

Recent Theodicies

111-114

P Protest theodicy – questions whether God is really all good

- ▶ Camus (to the extent that he thought there might be a God)
- ▶ Elie Wiesel – *Night* and “Trial of God”



Recent Theodicies

1

Process Theodicy

P Power of God is essentially persuasive rather than coercive

P Migliore characterizes process theology as offering “a radical restriction of divine power” and “most distant from the biblical witness”

- ▶ Better to understand process thought as arguing that we have a misunderstanding of perfect power
- ▶ Biblical witness about power of God can be found in 1 Cor. 1:23-27



Process Theodicy

2

1 Cor. 1:23-27

We proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong



3

Person-making Theodicy

P John Hick – “possibility and experience of evil are conditions of the possibility of growth toward free and mature humanity in the image of God

- ▶ Imagine a world where God intervened every time evil could occur, e.g., softening your blow when you hit another, cushioning your fall when you slip out of a tree – what kind of person would you become?

P Still the issue of *tremendum* – couldn't we have soul-making without the extremes?

Person-making Theodicy

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Liberation Theodicy

P James Cone – in cross we see struggle against evil and in resurrection the promise that God will vanquish evil

P Called to participate in God's struggle against suffering and evil – to seek liberation of all creation

Liberation Theodicy

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Migliore's Application of Trinitarian Theology

115 ff.

P “God is present with the creatures both as co-agent and co-sufferer” (115)

- ▶ God has chosen to be vulnerable
 - vs. Process Theology where that is God's nature – is there really a difference?

P “The crucial point is that a trinitarian understanding of divine providence and the reality of evil is marked not by a pagan notion of God as sheer almightiness but by the power of love at work in the ministry, cross, and resurrection of Jesus” (115-116)

- ▶ “logic of trinitarian love”

Migliore's Application of Trinitarian Theology

6

God as Creator and Provider of Life

P God as creator works for good in life, is present with all who/that fight against that which threatens and harms good creation, and present as One who judges agents of harm (see 116)

- ▶ Evil is to be resisted (but not with evil)



God as Creator and Provider of Life

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God as Redeemer

P Love of God the redeemer works in all creatures, strong and weak (117)

- ▶ God experiences our suffering (and our joy)
- ▶ God's solidarity with victims of evil is both grace and judgment (118)



God as Redeemer

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God as Sanctifier

P God as Sanctifier is source of hope, renewal, and transformation of all things

- ▶ Sacrificial love which forgives and liberates

P All reflection on theodicy is limited – theological point is confidence that God is with God's creatures and will ultimately assure victory of love



God as Sanctifier

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