

A word cloud featuring the words "God", "Mankind", "Search", "of", "in", and "of". The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with "God" and "Mankind" being the most prominent. The colors used are red, yellow, blue, and brown. The words are of various sizes and orientations, creating a dense and complex visual. The word "God" is the largest and most central, followed by "Mankind" and "Search". The words "of" and "in" are also prominent, appearing in various sizes and orientations. The overall composition is balanced and visually appealing.



Word cloud featuring the words: Mankind, God, Search, Of, In, and On. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with varying sizes and colors (red, yellow, blue). The words are repeated and layered to form a circular shape.





THE
UGLY SIDE OF
THE GOSPEL





THE
UGLY SIDE OF
THE GOSPEL



**GOOD
INTENTIONS**

**BAD
THEOLOGY**





**Do We Really Know All
We Need to Survive?**



WE DON'T KNOW MANY THINGS...

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

Deuteronomy 29:29



Why Do I Need to Know About This War?



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

“Life is outrageous. Hardly anyone will deny that conclusion outright. Tragedy, pain, injustice, premature death—all of these and more waste us away. No explanation seems quite able to still our anger, hostility, and sadness.”

John K. Roth, “A Theodicy of Protest,” 18



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

“To many minds the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity . . . They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love.

Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, 492



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Here is a mystery of which they find no explanation. 'And in their uncertainty and doubt they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God's word and essential to salvation.'

Ellen White, *Great Controversy*, 492



THE LOGICAL PROBLEM OF EVIL

“Is He willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then He is impotent. Is He able, but not willing? Then He is malevolent. Is He both able and willing? Whence then is evil?”

David Hume, quoting Epicurus



THE EVIDENTIAL PROBLEM OF EVIL

- The kind and amount of evil in this world renders it improbable that an all-powerful and entirely good God exists.

Important Distinction:

- Moral evil is evil that results “from the free actions of personal beings.”
- Natural evil is evil “that cannot be ascribed to the free actions of” creatures.

Alvin Plantinga, *The Nature of Necessity*, 191.



THE EVIDENTIAL PROBLEM OF EVIL

“When I looked for good, evil came;
and when I waited for light, darkness
came”

Job 30:26



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

“Why does the way of the guilty prosper? Why do all who are treacherous thrive?”

Jer 12:1; cf. Mal 2:17; Pss 10:5, 13; 94:3-7;
Eccl 3:16; 5:13; 7:15; 8:14



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

“Where is the God of justice?”

Mal 2:17; cf. Ps 94:3-7; Jer 5:19; 9:12;
13:22; 16:10; Ezek 18:2



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

“Why, O LORD, do you stand far off?
Why do you hide yourselves in times
of trouble?”

Ps 10:1; cf. 10:11; 30:7



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Even Jesus asks:

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Matt 27:46; cf. Mark 15:34



THE GREAT CONTROVERSY IS BIBLICAL

“One of the things that surprised me when I first read the New Testament seriously was that it talked so much about a Dark Power in the universe—a mighty evil spirit who was held to be the Power behind death and disease, and sin....”

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 45



THE GREAT CONTROVERSY IS BIBLICAL

Christianity thinks this Dark Power was created by God, and was good when he was created, and went wrong.... this universe is at war... [and] it is a civil war, a rebellion, and that we are living in a part of the universe occupied by the rebel. Enemy-occupied territory—that is what this world is.”

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 45



WHAT IS THIS CONTROVERSY?

Let's get a working definition:
"the Great Controversy refers to the cosmic battle between God and Satan over the moral right of God to rule, which is not a question of divine power but focuses on charges against God's character of goodness, justice, and love ..."



THREE REASONS WHY

1. Adventist misunderstanding
2. Thomistic Classical Theism = no Great Controversy
3. Liberalism (post-enlightenment)

“now that the forces and the laws of nature have been discovered, we can no longer believe in spirits whether good or evil”

**Rudolf Bultmann, New Testament
Mythology and Other Basic Writings, 4**



TO THINK ABOUT

“It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it.”

Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, 492-3



WHERE DO WE
GO FROM HERE?



Matthew 13:24-30, 37-38



"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares."

