations is more likely than the others, as we them. Hume asserts that the universe could simply be down to chance – the the theistic explanation of the order found in the universe over the idea that

3. The principle of proportionality

Hume argues that comparing God to a human designer may challenge some attribute to him. If God is a designer, he must resemble that which he create proportionality). This would mean that he is finite, rather than infinite, and tuniverse is full of suffering and evil. If the analogy works, God must also resewould lead to an anthropomorphic idea of God – a man-like picture of God. because human objects require the work of many people many gods made to make the universe, but no longer exists – the universe, but no longer exists – the universe, but no longer exists – the universe of God in the outlive its architect. Perhaps God also has a my sody.

A posteriori arguments and the problem of evil

The strength pocarguments lies in their appeal to our observations of tworld. We understand the starting point of the arguments as we have all of for example, order of time and the seasons and the purpose of the eye. There appeal to special revelation and the arguments accord with our common sense. In the design argument, Immanuel Kant, who was famously sceptical of arguments for (apart from his own moral argument!), said of the design argument, 'This proof design treated with respect, for it is the oldest, the clearest and the most accordant with common reason of [hu]mankind.' However, the issue with beginning with our observations of evil. Our experience of the world is one in which we see much suffering evil, such as the Holocaust, terrorist attacks and natural disasters. If the world is starting point from which to arrive at God, Hume would argue that we may well evith an evil, uncaring God or powerless God... or even no God at all.



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Activity

 Think of ways in which a supporter of the design argument may defend it as Hume. Complete the table below, adding your responses to his criticisms.

Hume's critique	Supp
The world is too dissimilar to man-made objects, which means that we cannot make an analogous between them. We to save the beginning of the universe and transfer refore, cannot make any claims about its origin.	
Even if we do accept that the universe is similar to a man-made object, we cannot move from this to claim that they must have similar causes. The universe could just be down to chance.	
The design argument risks anthropomorphism as it compares God to a human being. If we extend the analogy, we could be left wondering if God is physical, has a gender, etc., devaluing the status of God.	

Strengths and weaknesses 12 e 3 sign argument

Strengths

- ♦ Kant at this argument is strong as it appeals to our common sense world. Everyone can access and understand this a posteriori argument and it
- The science of the time backed up Paley's argument of design as it pointed of the eye (used in Paley's argument of design qua purpose), and Newton's laws the order and regularity of the universe which Paley deemed to be deserving
- The argument is inductive, which means that it should lead to a highly probal premises that there is order and purpose in the world, and that things within purpose are given that order and purpose by a designer, then, by analogy, we that the world, too, probably has a designer God.
- Arguing from analogy is convincing as we are able to understand this argume upon our experience of the design and creation of man-made objects. Paley' and we may find ourselves convinced by his principle that 'similar effects hav seem reasonable.

Weaknesses

- Although he acknowledged the argument's s reneral, Kant felt that it ultimat God's existence. Kant argued that it is incapable of grasping: God.
- Paley argued that it is not was responsible for the order and purpose of the by chart to the was writing, science seemed to back up his idea the God seemed

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- Given the inductive nature of the argument, we can logically reject the conclusion premises, and that is exactly what Hume does. He accepts that there is order can experience that order and purpose. However, we cannot experience a diamot conclude that one exists.
- Hume points out that the use of analogy is weak as the world is not really like want to check to see if there is a watchmaker, we can go and observe a watch cannot do that with the worldmaker! The universe is unique and cannot be in this way.

Evaluation

- 1. Match these strengths and week we up in a table these points would farguments for each are mann of your essay.
- 2. For example, highlight which side you think is stronger, then be the
- 3. Overal, 40 you think that the argument succeeds or fails? Write a paragrap

Taking it further

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Immanuel Kant was heavily influenced by the work of David Hume and credited 'dogmatic slumber' in which he believed religious ideas and church teachings wifor himself.

In his book, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argued that arguments such as the to prove the existence of God using human pure reason, fail as they are examples and trying to understand that which is beyond human comprehension. For Kant, never understand through pure reason as he is beyond the physical world and, the him. The only way to come to knowledge of God, argued Kant, is through practice sense of morality and concluding that it must be given by

The value of the design argument for fait

Value for believers

This argument may street in a re-existing faith in God as believers add the existed world to the solution of the believer in God. It may also be valuable to believers as the faith in God which non-believers can understand. They may feel that the reasonable explanation for belief in God, allowing others to relate to them (for the wonders and complexities of the universe).

Value for atheists/agnostics

In Paley's time, this argument may have led people to faith in God as they felt that world must have an explanation and could not simply be down to chance. However, coming to a probable conclusion based on evidence, it is loving and trusting in the point out that we cannot accept the conclusion that God exists without faith as we designer God. In order to move from the premises to the conclusion that God exists leap of faith, and this leap could not be taken by an atheist or agnostic. It is only a faith, Hume argues, who can bridge the gap between experiences in the world and argument may be valuable to non-believers as they try to understand the point of believe in God. This argument is clear, straightforward and ar peals to our common may not convince an atheist that God exists, it may hely to grasp faith in other convinces.

The status of this argument as a 'proot'

The design argument cannot provide us with the provided us with the prov

Exam Prep

- 1. Draw a table which gives reasons why supporters of the argument may feel and reasons that others may reject the idea that the argument has value or
- 2. Write a paragraph explaining whether or not you think the argument has va

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Quick quiz: design argument

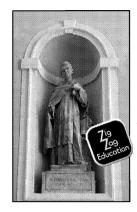
1.	This argument is a posteriori. What does that mean and why can it be cons argument?
	-
2.	Explain Paley's use of analogy in his version of the degree argument.
3.	What (799)th. ee headings under which Hume's criticisms fall?
4.	Give three strengths of the argument.
_	
5.	In what ways could this argument be said to have value for a non-believer?
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AQUINAS'S THIRD WAY: THE ARGU CONTINGENCY AND NECESS



Aquinas was a scholastic theologian who sought to combine faith and reason to allow an understanding of God (albeit an imperfect understanding, as social great for us to fully understand). He infinity of the Catholic Church. Aquinas providing the common to understanding of, and belief in, God in summa Theologica. The first three of these ways form cosmological argument for the existence of God. Aquinas argument:

- ◆ All things which exist in the world are dependent upon something else for their existence and will one day cease to exist (earthy creatures have contingent existence).
- Our observations and experiences of the existence of creatures allow us to determine, therefore, that they exist contingently, not necessarily, which means that they could either exist or not exist.
- Everything we observe in the world, therefore, has contingent existence.

Once we have established the fact that earthly creatures have contingent existence reasoning to lead us to the existence of God as a necessary being. Aquinas argues existence of a necessary being whether we suppose to a necessary being whether whether we suppose to a necessary being whether whether we suppose the necessary being the necessary b

If the world is infinite, the a recept that every possible thing which an infinite amount of time, there would be a point when nothing conting was when nothing existed then nothing would exist now as nothing (as a coings are contingent upon something else for their existence) – this see that many creatures do exist. This means that it is impossible to conclude the contingent. There must, therefore, exist a necessary being which is infinite for its existence, 'and all call this being God.'

If the world is finite, then we accept that it had a beginning and a time when noth cause itself to exist, we must, therefore, accept that there is a necessary being our brought the universe and its creatures into existence.

Whether one accepts the argument or not, I do not think that there is any i understanding the line of thought. (Copleston)

Contingent existence / Contingent being

Necessary exist

Something which has a beginning and an end to its existence and which is depended up to its line else for its existence to begin.

Something which has a is not dependent upon

Aquinas's t. The second of the

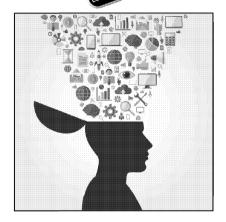
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Copleston states that there are two types of cause, *cause in fieri* and *cause in essi* cause which brings a thing into being, starting its existence but then no longer being existence. God is the *cause in esse* because he not only begins our existence, but continued existence.

The relationship between faith and reason in this argument

Aquinas was a scholastic theologian who believed the common must be accompaniunderstand God; it could be argued that only a be increased would be able to comprehense.' Fellow scholastic theologian for second that, although a non-believe meaning of 'necessary being' and not truly understand the term as to do so This would mean that it is inaccessible to those without faith. However believers we have any explaining their faith in a way which appeals to logic and response to the comprehense of the compreh



between things a priori – in order to link cause experience. Thus, we can conclude that the the world today are contingent upon other the with any certainty that the things which exist upon others for their existence. We cannot being a time when nothing existed, for we can we certainly cannot claim that there exists a existence, for we have no experience of such what we experience and thus any a priori argargument is inductive, meaning that it can, at conclusion that there exists a being responsite contingent beings. We just, therefore, take follow the results and the argument to its connect the continuous priori argument to its connect the continuous priori

Criticisms of Aquinas's 🖰 🦳 🦠

We have all the empiricist David Hume criticised the cosmological assuming the series is a necessary connection between cause and effect. We can a connection exists if we have experienced this connection ourselves. Our experse highly probable predictions about future effects and their causes, but we cannot k have particular causes unless we experience them. He argued that 'the effect is to and consequently can never be discovered in it... In vain, therefore, should we pret event, or infer any cause or effect, without the assistance of observation and experthat creatures who existed before ourselves were also brought into existence by a this was the case as Aquinas suggests. The whole cosmological argument, therefore reason that there was a chain of contingent existence and cannot assume that the nothing existed, as we have no experience that this was the case. For Hume, the cannot be anything other than a concept as we cannot experience this being — we certainty that such a being exists—to agree with the conclusion that there is a Goo faith necessary to move from our observations of contingent existence to the idea.



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Bertrand Russell - criticisms of the argument from contingency

In 1948, Russell (a twentieth-century British philosopher) took part in a radio debawith Copleston which centred around the argument from contingency. Russell are that the fact that our observation reveals that things within the universe have a codoes not mean that the universe itself has a cause. Thus, the cosmological argum is a **fallacy of composition** as it wrongly assumes that the whole universe has the same qualities as the parts that make it up by suggesting as because the things within the universe have contingent existence the universe itself has contingent existence. Russell argued that the universe is not require an explanation at all is a 'brute inexplicable fact'.

For Russell, Town what happens outside of the universe as we have no experience in did thus the claim that God was the cause of the universe is meaningless—we do not even know how to go about proving or disproving the claim God exists, and thus we cannot make this claim in a meaningful way. The fact the we cannot experience God means that we cannot make claims about this God's existence.

Likewise, logic does not reveal that God exists, so we cannot argue for God with a deductive, a priori argument – the statement 'God exists' could easily not be true it is, therefore, not a logical necessity. Therefore, the Cosmological Argument fail we cannot experience God as a first cause and we cannot know that the 'necessar it is easy to imagine that he does not exist. In fact, we do not even understand wi means as we have no experience of such a being.

Activity

1. Listen to the radio debate between Russell 20 Ston online 2zed.uk/7291-existence-god

Discussion Osstia

1. Russ The east at we should only ever consider the facts when making a proposed that he was right that the facts lead us to conclude that the unit

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- This argument appeals to our common sense by asking us to accept that ther nothing existed. As nothing can come from nothing, there must, therefore, b universe with a different kind of existence which began all contingent existen can understand this reasoning.
- Big Bang theory suggests that there was a time when there was nothing. As nothing can come from nothing, we could say that science here is supporting who began existence through the Big Bang.
- Copleston's argument that we cannot add to car an intervence that con existence is still contingent existence ui convincing as it reveals that contingency does not provide to the explanation for why there is existen must be an explanation. There is something rather than nothing.
- Modern priors for argument reinforce Aquinas's ideas; for example, cor Lane Conformulation of the Kalam argument which comes from the Isla forward argument of successive addition in which he argues that the universe impossible to add to an infinite number and we are adding to the universe not This means that the universe had a beginning and there was a time in which is now exist and nothing can come from nothing, there must be a necessary being is responsible for all contingent life.

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Extend your knowledge:

Watch the debate between William Lane Craig and Antony Flew:

zzed.uk/7291-does-god-exist

Weaknesses

- Even if we are able to follow Aquinas's reasoning to at 'something' whi we would need faith to conclude that this was a first accessary being is evil, uncarriable creation.
- Scientific atheists signal Dawkins would argue that this is an examp God in gallowy science. Eventually, science will understand more a reveal seem ssell was correct to argue that the universe is just a 'brute inext
- Russell argued that the fact that things within the universe require an explanat universe itself requires an explanation. The universe is a brute fact and, however there is a reason for our existence, we just have to accept that. The concept of is meaningless as we cannot experience a necessary being, we cannot unders
- ♦ In a debate with William Lane Craig organised to mark the 50th anniversary of between Russell and Copleston, Antony Flew argued that it is meaningless to the universe as we cannot experience it. However, it is a widely held belief the





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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT - VA

Atheists

If Aquinas's third way is indeed deductive, then it should convince everyone of the lead to faith. However, Hume felt that the argument is not ductive as we are reaway from logic to conclude that existence in the way we can the same way as it it would be an even greater jump to say the largument is unable to convince we have never experienced. This way to the argument is unable to convince

Agnostics

However, the ment is based upon our common sense and many people do find existence 'just is'. Aquinas's argument that our existence must be dependent on so could lead someone to be more open to the idea of God. However, due to the large seen in the world, it is unlikely that this argument alone would lead a person to beli

Theists

For believers, this argument could be valuable as it provides them with a logical win God. It could also strengthen their faith as they follow the reasoning of the arguight to believe that God is responsible for all existence. If they are also convinced the cause in esse, they may reflect on their dependence upon God and his supremote deepen their understanding of the deity.

The status of this argument as a proof

Aquinas argued that we cannot hope to understar if ocities immensity, the form that our intellect reaches'. God, by his a youre, is beyond our understand and imperfect and so cannot hope in the derstanding of the Divine, however limited the does seem to fail the limited that the classical there is conclude that the classical there is something which is resulting the conclude that the classical there is something which is resulting that the classical there is something which is resulting the conclude that the classical there is something the classical there.

Evaluation

- Match these strengths and weaknesses up in a table these points would fo arguments for each paragraph of your essay.
- 2. For each row on your table, highlight which side you think is stronger, then to be the case.
- 3. Overall, do you think that the argument succeeds or fails? Write a paragraph

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Quick quiz: cosmological argument

1.	Which of Aquinas's three ways of the cosmological argument could you be a
2.	Explain how Aquinas uses our experience of as en cin the world to lead u
	NSPECTON
	7/9 Feducation
3.	Briefly explain how Russell criticises the cosmological argument.
4.	How could a supporter of the cosmological argument defend it against Russ
	~ C) \$ V
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THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUME ANSELM'S A PRIORI ARGUM



In 1078, St Anselm wrote his *Proslogion* in which he presente argument for the existence of God selm was a scholast can combine faith and reasor to to some understanding has its basis in though selm which is based upon logic and experience which is purpose in writing the arguments.

gan to ask myself whether one might be able to find a proof beyond itself, which would suffice by itself to link to God truly exists, that he is the highest good – needing no existence and well-being of all else – and whatever else w being. (St Anselm)

He believed that we can come to an understanding of God *a priori* by examining of stated that everyone, even atheists (or 'fools'), defines God as 'that than which not ('a liquid quo nihil maius cogitari posit'). In order to be the <u>Greatest</u> Conceivable I reality (**in re**) as well as in the imagination (**in intellectu**), for things which exist in which exist only in our mind. We could set out the argument as follows:

- ♦ We all define God as the Greatest Conceivable Being.
- Part of being the Greatest Conceivable Being involves existing (as to exist is g the mind).
- Therefore, God must exist 'Without doubt then there exists both in the under greater than which nothing can be conceived.' (Anscirit.)

Existence, therefore, is contained within continuous of the word 'God'. This means that 'God exist' and a analytic proposition (one in which the prediction of the word 'God'). Ansolution of the word of reduction ad absurdum to show that an ather claims 'God does not exist' is making an absurd claim as he/site is contradicting the agreed definition of God. God must exist as part of the meaning of the word 'God' involves existence, so one simply cannot argue 'God does not exist'.

Hence, something greater than which nothing can be conceived so truly exists that it cannot be conceived not to be. (Anselm)

Analytic p
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(the state
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A triangle

A bachel

In addition to being a priori, the ontological argument is also deductive. This mean premise (building blocks of the argument) that God is defined as the Greatest Conthat a being had to exist in order to be the Greatest Conceivable Being, then we maccept the definition of God as the Greatest Conceivable Being, but reject the concontradicting our agreed original definition of God and main an illogical, absurd





Criticisms from Gaunilo

The monk, Gaunilo criticised Anselm's Ontological Argument from *Proslogion* Chapter 2. He argued that we cannot move from a definition of God to a claim that he exists. We have an understanding of many things, he argues, but this does not mean that they exist. To illustrate this argument, Gaunilo ack us to imagine a perfect island. We can all imagine a rate se island and if someone told us that such an island argues that if someone said that such an island must exist in reality as if it did not an only the magination, it would not be a perfect island which existed not conclude either that they are joking, or that they are a fool.



Gaunilo also argues that the fact that the fool dismisses the existence of God show of understanding God, meaning that Anselm is wrong to say that we all understan conceivable being'.

St Anselm's reply to Gaunilo's argument that we cannot derive existential cla

Anselm realised the weight of Gaunilo's criticisms and reformulated his argument version of the ontological argument is much stronger and has been reformulated as Norman Malcolm in order to provide modern versions of the ontological argument as the Greatest Conceivable Being, must have the greatest kird of existence. To hexistence and to be dependent upon nothing else for existence is the greatest necessary existence.

Necessary existence is great in changent existence as contingent existence contingent beings and the length upon others for their existence. Therefore, God This means the change change that he might not exist, he must exist, for his existence imagin existing. Therefore, our definition of God shows that he can

To put it another way:

- ♦ Nothing greater than God can be conceived.
- ◆ To be thought not to exist would be inferior to thinking of something that mu
- ♦ God must, therefore, necessarily exist.

This means that Gaunilo's criticism does not apply to God as God has necessary exercisence is contingent. To say the God exists necessarily is stronger than to claim within the definition of God as it means that there is simply no possibility that God



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Criticisms from Immanuel Kant

We find Kant's criticisms of the ontological argument in the first of his three *Critiq Reason*.' Kant has two key criticisms of the argument:



We cannot derive existential claims
Gaunilo, Kanta gued that we cannot
of som an it a claim that it actual
of som an it a claim that it actual
of som an it a claim that it actual
of som an it a claim that it actual
of som an it a claim that it actual
of som an it ac

Similarly, we have an a priori idea of Being'. Therefore, if God exists, he which will be existence. However, tidea of God does not mean that he qualities we imagine him to have if

2. Existence is not a predicate. Kant felt that existence is not a predicate (quality/characteristic) as it does not add anything to our idea of something. Kant asks us to imagine a pile of 100 pound coins and to acknowledge that there are no less pound coins in an imaginary pile than there are in a real pile of pound coins — existence does not add anything to the concept we have. This means that we cannot view existence as a quality of God in the same way as we would with 'power' or 'knov — nothing can exist by definition, therefore as 'xi conce is not something which can be involved as a manalytic proposition in the way that the predicates are contained within the subjection of the predicate are contained within the subjection of the predicate.

Predicate
Quality
in the se
'Rover is
subject

Syntheti
A stater
be true
For exal
Sarah is
The fror

Kant felt that the ontological argument mistakenly gives a synthetic proposition – in order to say whether God exists or not, we would need empire.

Does Kant manage to undermine Anselm's second version of the argument?

American twentieth-century philosopher Norman Malcolm argues that he doesn't successfully point out the flaws in Anselm's first argument (and the arguments of argument manages to survive due to the distinction made between necessary and

In Kant's first argument, he stated that just because we have an idea of a perfect actually exists — we cannot move from our a priori ideas of things to claims that the only have the qualities we imagine them to have if they do. in fact, exist. However is necessary, not contingent, and, therefore, he cannot exist. We can say that ascribe to it, can only have these qualities if it is because the triangle is continuated will only have the qualities of the continuation of the exists, because his not existence is necessary.

Kant's seco. The tichnat the word 'exists' has been used incorrectly in the ontological predicate. Were, Malcolm points out that Anselm does not use existence as a argument. To say that God has necessary existence is a stronger claim than to say the perfect God. In his second argument, Anselm is arguing that God's non-existence is cannot not exist. This is something that we can infer a priori and thus no empirical of the control of the c

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The relationship between faith and reason in the ontological argument of Ans

St Anselm was a scholastic theologian who attempted to combine faith and reaso understanding of God. He believed that all people can come to know God throug using their reason and rationality. In his *Proslogion*, Anselm states that his purpose Argument is to find a proof which could, on its own, show that God exists as a per

Anselm was motivated by his own deep religious faith and in approach is one of a faith seeking understanding. He stated, 'I do not seek to understand in order to be may understand' — he sought to use reason. The rationality to deepen his understand utmost faith in. Some people and it suggion as a prayer of adoration to God, at a God who is 'that the local nothing greater can be conceived'.

Anselm was how that we can come to understand God through the use of realised that decompleteliever, who does not understand or have faith in God, does not means (as the word 'God' involves the idea of necessary existence, a term which can

Strengths and weaknesses of the ontological argument

Strengths

- ♦ In theory, the argument should convince <u>everyone</u> of God's existence as it is reasoning that we define God as the 'Greatest Conceivable Being' and are conceivable Being must exist in reality in order to be the Greatest Conceivable to the necessary conclusion that God exists.
- Anselm's second argument, reformulated by Malcolm, does seem to protect criticisms of both Gaunilo and Kant. John Hick (English philosopher and theo seem that the second form of his argument is able to withstand criticism'.
- The a posteriori arguments may go some way to protect that there is a design they cannot really tell us what this God is like to be loogical argument is provided by the constant of the God of classical their such as power, love and wist on a constant of the God of classical their
- Aquinas argued that the following condition of God as the basis upon which to argue for know the definition of God is correct and thus all a priori arguments must only way to argue for God is through a posteriori arguments, through examining

Weaknesses

- Anselm himself acknowledged that although the atheist knows what the working as the 'Greatest Conceivable Being', they do not understand the meaning fail to be convinced by the argument.
- Brian Davies argues that Malcolm confuses his use of the word 'is'. He moves something ('a pixie is a creature with pointy ears') to saying that something 'i exists a pixie'). You cannot move from saying 'God is a necessary being' to sa that Davies feels this way because he has failed to understand the meaning of serves to highlight another problem with the argument an atheist cannot for ontological argument as, although they know the meaning of the meaning because they do not have faith in Grant and the same are got and the meaning because they do not have faith in Grant and the same are got and the meaning because they do not have faith in Grant and the same are got and the same are got
- Although the ontological argument acts to to belief in a perfect God suffering in the world may let the estion whether such a God is possible priori that these thires a priori reasoning can be said to disprove the God can be prove his existence at the same time, we may find ourselves feet
- ◆ Descart that it is most strange that imperfect human beings have an a minds. However, his reasoning is that God must exist and he must have give a Supremely Perfect Being. God is beyond our understanding and yet we all him the only explanation is that God gave this to us and thus we can trust if foundation for an argument for his existence.

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The ontological argument - value for faith

When considering the value of the Ontological Argument for faith, we may want has in terms of strengthening existing faith and the value it may have in bringing

Theists

The Ontological Argument is certainly capable of strength g a believer's faith be upon the supreme perfection of God as the 'Great Co givable Being'. Dwellin way may well strengthen faith as a believe term ates a God who 'cannot be compared the argument also provides believes who method of explaining their faith to ot way which may confirm to the ontological great and reconfirm the faith of a believer who finds their faith of a believer who finds the faith of a believer who faith of a believer

Non-believel

In theory, the argument should also convince a non-believer of the truth of God's nature of the argument means that all who accept the apparently agreed definition Conceivable Being / Supremely Perfect Being should arrive at the conclusion that the argument does not lead an atheist to convert, it still has value as it may enable of others.



The status of this argument as a proof

In theory, as this argument is deductive, it should prove to every However, the complex nature of the argument has been highlighthat it is a 'riddle', and we have seen that it is arguably impossing the argument due to their failure to understand the terms 'God Anselm himself recognised this as a problem and that you wouthe argument, making it a circular of the you need faith to acce

Activities:

- 1. Rank these three section order of effectiveness for each one, write you have lack the position you have. (Tip: discuss the **reasoning** of einclusterms).
- Take it arther challenge yourself by reading around these arguments. Go Thompson Teach Yourself Philosophy of Religion, Peter Cole Philosophy of Religion, Peter Cole Philosophy of Religion, Puzzle of God. For a greater challenge, try Richard Swinburne The Existence Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion or Immanuel Kant The Critique of Puter Puter States
- 3. Convert each of these arguments into flash cards or mind maps. Using a difference of these arguments into flash cards or mind maps. Using a difference of these arguments are the following the fol



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Quick quiz: ontological argument

1.	Anselm argues that we all share the same definition of God. What is this sh
	COECION COEY
2.	Explain he the seasoning of this argument is different to the reasoning of
	[500]
3.	Explain how Gaunilo uses his idea of a 'most excellent island' to criticise Ans
4.	Briefly explain Kant's two criticisms of the argument.
	TON CORT

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EVIL AND SUFFERING

Starter Activity

Make two lists, one with examples of evil and suffering which humans caus examples of suffering and evil which occur in the natural world.

What do I need to know for this section?

- The concepts of natural and not 1 ;...
- The logical and evided a pomems of evil
- th ു ്യാല്ല് of evil and suffering
- king theodicy
- The free will defence
- Process theodicy as presented by Griffin
- The strengths and weaknesses of each response



The existence of evil in the world presents a significant challenge for religious believers who advocate belief in an omnipotent and omnibenevolent God. With technology including social media, we are today more aware than ever of cases of and suffering (which is a consequence of evil) in the world and may find ourselves frequently asking how we can reconcile belief in the God of classical theism with large amounts of evil which happen on a daily basis. There are two types of evil present within the world:

- Moral Evil this type of evil occurs when humans make the free choice to ac in a way which will hurt others for their own selfish reasons. Examples of mo evil include the Holocaust, terrorist attacks, theft and holocaust.
- Natural Evil this is evil which happens in the man world which is not the 2. beings. Examples include famine die no earthquakes.

Both types of evil cause a religion and belief in an all-powerful and all-lu nic) το λhich is the most problematic. For some, natural evil is results in su which is beyond human control. Malfunctioning of the world Go and animals to question the power and love of the Creator himself. Howeve problem. Although we can say that moral evil is caused by the free choices of humothers for their own selfish gains, we can question why an all-powerful and all-lovin capable of such evil. Should he not have made us good or at least limited the amou

Two problems of evil

The Logical Problem of Evil

This is an a priori, deductive argument which questions the existence/characteristics of God given the existence of evil in the world. This argument states that logic tells us that three things cannot be true at the same time - evil exists, God is all-powerful and God is all-loving. (We) not need to experience any evil to know that and is hae.) Mackie argues that evil, God's omni and God's omnibenevolence form ar 'i cor i junt triad' as they cannot all be true at A si se ame.

God is all-powerful

Theref

- here is no evil (Hume states that we cannot argue that this is the suffering seen in the world),
- God is not all-powerful or
- God is not all-loving.

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St Augustine outlines the problem as follows:

Either God cannot abolish evil, or he will not; if he cannot then he is not al is not all-good.

Logic tells us, therefore, that the existence of evil in the world challenges Goo omnibenevolence. It can be argued, therefore, that the existence of evil in the the God of classical theism logically impossible.

2. The Evidential Problem of Evil

This is an a posteriori, inductive of most which argues that, given the huge the world around us. Which argues in an all-powerful, all-loving Govidence of evilority arms in the world to form an inductive argument against the world brought about a greater good, God might be happen ever, no good seems to come from evil at all. This, plus the scaintensity (think of examples such as the Holocaust), duration (evil often occur as is the suffering which results) and distribution (evil is seen all over the world it is very unlikely that the God of classical theism exists.

Exam Prep

Explain the differences between the logical and evidential problem

Responses to the problem of evil

In order to defend God against the problem of evil, Christians can either:

- argue that evil is not actually a substance and thus God cannot be responsible for it (as it isn't actually a 'thir
- ♦ argue that there is a purpose for evil and suff and 2 1 lat it brings about a greater good and thus has a good reason for allowing it to occur.
- accept that we can all-powerful and all-loving a which contains suffering and evil. God may not be all-powerful (this is the view of process theologians).

Evil is not a substance

St Augustine put forward the idea that evil is not actually a 'thing' but is a 'privation of good'. He believed that God made the world perfect and free from defects but it was caused to 'malfunction' due to angelic and human abuse of their God-given free will in 'the Fall'. When Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent in th

the Fall'. When Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent in the Garden of Eden to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge, God became angry with them, evicted them from the Garden and they 'fell' from his grace. This led the world to become distanced from God which allowed both natural and moral evil to flourish. Augustine argued that just as blindness is not a thing but is a lacking of sight, so evil is not a thing, but is a lacking of goodness of discompletely blameless for evil, and the suffering which results for this. If we accept that evil isn't a substance, then we can accept that Gods a lacking which occurs on earth is the result of the abuse will and not something for which God is responsible.

Theodicy: A Problem of classical the raised by the

Deism: The created the exists indep a personal to the worl or interven or guidance

PrivationA lacking of



However, is it really possible to argue that evil isn't a substance? David Hume felt the world to argue that it does not exist as a 'thing'. Similarly, William Rowe argue (intensity, distribution and duration) means that we cannot ignore it by saying the goodness. For thinkers such as these, evil is a real thing with consequences which people. To deny its existence is simply not acceptable for most people, especially increasingly aware of suffering in the world through the media, including social margue that evil is a 'thing' for which God is responsible, by ich he allows in the good of developing his creation. That is the thour we're a both the Vale of Soul-Will Defence.

Evil is allowed by an notation and omnibenevolent God as it brings about a 1. John Hi. 1939 Processor soul-making theodicy

Do y not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul? (Keats)



John Hick's Vale of Soul-making Theodicy draws he the theodicy of St Irenaeus, who believed that God deliberately created us imperfect in order that we through our experiences of life, move from 'huma to become 'children of God'. Irenaeus believed the although we were created 'in the image of God' (we have to develop into a likeness of God through free-will to make good moral choices which transf

Hick argued that God deliberately created us imperfeely choose for ourself the difficult situations in

valuable' than a ready-made goodness created by Go and has left humans unfit they must complete the second stage of an intermselves by making free more of adversity.

In a world in the present of the prevents them from knowing that he exists) between God and humans so that the humans knew that there was a God, they would love him and be good not because because they wanted to please God for a reward. This would make their good chapterent them from truly improving moral character.

Thus the human situation is one of tension between the natural selfishness survival, and the calls of both morality and religion to transcend our self-c

We are not, therefore, fallen from perfection, but are moving towards perfection making. This process can only occur in a world in which we can make free choices obviously present). However, a consequence of living in a world in which we have evil will inevitably occur. If humans are to be completely free to make their own make a choice which causes others to suffer. However, a ferring which result humans to develop through the process of south laking.

There is still the problem of the process of soul-making. It cannot be a 'he mean that never the process of soul-making. It canno

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If we were to be protected from all harm, this would mean that the laws of nature rather than fixed, e.g. gravity would have to stop working / work in a different wa they would not experience the pain of the fall. Such a life would be 'dreamlike', be would never experience any hardships and thus would never develop character empathy or compassion.

Consequently, such a world, however well it might promote pleasure, would development of the moral qualities of human provided by the worst of all possible worlds!' (Hick)

We must live in a world in which the events have consequences so that we consequences, develop consequences, d

'Or To or, that has this general character could constitute an effective (or inning of the second stage) of God's creative work, whereby huntransformed through their own free responses into 'children of God'. (Hick

The need for an afterlife

- Sometimes good doesn't come out of evil. Sometimes bad situations don't be characteristics, but instead lead to fear and resentment. 'Therefore, it would soul making that is at work in earthly history must continue beyond this life if partial and fragmentary success.' (Hick)
- 2. The only way to justify the 'toil and sorrow of human life' is if we experience a full be beyond our imagination, 'the endless enjoyment of that fullness of life and joy imaginations, which is the eventual fulfilment of God's love towards us, will render pain and travail of the long journey of human life, both in this world and in anoth
- 3. God can only be defended against the problem of evil if all humans reach hear



Strengths of the Vale of which ing Theodicy

This theodicy has use meedom at the centre – for of what to a human being and humans are different to of making free moral choices rather than a national. This strongly adheres to our contemporary the value we place on our liberty. The idea that our free is abhorrent to us (as can be seen in films such a and *The Hunger Games*), and thus this theodicy, with human free will, is appealing.

This theodicy involves accepting that God is responsible for suffering and evil which is perhaps more realistic than theodicies in the Augustinian tradition which attern responsibility. It also accords with popular ideas that 'whatever doesn't kill you me from the philosopher Nietzsche) and that we learn through the difficulties we face



Weaknesses of the Vale of Soul-making Theodicy

Is it really possible to see pain and suffering as an exp scholar Phillips would argue that it is not — it is never jorder to help them. Ther — is a ne things so terrible matter what positive but— les could come out of the because— ie — e might think about the Holocaust in a ling i.e Zika virus). Dostoyevsky uses his character amazov to highlight the fact that nothing could evinnocent children and that belief in a God who allows rejected.

Linked to this, we could ask whether human suffering really needs to be so bad. Sfrom small amounts of suffering. Do we really need suffering of the scale we see

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Unlike the theodicy of Augustine, this theodicy does not strongly adhere to scriptude Doctrine of the Fall (Adam and Eve falling from God's grace) is not present here are Atonement (Jesus dying on the cross to allow God to forgive us so that humans are Jesus is to be seen as an example to follow to help us to develop our souls rather our sins.

Activity

2. Can you think of examples when suffering might wike someone a better/stro

2. The free will defence

This theodicy ses of sewill is an intrinsic part of what it is to be a human believed would never the world to preveal his preveal his preveal his preveal we would then be good and love him, not through our own want to please him to gain entry to heaven. If we are to be truly free (and freedom regard as being an essential human characteristic), then there must be the real post the world. Our actions must have real consequences – we can choose to learn from or we can ignore the suffering we cause – that is our choice to make and we will be

Theologian Richard Swinburne argues that we live in a real world – in this real world will must result in *real* consequences. God is good and so he does not deceive us make have to make important differences to the world in which we live. Although do what is <u>logically possible</u>. This means that he cannot give us free will *and* make us free will, which means that there is always the possibility that we will choose

As God is good, we know that evil must only be permitted because it brings about could not be achieved in any other way and God has the could not be achieved in any other way and God has the could not be suffering will is the greater good – it is so valuable that it is wo. The evil and suffering which has the could not be evil and suffering which has a suffering will to may use our free will t

Natural evil cour so that we can make significant moral choices. God is our much good in our lives, but he does have the right to require some suffering from further good for others and/or ourselves. However, there is a maximum amount us. God was right to create humans because we create the possibility for evil in the enables the development of our moral characters and goodness – God could not is not able to be evil. However, God is in control of the amount of evil produced a freedom and power given to humans. He also makes sure that the evil of the nature only the correct amount of evil needed to allow humans to exercise free will effect.

God allows moral evil to occur and, by creating the natural processes that cause b desires, disease and accidents, also allows natural evil to occur.

Why does evil occur?

Evil can include 'biologically useful sensations' where it is safe and alive. For example, pain caused by the heat of a fire is so seek our escape from a dangerous situation, the pain of sortion from a poisonous gas in a room cause rush out of the room away cause of harm, and the emotion of fear may us to flee from it.

Humans have an epower to hurt and they have free will – therefore, 'it is vastly pre that in such a world there will be a lot of further suffering, inflicted by humans on other... and there will also be the moral evil of people choosing to do what they be be wrong in inflicting the suffering.' (Swinburne)

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The evil of bad desires and temptation is present in the world so that we can make and evil.

We feel grief, sympathy and regret when bad things happen to us/others or good

Swinburne points out examples of good people allowing evil to occur in order to bring parents let children suffer in the dentist's chair in order to my heir teeth healthy. I about the greater good without allowing evil to take put to dentist also make sure necessary to achieve it. Swinburne feels the world's evils do probably serve a

Swinburne argued that not a wisk because without it our ability to make fr diminished or this view:

1. The higher-order defence

Here, Swinburne states that natural evil provides us with the opportunities for response. When people suffer due to natural evil, we are given the opportunities that a world in which we feel pain and compassion is at least equal which we feel no pain and no compassion. Therefore, in order for us to have genuinely suffer due to natural evil, and Swinburne feels that the world is a boncern for others.

We can only make certain valuable free choices as a response to natural evil

2. Natural evil provides us with knowledge which can help us to prevent future

This then provides us with the choice of whether to use this knowledge to hel and not help others (bad). A world which is governed by natural laws allows act always, or nearly always, in the same way – they allow us to predict, with certainty, the consequences of our actions. Governed by natural laws allows to predict, with certainty, the consequences of our actions. Governed by natural laws allows to predict, with certainty, the consequences of our actions.

- we have observed the non-model ests of exposure to asbestos and now prevent this, reduced a number of cases of asbestosis.
- we to o the devastating effects of earthquakes and so now kn fa 79 5.

Swinburne argues that this knowledge could not come to us in any other way were dealing with certainties rather than probabilities; in order to make free of what the consequences of our actions will be. Natural evil provides us wit to spend our time, energy and resources investigating causes and means of pothers — if we had the knowledge a priori, we would not have the opportunit

Why does God not step in to help the world?

- If we knew God existed, we would be good for the reward rather than because choose good. We would want to please God and would be good for this reas wanted to choose good. 'We need "epistemic distance" from God in order to good and evil.' (Swinburne)
- 2. If God stepped into the world, we would know that he sts and there would atheists. However, the fact that these non-buse er xist provides believers their free will to choose to help there the truth of God's existence and which is a great good.



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Strengths and weaknesses of the free will defence Strengths:

- ♦ This theodicy explains that an all-powerful, all-loving God allows evil to occur good of protecting our free will, enabling us to grow morally by freely choosin could see the existence of evil in the world as something which can be reconculassical theism. Also, God has deliberately created us with limited power an we cannot cause too much suffering.
- We may be convinced by Swinburne's argum at he latural evil is inevitable not a toy world'. If we are to learn to ur nee will to choose good moral have real consequences. If our not prevent any negative consequences choices, how would be a fine importance of choosing good actions and he world like the world like the world like the physical pain. Unfortunately, always is natural evil.
- Swinburne's idea that God, despite being omnipotent and omnibenevolent, opossible, makes sense. Mackie's argument is difficult to agree with as it is subeing but then always make them choose to be good (for then, they would not this theodicy is to show that good which is freely chosen is much more valual thus, we have to choose good for ourselves and cannot be influenced in any
- In order to allow for the development of qualities such as compassion, people suffering. The emotional response we have to the plight of others may cause cost to ourselves; we might give a large sum of money to charity, we might ourselves at risk by journeying to an area in which there is suffering in order to be fair, therefore, for God to trick us into thinking others needed our help if to the suffering to the suffering of the suffering in order to the point of the suffering in order to the plight of the pli

Weaknesses:

- Is our freedom really worth the price of intense has a danimal suffering has limited the amount of evil which can use reduces this idea account for natural evil in addition to more in a limited the amount of evil which can use reduces that we do, for much evil and so God is dense used an attract evil to create opportunities to allo perfectly god, in a limited the price evil himself), but we may still be left quest and all the price of intense has a danimal suffering?
- Is the grand-nich comes out of free moral choices really worth the pain we good better to live in a world in which there was no good but also no pain? Swi could still develop qualities of courage, etc. in a world free from pain (but the the extent that they are in this world).
- Mackie if God is omniscient and omnipotent, he should be able to make us always choose good. '... God was not... faced with a choice between making beings who, in acting freely, would sometimes go wrong: there was open to h possibility of making beings who would act freely but always do right. Clearly this possibility is inconsistent with his being both omnipotent and wholly good
- Could God not have created a world in which others appeared to suffer, allow response and develop qualities such as compassion?



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3. God is not all-powerful - process theodicy

This theodicy is based upon the philosophy of A N Whitehead. It was developed into a theodicy (defence of God against the problem of evil) by David Griffin in his book *God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy.* Process thought contains within it ideas very dissimilar to the theodicies of Christian thinkers such as Augustine and Irenaeus, as God's position as an omniration creator is completely rejected. As this view accepts here a argument that the existence of evil is in the ble with the existence of an all-powerful. All vine Cou, many thinkers do not like to call it a theodicy. The chan defending God against the problem of the problem and presents a different understand.

ideas which philosopher 1947). Processubject to chaprocesses of of Classical T subject to chapter the universe

God is not the creator

Traditional Christianity teaches that God made the world *ex nihilo* and that God h creation. However, process thought holds that the universe is an uncreated processhaped the universe from pre-existing primordial chaos. In disturbing this chaos, possibility of both good and evil.

The possibility of good outweighs the possibility of bad

The evolution of the universe occurs due to God's desire to maximise harmony and also to produce opportunities for even greater harmony and intensity on future unfortunately, allows for the possibility of great discord, and thus evil, in the future can come out of these occasions outweighs the evil that had been produced in the future. God, therefore, begins and shapes a process which results in intense sworthwhile as it allows for good. In order to allow for the possible for some evil of Hitler, etc.

The suffering of human bei

Process thought ta': 10 volmportant values are 'harmony' and 'intensity'. Vevil of discussion was nout intensity, we have the evil of triviality. However, intercomplexity, can lead to discord and, therefore, evil. As human beings expebeyond that experienced by other creatures, we also experience the most discord suffering than any other creature.

Harmony: Parts of an experience must fit together and not clash in order for the experience to be enjoyable. An experience could have harmony, but no intensity, which would lead to triviality. Whitehead argued that for a 'beautiful' experience, we need both harmony and intensity.

Discord: When the parts loses harmony and make experience, therefore.

Intensity: Experiences must be intense in order to be enjoyable and worthwhile. The more complex are experience, the more intense and the more of the complexity can only occur if there is a legree of order and harmony.

Tri lality: If experiences ne ming and become to unenjoyable). Whitehe maximising harmony are us with beautiful and experiences.

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God experiences with us

God does take a risk in creating the universe – as he is not in control. However, he experiences with us – he shares our joys and our pains. 'The whole weight of wickedness and stupidity, passes into the divine consciousness, together with the and ecstasy, saintliness and genius.' (Hick). The fact that God shares our suffering us to accept that evil is outweighed and justified by good.

God is not in control

The God of process thought is really or of the world. He is not omnipotent absolute and unchanging a mature. The universe has power, but God's power classical the God of process to be good free will to the correct decisions, the God of process thought persuades behaviour because this is his only option – he wants us to be good, but he cannot is not in control of the world. As Griffin argues, 'God does not refrain from control because it is better for God to use persuasion, but because it is necessarily the control the creatures.' The universe itself is in control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain extent. Although the control to a certain extent of the control to a certain

The role of God

In each of these creative moments, God is there, offering the universe a good out to choose good over evil. However, the fact that evil occurs is evidence that God's often not done, resulting in the evil we see in the world. He wants us to be good, opportunity to be good and hopes that we will take it, but has limited power a choose the good that he wishes for us. God wants to evil, but he can't.

Why is this theodicy appealing?

- 1. It avoids the problem that God is not omnipotent he is not therefore and discount of responsible for the evil in the universe. Evil is part has no hard God is unable to change the nature of the universe and, (However od must have some responsibility as he shapes the primordial change the which brought with it both good and evil perhaps it was irresponse to could never be in control).
- 2. In process thought we have a God who suffers with us he is with us in our b sufferer who understands our pain and anguish. This could lead to a greater stronger relationship with him.

Strengths and weaknesses of process theodicy

Strengths:

- Why does God not stop suffering and evil? Because he can't! God exists as p didn't create it. Therefore, he is not responsible for the suffering in the unive could, but he cannot control the universe.
- ♦ God suffers too, so he knows what we are going on gh when we suffer w with this God who is a fellow sufferer with understands.
- God suffers too and yet continue us with opportunities to develop against evil is worth " ould we.
- We do not too will triumph, so we must work together with God all in to 79 together.

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Weaknesses:

- This does not work as a theodicy as the 'God' portrayed is not the God of clas omnipotent may not be worthy of worship.
- We can already see God as a fellow sufferer as he suffered on the cross incar
- If God cannot guarantee that good will triumph, then what is the point of our the end anyway. This idea may be quite depressing for some – what is the po
- Process thought can be seen as elitist the intense so ing of the poor and leads to the opportunities for great happines no the elite some people's was suffering! If God loves us all, surely to bound stiff the intense suffering so especially as there is no process. Impliness in heaven at the end of the structure of the struc
- Is the God of process theology is likened to a mad scientist, www.will bei

Activities

- Create a table in which you detail how the three different theodicies covere attempted to explain the existence of moral evil and natural evil.
- 4. Take it further challenge yourself by reading around these ideas. Good st Thompson Teach Yourself Philosophy of Religion, Peter Cole Philosophy of Reli
- 5. Explain how each of the three theodicies has responded to:
 - ♦ the logical problem of evil
 - the evidential problem of evil





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Quick quiz: evil and suffering

1.	What are the three parts of Mackie's inconsistent triad?
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2.	Explain William Rowe's argument to seevil and suffering in the world can be against the existence of six and suffering in the world can be
	719 120 130 (130 (130 (130 (130 (130 (130 (130 (
3.	How does Augustine's argument that evil is not a substance potentially solv
4.	How does the vale of soul-making theodicy explain the existence of moral e
	Coi Coi
5.	Give to 730 grns of the free will defence.
5 .	How does process theology attempt to solve the problem of evil?
7.	What are the key weaknesses of process theology in tempt to explain
	- JECIJON
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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

What do I need to know for this section?

Religious experience

- ♦ Visions: corporeal, imaginative and intellectual
- ♦ Numinous experiences: Otto, an apprehension of the wholly other
- Mystical experiences: William James ensuous and non-intellectual unic by William Stace

Verifying r 7% is . periences

- ♦ The characters of verifying religious experiences
- ♦ The challenges to religious experience from science
- ♦ Religious responses to those challenges
- ♦ Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony
- ♦ The influence of religious experiences and their value for religious faith

Visions

A vision is a type of religious experience in which an individual believes that they have seen or heard God or another supernatural being. Visions can be involved in other types of religious experiences, such as mystical or conversion experiences. There are three types of visions:

1. Corporeal vision

This is a vision of a figure in human form, external the policit. An example of this is St Bernadette's vision of the lower at Lourdes. Aged 14, Bernadette received sever the control of the lower several months. The 'Immaculat's form appeared to Bernadette to inform her of the heavily post to of the spring at Lourdes — the chapel which was built of 'miraculous' healings have been made.

2. Imaginary vision

This is a vision which occurs as images in the person's mind or in a dream. For example, to heaven: 'He came to a certain place and state because the sun had set. Taking one of the sunder his head and lay down in that place. A ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reach God were ascending and descending on it. A and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham Isaac; the land on which ou lie I will give to your offspring." Ill like the dust of the earth of the earth shall be blessed in you am with you and will keep you wherever you this land; for I will not leave you until I have dear

Then Jacob from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I dafraid, and seed the How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house heaven." (NRSV)

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3. Intellectual vision

This is a vision which gives the subject special knowledge of a 'revelation' from God – it is extremely difficult for a person to put into words although it affects them deeply. A person who has such a vision is able to grasp truth about God which could not be gained in any other way. In Acts 11: 6–10, Peter gives an account of his vision in which he felt God was telling him that there was no longer a need to follow the Jewish dietary laws: 'As I look a it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and are the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, "Get up, Peter; kill at a look and it replied, "By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or up I and a lever entered my mouth." But a second time the voice answers to a long the everything was pulled up again to heaven."

Numinous experiences

Rudolf Otto – the idea of the holy

Otto states that religious experiences are 'mysterium tremendum et fascinans — mysterious experiences which frighten us and which we respond to with awe. He claimed that the emotional and non-rational element of religion is very important. Otto believed that part of religion involves experiences of the 'wholly other' or the 'numinous'. The numinous cannot be taught or transmitted, but must be 'awakened in the spirit' through religious experience. Thus, attempts from scholastic scholars to describe the numinous are 'rolled out so thin and flat' that the meaning is lost. Thus, religious experiences are vital to religion, as they are the best way to understand something of the wholly other. They give an insight into the my te for the set of God which cannot be obtained in any other way.

A numinous experience is usevidence of the 'wholly other'. The subjects of survision and for any sery overwhelmed by the presence of God and feel insignifications. Sometimes, included in a conversion. An example of surthe conversion of St Paul:

Saul was a Jew and a Roman citizen, who worked with the Romans persecuting Chexecutions. One day, he was travelling to Damascus to carry out such persecution him, temporarily blinding him. He also heard the voice of Christ asking 'Why do you have the experience left Saul weak and confused; he realised that he needed to make a converted to Christianity and changed his name to Paul. He became an incredibly Church, spreading the word of Jesus to early Christian communities and informing which would please God. St Paul's letters to these early Christians can be found also find details of his work with the early church and his conversion in Acts of the New Testament.

For Otto, we cannot fully understand the numino sa it s'wholly other' – it is so comprehend it using reason and rational cy wever, through emotions and feel experiences, we can come to be a viscin summer of the numinous. The problem wit into God cannot easily is a words. However, Otto argues that we can use explain our particular, although this is not ideal, it could still 'awaken the spiglimpse of wholly other' – God.

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The 'tremendum' component of the numinous experiences comprises three elenis

- **Awfulness** inspiring awe, a sort of profound unease. Otto describes this as at the potential for experiencing the wrath of an almighty God.
- Overpoweringness that which, among other things, inspires a feeling of hu
- **Energy or urgency** creating an impression of immense vigour, compelling.

The 'mysterium' component has two elements:

- Wholly other totally outside our normal experime
- Fascination causes the subject of the language end to be caught up in it.

Mystical experiences *

In The Varid 19 Resigious Experience, William James states that '... personal religious exp Educe e has its root and centre in mystical states of consciousness.' Mysticism can be defined as a direct experience of God which makes a person feel at one with their creator. James felt that a person who has had a mystical experience is able to see truth in a special way, i.e. it gives them an insight into Ultimate Reality.

William James said that for an experience to be a mystical experience, it must meet these four criteria:

- **Ineffability** The experience is so unlike anything previously experienced that it is impossible to explain it to another person. The person who has had the experience will be unable to convey its significance to another person.
- Noetic Quality The experience gives truths which a person would be unable to obtain without the experience. The truths are very important and significant and are universal and eternal. The person who has have experience will be convinced by the truths given.
- **Transiency** The experience is short in the than two hours). However important to the subject and and it remember it forever.
- Passivity The pers a horizonthe experience feels that they are taken over

gious experiences of God did happen and James felt t Veridical: A pointed to the positive changes people have made to their lives as if it is an ex a result of such changes as evidence that they are real and thus veridical (experiences of a God who actually exists). He felt that

people of different backgrounds and cultures should be expected to have slightly for James, religious experience is very like an emotion – people feel emotions in they can also experience mystical experiences in different ways. Therefore, the experiences contain differences does nothing to detract from their significance.

Walter Stace identified two types of mystical experience:

- Extrovertive this is an experience which involves looking at the physical wo in all things.
- 2. Introvertive – this is the truest form of religious experies le, for it is **non-sens** experience) and non-intellectual (not the res: from uman trying to underst within one's self and realising that there is unit with the Divine – a feeling t looking within ourselves and a first our nature. Stace felt that the esser same for people of a " and cultures, although they may interpret the





The challenges of verifying religious experiences

The main problem with accounts of religious experiences is that they cannot be ve testing – we cannot carry out a scientific experiment to determine whether they Scholars have suggested that they are, at best, ambiguous and can be interpreted

Logical Positivist A J Aver argued that all religious language, including the language used to explain religious experiences, is completely meaningless, due to the fact that account religious experiences can never b verified. He stated that claim when a religious experience inceresting from a psychologic 1991 to view, but dismissed any claims to rel Education knowledge as a result of such experience. He argued that it is impossible to

Transcer lent: A 'a en lent God 1 is outside of the world of time and space. This makes him virtually unknowable, or 'wholly other'.



move from an experience of a religious emotion to a claim that a

transcendent God exists – for this is something for which we have no empirical evidence and therefore this claim is meaningless.

The fact that religious experiences tend to be private experiences which happen to no empirical evidence to back them up. If only one person has experienced a vision connection with God at a particular time, then we would have to take their word empirical data. In addition to this, individuals from different cultures and religions differently – shouldn't they all have the same experience? William James would a that experiences have happened because we can observe the positive changes rec make to their lives as a result of such experiences, but this may not be enough to experience of God has taken place. Additionally, he argued that different cultures interpret experiences differently, but this doesn't mean that t'e experiences them

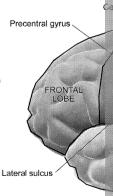
Added to the fact that religious experiences are c cer. So wate experiences, the fac ineffable complicates things even further an unity can we not observe the exper understand the description of the experiment given by the subject, nor the knowledge and the subject of the sub attained about God through the perience, due to the limits of human language. et hand our understanding, and thus it is impossible for re rience in human language which comes from limited human in to explain t ourselves cooling that, although the experience may be significant for the subject to the subjec hold no significance for others as they cannot feel the experience themselves and accounts of the experiences of others.

The challenges to religious experience from science

Scientists seek to find alternative explanations for 'religious' experiences. They en simplest explanation is the best explanation) by arguing that it is much more likely psychological/physiological explanations for apparently religious explanations that examples of a 'god' (who is present outside of the world)

communicating with us. The fact that religious experiences cannot be verified and are ineffable is also problematic from a scientific point of view as the discipline of science states that we must have evidence for something before we accept it as true.

V S Ramachandran is a neurologist who are our work related to temporal lobe epiler and found evidence that links the temporal lobe will get a experiences. He set up an experim co the brains of people with and without ten beautiful ten brains of people with and without ten brains of people with a people with patients' chases in skin resistance, essentially measuring how much they sweated when they looked at different types of imagery.



Medulla

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Ramachandran was surprised when sufferers of temporal lobe epilepsy experienc resistance when shown religious imagery — much greater than the changes in thos concluded that temporal lobe epilepsy sufferers are more prone to religious and r that figures such as St Paul who claim to have had religious experiences could suff

However, Ramachandran does not think that his work shows that religious experion people with temporal lobe epilepsy are more susceptible to the experiences — it brains work makes them more open to receiving (at 1) sation from God.

'The science of neurotheology' (re) and that it is too simplistic to see relinspired or the result (cir) mattioning. What it shows is that for some developed specific wares that help us to believe in God. Remarkably it not 19 may a rorains have developed, we will go on believing.' (Ramacle

Michael Persinger's God helmet

Persinger is a scientist who created a helmet which passes electromagnetic energy to subjects' temporal lobes. Those who have worn the helmet have reported feeling a presence with them, feeling peaceful, humble and/or joyous and feeling at one with the world – sensations which are also reported by those who have religious experiences. Persinger conducted the experiment on a Buddhist monk and a Christian nun and they both had an experience which gave them a similar feeling to experiences felt during their meditation. Persinger believes that this proves that religious experiences are not genuine experiences of God, they are caused by temporal lobe epilepsy.



Physiological explanations

Many accounts of relievely experiences come f known to take article for example, religious gr reported by religious experiences. They we

A test carried out on theology students in 1966 meditation found that drugs significantly increasexperience. Half were given a drug and half a preported religious experiences from the studen

Psychological explanations

Father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud argued that religious experiences are reactions to a hostile world. Humans feel helpless because they cannot control things such as natural disasters and so seek a father figure who will protect them. They create God to satisfy their need for a protecting father figure. As God is not real, he cannot be experienced and, therefore, religious experiences are illusions. For example, Freud said that if someone has a mystical experience of being on the cross with Christ, it is a projection of their beliefs about suffering, helplessness, salvation, hope and their desire to be reunited with their parents.

Other psychologists have put religious per les down to mental illness, sexual frustrations, adolescen not lest. They also argue that religious experiences are more continued personality types.

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Religious responses to challenges

Responses to the challenge of verification

- Believers might argue that it is obvious that religious experiences cannot be electronic occasions when God has chosen to reveal himself to an individual or small grohumanity with a message without revealing his existence (and thus without to
- It may well be that religious experiences fail to convince ceptics of God's eximeaningful for those who have such experiences a counts of religious experiences (Otto) in others, allowing them to have a poster understanding of God
- ◆ James would argue that religion the chees can be verified as we can observe recipient of an experience.
- James would a the fact that different religions and cultures have slightly be experienced to course people will interpret experiences in a way which makes that introvertive mystical experiences are all the same but are of different cultures and religions.
- ♦ Otto would agree that the limitations of human language cause problems as 'wholly other' into words. No words are adequate when trying to explain exponly thing we can do is use the words available to us and we must try to explore religious experience as this may 'awaken the spirit' in others, allowing tunderstanding of, and connection with, God.

Responses to the challenges of science

- Swinburne countered scientific challenges to religious experiences. Scientists evidence to support belief that a religious experience has taken place, but Sw everywhere and so it is perfectly plausible that religious experiences take pla prove that an experience has taken place, but up to the sceptic to prove that prove that religious experiences do not take place.
- Swinburne also argues that the fact that *some* of the sound of the so
- It may to that 'faulty minds' might be easier for God to communicate with

To reach his conclusion that evidence for the occurrence of religious experiences Swinburne used the **Principle of Credulity** and the **Principle of Testimony**.

Principle of Credulity – I should believe that God exists if I have an experience of to judge if your experience is one of God or not.

'If it seems to a subject that x is present, then probably x is present.' (Swir

Swinburne believed that we should accept events which happen to us, unless we do not trust that what we perceive is probably true, then we will be sceptical about through the senses. Therefore, religious experiences of God should be believed provide evidence that an experience is false.

The Principle of Testimony – I should believe that Go you tell me that yo

'In the absence of ... positive evidence we see good grounds to believe wheexperiences.' (Swinburn ... 1 stence of God.')

Swinburne states that it is smable to believe people when they say that they be unless we is trust people when they state that they have experienced God. He accepts that pe about their experiences, but suggests that it is up to the disbeliever to provide eviexperience should be rejected rather than for the believer to show that it is true.

Swinburne feels that together, the Principle of Credulity and the Principle of Testillarge amount of religious experiences reported go some way towards proving the

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The influence of religious experiences and their value for religious faith

Religious experiences have been very influential as the religious experiences of infor the origin of religious traditions and their development. For example, Muham Jibril were later written down to form the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, Moses' Sinai gave the Ten Commandments which form the basis of the religious laws of and have also influenced the legal system and, as we have already seen, St Paul's road to Damascus led to the spread of Christianity and Try of its moral teaching religious experience, such an experience is sinificant as it may lead them to faith existing faith by giving them a deem to be anding of God.

gio 💎 🥍 nces really have any value for those who do not hav themselves 799 e cannot verify such experiences, can we know that they are reexperience deduction into words, they will struggle due to the ineffable nature of suc limitations of human language, so it is unlikely that we will understand them. Also alternative explanations for apparent religious experiences. There are similarities and temporal lobe epileptic seizures and they may also be the result of drugs. It may have value if they cause a person to change their lives in a positive way and not really allow anyone other than the subject of the experience itself to gain any

Activities

- Create a mind map giving details on the three types of religious experiences numinous experiences and mystical experiences.
- Take it further challenge yourself by reading around these arguments. Thompson Teach Yourself Philosophy of Religion and Peter Cole Religious 👨 challenge, try Richard Swinburne The Existence of God, Rudolf Otto The Idea The Varieties of Religious Experience.
- Write a paragraph explaining whether can two nink the religious respon work. Do the same for the scienting a lenges. INSPEC





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Quick quiz: religious experience

1.	What are the three types of vision experiences?
า	Driefly cyclein what happened to St Dayl on in the Company
2.	Briefly, explain what happened to St Paul on The to L to Damascus.
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3.	What a work am James' four characteristics of a mystical experience?
4.	Give two ways in which science explains religious experiences.
5.	Briefly, explain the challenge of verification.
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Answers to Quick Quiz

Design argument

- 1. It is arrived at through examining the world as it appears to us through our sense argument is that it fits in with a modern scientific minds. In dis not reliant upon
- 2. Paley makes an analogy between a watch and the variation order to show that sin the watch had a watchmaker and so the variation of the vari
- The diversity of course of account for the diversity of course of account for the Prior of the p
- 4. Three fired
 - ♦ Kant it appeals to our common sense
 - ♦ The science of the time (such as Newton's laws of physics and motion) appe
 - It's inductive and so leads to a highly probable conclusion
 - The principle of similar effects have similar causes seems reasonable
- 5. It may help them to understand why other people believe in God.

Cosmological argument

- 1. The third way of contingency and necessity.
- 2. Everything which exists in the world is dependent upon something else for its ex cannot regress infinitely (go back forever); therefore, there must be a necessary else for its existence, which began the existence of everything else God.
- 3. The cosmological argument involves a fallacy of composition—it is clear that the cause just because the things within the universe page. The universe page is a lause. The universe page is a lause.
- 4. The universe is too complex to just he rather than nothing.

Ontological

- 1. God is 'ledwood an which nothing greater can be conceived'.
- 2. This argument is a priori and deductive it uses our logic and reasoning to move to the claim that he must exist. In contrast, the design argument is a posteriori at of order and purpose in the world to lead us to the likely conclusion that God exist.
- 3. Gaunilo argues that the fact that we have an idea of something perfect, like an isla in reality. In the same way, the fact that we have an idea of a perfect being. God, exists in reality.
- 4. We cannot move from our idea of something to a claim that it actually exists. Existence is not a predicate and, therefore, cannot be part of the definition of God G

Evil and suffering

- 1. Evil exists, God is all-powerful, God is all good.
- 2. The intensity, distribution and duration of sill no same ring experienced through to suggest that God does not exist
- 3. If evil doesn't actually a dostance, but is just a lacking in goodness, then answered oci is verful and all-good as evil doesn't exist as a 'thing'.
- 4. Moral & Locate as humans progress through their journey from human animals inevitable set some things wrong on their journey, resulting in moral evil.

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5. Two from:

- God remains all-powerful and all-good evil exists because God wants to pr make good moral choices so that we can grow and develop.
- It seems reasonable that we have to live in a world in which our choices have result in evil and suffering.
- It makes sense that God can only do what is logically possible and so cannot choose good.
- It seems likely that we need real situations of evil a uffering in order to a compassion.
- 6. Process theology argues that God: t. L. werful. He wants to stop evil and s enough to do so.
- 7. This God is not it is an God as he is not all-powerful.

 There To are been that good will triumph in the end.

 God apple decetors be morally reckless in creating a world which he knew he would

Religious experience

- 1. Intellectual, corporeal and imaginary.
- 2. St Paul (then Saul) was on the way to Damascus to put Christians to death when temporarily blinded him and heard the voice of Jesus asking 'why do you persecutive Christianity and became incredibly influential to the religion.
- 3. Ineffability, noetic quality, transiency and passivity.
- 4. The experience may have been caused by drugs or the experience may be the result
- 5. Religious experiences cannot be checked or verified and thus are incredibly difficult relate to some may, therefore, argue that accounts of religious experiences are





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