



AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

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In a similar manner, **Dr. Douglas Groothuis** explains in **Christian Apologetics**, ©2011 IVP:

“Evil is dependent on a prior and original goodness. Evil is a lack or pri-

vation of goodness. Evil is dependent on goodness in a parasitic way. Evil is not a thing or substance in and of itself, but the warping and twisting of an antecedent good, which results in a lack of proper goodness. The upshot is that God is not the author of evil.”

But aren't we essentially denying the existence of evil if we say that evil is no more than a label that we use to describe the absence of good?

No — unlike Buddhism, pantheism, Christian Science, and a number of other world views, Christians do not deny the reality of evil. We simply deny the fact that evil exists *inherently*—of itself, on its own, apart from that which is good/goodness.

Dr. Norman Geisler says it this way in *When Skeptics Ask*, **Victor Books** ©1990:

“We can deny that evil is a thing, or substance, without saying that it isn't real. It is a lack in things. When good that should be there is missing from something, that is evil.”

“There is nothing wrong with strong winds moving in a circle, but a bad relationship arises when the funnel of wind goes through a mobile home park.” “So evil is a lack of something that should be there in the relationship between good things.”

“God made evil possible; men made evil actual.”

Perhaps it would help to think about **evil** in the same way that we think about **cold**. In reality, cold is just the absence of heat. So the word **cold** refers to the condition or subjective perception of having low temperature, or the opposite of **hot**.

Another way to understand the nature of **evil** is to consider the nature of **darkness**, which is polar to brightness, or the absence of visible light.

It's difficult to measure darkness in any place without quantifying the amount of light that is present. So darkness is really no more or no less than the term that we use to describe the absence of light.

But doesn't the Bible say somewhere that God created both good and evil?

A few translators have used the term “**evil**” in Isaiah 45:7, but many others believe that the preferable rendering of verses 5-7 is as follows (New American Standard): “I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other, The One forming light and creating darkness, Causing well-being and creating **calamity**; I am the LORD who does all these.”

To summarize — **all that God created was good. God did not create evil.** Still, evil was possible — and soon became actual. God had good *reasons* for creating a world in which evil exists, and even to this day He uses evil to actualize a greater good than must otherwise be possible.



Did God Create Evil?

by Daryl E. Witmer

Did God create evil?

Does **Dunkin' Donuts**® create donut holes—those empty round spaces in the middle of a donut?

They do? They really *create* the holes? Or is it that they just remove the part of the donut that once occupied that area in the middle of the donut and that we then refer to the resulting empty space as a donut hole?

So Dunkin' Donuts does not actually create the holes. And yet the holes exist, don't they? So how is it possible for something to exist if it hasn't been created?

Well, isn't it true that while the donut hole is a *reality*, it's not an actual created *object* or *thing*? And because a *contingent reality* can exist without ever actually, technically, having been created, we can say that it *exists*. We refer to it as a *contingent reality* because there has to be a donut around somewhere in order for there to be a donut hole. Otherwise, that empty area would just be space and not a *donut* hole at all *per se*. (Even worse, there may be no Munchkins® around either!)