

Reconciling Science and the Bible

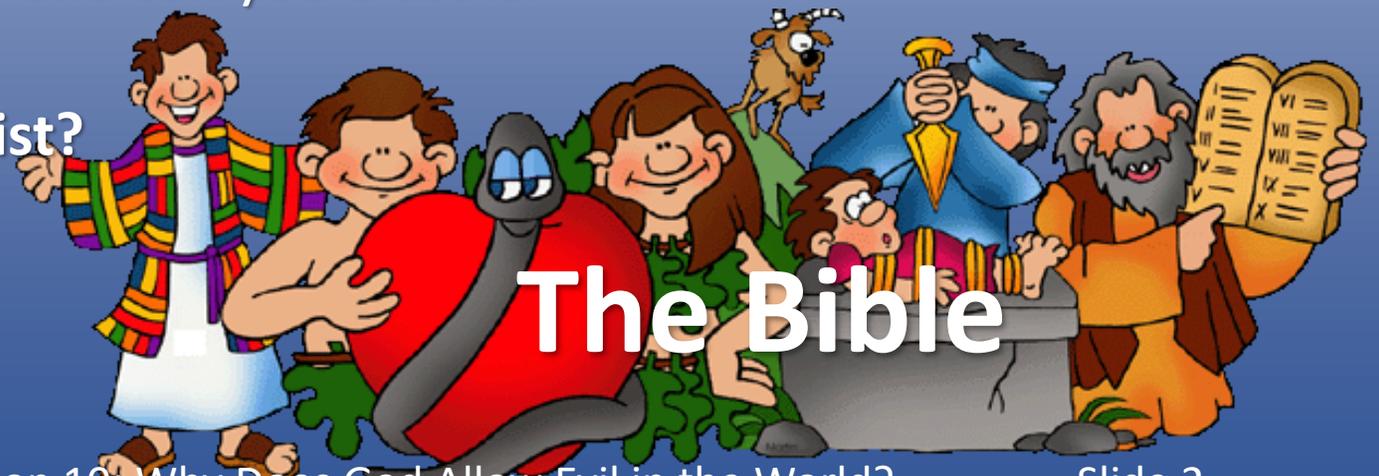
Lesson 10: Why Does God Allow Evil to Happen?

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Lessons: Reconciling Science and the Bible

1. 7 days of creation
2. In the Beginning (the Big Bang)
3. Did dinosaurs really exist? How old is the Earth?
4. The Existence of God: The Ontological Argument
5. The Existence of God: The Anthropological Argument
6. The Existence of God: The Argument from Logic
7. The Existence of God: The Argument from Intelligent Design
8. What is truth? Is the Bible true and can you trust it?
9. Was Jesus a REAL person?
- 10. Why does God allow evil to exist?**
11. Is there life after death?
12. Is God multidimensional?
13. Living an intentional life!



God IS Love

- It is not that...
 - God loves
 - God is a God of love
- It is that...
 - God *IS* love
 - He is the essence and fulfillment of love
 - He loves fully, unconditionally, completely, universally



<http://www.111ideas.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/pictures-of-God-love.jpg>

We Understand Love



<https://image.shutterstock.com/image-photo/god-love-concept-text-lying-260nw-328480277.jpg>

- We understand love ONLY because God is love

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails.

1 Cor 13:4-8

Contingent Love

- Our love is not God-like love. It is often (always?) contingent:

I love you BECAUSE ...

I love you IF you ...

I love you WHEN you do ...

I love you BECAUSE you are ...

I love you SINCE you ...

I love you IN AS MUCH AS ...

I love you AS LONG AS ...

I love you CONSIDERING THAT YOU ...

I love you DUE TO ...

I love you FOR THE REASON THAT ...

I love you FOR THE SAKE OF ...

I love you IN BEHALF OF ...

I love you IN THAT ...

I love you IN THE INTEREST OF ...

I love you IN VIEW OF ...

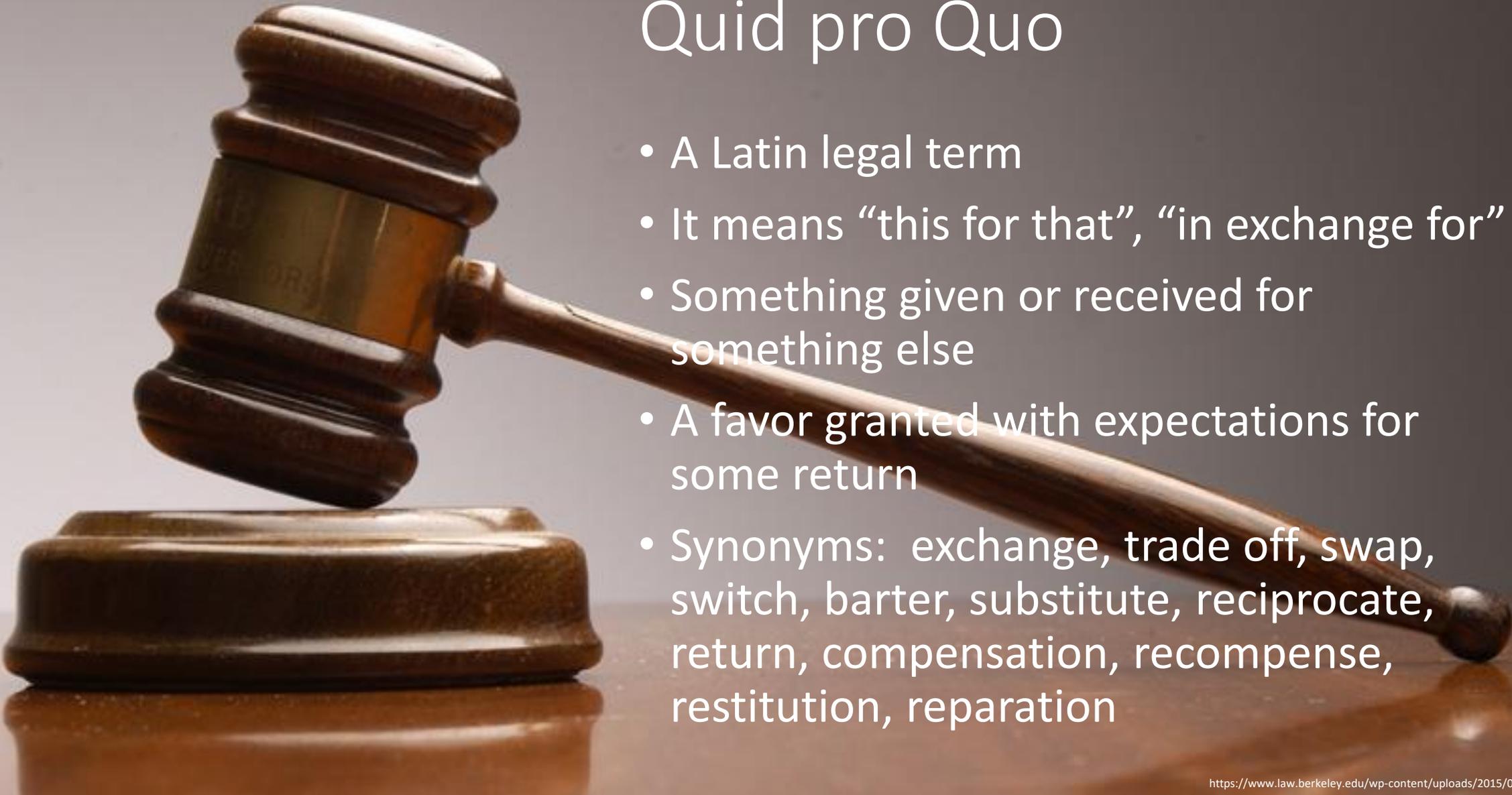
I love you IN SPITE OF ...

I love you NOW THAT ...

I love you SEEING THAT...

I love you OWING TO ...

I love you CONTINGENT UPON...



Quid pro Quo

- A Latin legal term
- It means “this for that”, “in exchange for”
- Something given or received for something else
- A favor granted with expectations for some return
- Synonyms: exchange, trade off, swap, switch, barter, substitute, reciprocate, return, compensation, recompense, restitution, reparation

<https://www.law.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/gavel.jpg>

God's Love is NOT Quid Pro Quo



- He does not love us with expectation of anything we can provide in exchange for his love
- He does not love us because we are “worthy”
- We should not be motivated to do things because of fear of what he may expect in return

https://melbournechapter.net/explore/scared-drawing-fear/#gal_post_7360_fear-clipart-panicked-person-4.gif

God IS Love

- Love is not a quality that God possesses
- It is not a trait that He has
- It is not something He does
- It is not something He gives
- It is not something He has learned
- It is not something He manifests
- It is not something He perpetuates
- It is not something He is good at

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God

is

LOVE

If God is Love...



- Our nation respects God. It says so on our currency (since 1864)
- We trust in Him to accomplish all He said he would in this world
- He is the supreme being
- There is none greater

...Then why does EVIL exist in the world?

God is either...



Quid pro Quo

Gratuitous

What is Evil?

- The opposite of Good (but, that's not a suitable definition!)
- Generally means profound “wickedness”
- Two classes: Moral evil (humans) and natural evil (nature)
- Most religions teach evil is caused by something other than God
- Christianity defines it as any action contrary to God's character or will
- We have lots of names for it...murder, rape, incest, molestation, genocide, slavery, abuse, abandonment, assault, mutilation, robbery, burglary, theft, personal harm, embezzlement, conspiracy, larceny

Natural Evil

- Evil that occurs in the form of natural disasters
 - Tsunamis Indian ocean, Dec 2004, 230,000 deaths
 - Hurricanes 10 hurricanes, 3,361 deaths, \$282B damage
 - Tropical cyclones 38 tropical cyclones, \$850B damage
 - Tornadoes 1,418 tornadoes, 35 deaths and \$5B damage
 - Hail storms 6,045 hail storms, \$1.8B damage
 - Winter storms 14 winter storms, \$43B damage
 - Severe storms 91 severe storms, \$206B damage
 - Floods 28 floods, \$120B damage
 - Drought 25 droughts, \$237B damage
 - Wildfires 15 wildfires, 238 deaths, \$54B damage

All statistics (unless noted) are from the US between 1980 and 2017
<https://www.climate.gov/sites/default/files/billions-2017-fig5-fullsize.png>

Moral Evil

- Evil that is generated by human beings
- Statistics (from 2017):

	Total	per 100K
– Violent Crimes	1.28M	10.28
– Homicide (deaths)	17,284	0.17
– Aggravated assaults	810,225	8.01
– Rape	99,856	0.99
– Murder	17,215	0.17

All statistics (unless noted) are from the US in 2017

The Real Question (or Syllogism)

Simple syllogism:

- If God IS Love, such a being would not allow evil to exist
- Yet, clearly, there is evil in the world
- Therefore, there is no God

Stated in another form:

- It is presumed that God is capable of eliminating evil in the world
- Yet, the evidence shows that he does not do so
- Then God is either
 - Incapable of eliminating evil (i.e., He is not all-powerful)
 - Capable, but unwilling to eliminate evil (i.e., He is a malevolent thug)

The Full Form of the Argument

- If God exists he is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnibenevolent.
- An omnibenevolent God would want to prevent all evils.
- An omnipotent God would be able to prevent the occurrence of evil.
- An omniscient God would know all the ways evil can come into existence.
- God would want to prevent evil, he would know all the ways evil exists, and be able to prevent it.
- If there exists an omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient God, evil would not exist.
- Yet, evil exists. Therefore, there is no God.

It Depends Upon how you Define Evil

- Is there such thing as “cold”?



<https://us.123rf.com/450wm/anggar3ind/anggar3ind1701/anggar3ind170100326/68542278-stock-vector-man-shivering-cartoon-character-isolated-on-white.jpg?ver=6>

Technically, Cold does not Exist!

- Cold has no true definition or measure.
- Cold is a word that we use to describe the absence of heat which we can measure.
- The complete absence of heat is called absolute zero (-497.67 Fahrenheit, -273.15 Celsius, 0.00 Kelvin)
- Heat comes from the movement of atoms as they bounce around and the electron movement in circling the atom
- To freeze the atom to the point of the absence of heat where all of the electrons are not moving and the atoms are not bouncing around would imply we need to get these frozen past the point of being stationary and make them even more stationary...and this is absurd.



<https://us.123rf.com/450wm/anggar3ind/anggar3ind1701/anggar3ind170100326/68542278-man-shivering-cartoon-character-isolated-on-white.jpg?ver=6>

What is “Cold”

- Any temperature at all that is above 0° Kelvin is effectively not “cold” because there is some heat present
- “Cold” is simply a convention we use to describe temperatures that we feel are not warm or hot



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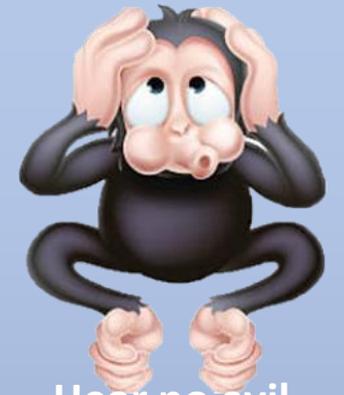
What is Dark?

- The speed of light we know: 299,792.458 meters per second or 186,000 miles per second
- Is there a “speed of dark”?
- No!
- Dark is a convention we use to describe the lessening or the complete absence of light
- Technically, there is no “dark”, there is only the degree of light that is available



What is “Evil”

- You guessed it!
- You cannot hear evil, see evil, or speak evil!
- Evil is not the presence of something called evil
- It is simply the absence of Good



Hear no evil



See no evil



Speak no evil

God never created Evil! Only Good!

- In Genesis 1, God is seen only creating things that are good
- As He created things, he labeled them “Good”
 - Light is “good”
 - Land is “good”
 - Plants are “good”
 - Sun, Moon, and Stars are “good”
 - Water creatures and birds are “good”
 - Livestock and wild animals are “good”
 - Even man, created in God’s own image, is “good”
- Notice that He never created anything that was “Evil”

Other Named Things with no Reality

- Ignorance The absence of knowledge.
IQ measures intelligence, not ignorance.
- Disease The absence of health. All living things have some measure of health.
- Callousness The absence of compassion.
- Fear The absence of bravery.
- Anger The absence of pleasure in someone or something.
- Hatred The absence of love.
- Evil The absence of God, the source of goodness

So, God Created Man

- He created man (which he described as “good”) and left him to make the decision of how much good he will have in his heart
- God never forces anyone to be good or to do good
- We determine our own path, God did not decide that for us
- We have “free will”
- We determine our own actions, attitudes, and thoughts

Consider Mother Teresa of Calcutta

- Mother Teresa was born just as you or me
- She was born into a culture
- She had to find her own place in society
- She chose a life dedicated to helping others less fortunate than herself
- But, this goodness was her choice
- She was not born with a level of goodness that was higher than anyone else
- You cannot attribute her goodness to God's creative ability



Consider Hitler



- He was an infant as we were, born into a society that had a huge impact on his decision to be good or not.
- God did not make him a vile person destined to slaughter six million Jews.
- That was Hitler's choice.
- He chose how much "goodness" would be in him
- You cannot blame Hitler's actions on God

Consider Natural Disasters



- God is not the cause of natural disasters
- He does not control the weather or the oceans and seas
- You cannot blame natural disasters on Him

How and Why Do We even Recognize Evil?

- Man has a moral compass that points toward good
- Any deviation from that compass point is not good
- Everyone knows there are moral and immoral actions
 - It is wrong to: lie, cheat, steal, harm, kill, and so forth
- This moral compass is innate...it is not learned or legislated
- This moral compass is in fact an evidence for the existence of God
- If there were no “Good Creator”, there would only be self-serving and evil actions in the world! Nothing good.



One Final Thought

- Recent news headlines:
 - A church bus headed to a youth rally runs off the road and kills 30 teens
 - A young couple has a stillborn baby
 - A drunk driver slams into a car and kills an entire family
 - A flood completely wipes away all the houses in a neighborhood
 - An addict deposits a newborn baby at steps of a hospital
 - A man brings a handgun into a church building and kills 20 people, then himself
- We can shake our finger at God and ask “Why did you let this happen?”
 - Bad things happen in this risky world.
 - But, God has no culpability for any kind of evil.
 - How we react to bad things that happen is also left up to us.