

# When Religion Becomes Evil

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## **Suffering and Evil in Early Christian Thought (Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History)** - Nonna Verna Harrison

2016-11-15

Distinguished Scholars Explore Early Christian Views on the Problem of Evil What did the early church teach about the problem of suffering and evil in the world? In this volume, distinguished historians and theologians explore a range of ancient Christian responses to this perennial problem. The ecumenical team of contributors includes John Behr, Gary Anderson, Brian Daley, and Bishop Kallistos Ware, among others. This is the fourth volume in Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History, a partnership between Baker Academic and the Pappas Patristic Institute of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. The series is a deliberate outreach by the Orthodox community to Protestant and Catholic seminarians, pastors, and theologians.

**What's So Great About Christianity** - Dinesh D'Souza 2008-11-04

FIRM STREET DATE = NOVEMBER 4, 2008. STORES MUST NOT HAVE THIS TITLE ON DISPLAY BEFORE 11/4/08. A low-cost softcover that is perfect to give to seeking friends and neighbors to explain why an intelligent, college-educated person can believe in Christianity. Is Christianity true? Can educated, thinking people really believe the Bible? Or, do the atheists have it right? Has Christianity been disproved by science and discredited as a guide to morality? Best-selling author Dinesh D'Souza (What's So Great About America) approaches Christianity with a skeptical eye, but treats the skeptics with equal skepticism. The result is a book that will challenge the assumptions of doubters and affirm that there really is, indeed, something great about Christianity.

**Evil Incarnate** - David Frankfurter 2018-06-05

In the 1980s, America was gripped by widespread panics about Satanic cults. Conspiracy theories abounded about groups who were allegedly abusing children in day-care centers, impregnating girls for infant sacrifice, brainwashing adults, and even controlling the highest levels of government. As historian of religions David Frankfurter listened to these sinister theories, it occurred to him how strikingly similar they were to those that swept parts of the early Christian world, early modern Europe, and postcolonial Africa. He began to investigate the social and psychological patterns that give rise to these myths. Thus was born *Evil Incarnate*, a riveting analysis of the mythology of evil conspiracy. The first work to provide an in-depth analysis of the topic, the book uses anthropology, the history of religion, sociology, and psychoanalytic theory, to answer the questions "What causes people collectively to envision evil and seek to exterminate it?" and "Why does the representation of evil recur in such typical patterns?" Frankfurter guides the reader through such diverse subjects as witch-hunting, the origins of demonology, cannibalism, and the rumors of Jewish ritual murder, demonstrating how societies have long expanded upon their fears of such atrocities to address a collective anxiety. Thus, he maintains, panics over modern-day infant sacrifice are really not so different from rumors about early Christians engaging in infant feasts during the second and third centuries in Rome. In *Evil Incarnate*, Frankfurter deepens historical awareness that stories of Satanic atrocities are both inventions of the mind and perennial phenomena, not authentic criminal events. True evil, as he so artfully demonstrates, is not something organized and corrupting, but rather a social construction that inspires people to brutal acts in the name of moral order.

**The God Delusion. 10th Anniversary Edition** - Richard Dawkins 2016-05-19

The *God Delusion* caused a sensation when it was published in 2006. Within weeks it became the most hotly debated topic, with Dawkins himself branded as either saint or sinner for presenting his hard-hitting, impassioned rebuttal of religion of all types. His argument could hardly be more topical. While Europe is becoming increasingly secularized, the rise of religious fundamentalism, whether in the Middle East or Middle

America, is dramatically and dangerously dividing opinion around the world. In America, and elsewhere, a vigorous dispute between 'intelligent design' and Darwinism is seriously undermining and restricting the teaching of science. In many countries religious dogma from medieval times still serves to abuse basic human rights such as women's and gay rights. And all from a belief in a God whose existence lacks evidence of any kind. Dawkins attacks God in all his forms. He eviscerates the major arguments for religion and demonstrates the supreme improbability of a supreme being. He shows how religion fuels war, foments bigotry and abuses children. *The God Delusion* is a brilliantly argued, fascinating polemic that will be required reading for anyone interested in this most emotional and important subject.

**When Religion Becomes Lethal** - Charles Kimball 2011-02-25

A compelling look at today's complex relationship between religion and politics In his second book, bestselling author Charles Kimball addresses the urgent global problem of the interplay between fundamentalist Abrahamic religions and politics and moves beyond warning signs (the subject of his first book) to the dangerous and lethal outcomes that their interaction can produce. Drawing on his extensive personal and professional knowledge of, experience with and access to all three traditions, Kimball's explanation of the multiple ways religion and politics interconnect within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will illuminate the problems and give readers a hopeful vision for how to chart a safer course into a precarious future. Kimball is the author of *When Religion Becomes Evil*, one of the most acclaimed post 9/11 books on terrorism and religion Reveals why religion so often leads to deadly results The author has scholarly knowledge and expertise and extensive personal experience with the peoples, cultures, and leaders involved Readable and engaging, this book gives a clear picture of today's complex political and religious reality and offers hope for the future.

**God and Evil** - Chad Meister 2012-11-14

Leading thinkers in Christian philosophy and apologetics take on the problem of evil and suffering. Essays from Gregory Ganssle, Yena Lee, Bruce Little, Garry DeWeese, R. Douglas Geivett and others provide critical engagement with the New Atheists and offer grounds for renewed confidence in the God who is "acquainted with grief."

**Godless** - Dan Barker 2008-09

A former preacher tell why he abandoned the guidance of the Bible to follow the dictates of own conscience.

**The Origin of Satan** - Elaine Pagels 1996-04-30

From the religious historian whose *The Gnostic Gospels* won both the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award comes a dramatic interpretation of Satan and his role on the Christian tradition. With magisterial learning and the elan of a born storyteller, Pagels turns Satan's story into an audacious exploration of Christianity's shadow side, in which the gospel of love gives way to irrational hatreds that continue to haunt Christians and non-Christians alike.

**Infidel** - Ayaan Hirsi Ali 2008-04

The author of *The Caged Virgin* recounts the story of her life, from her traditional Muslim childhood in Somalia and escape from a forced marriage to her efforts to promote women's rights while surviving numerous threats to her safety. Reprint. 100,000 first printing.

**Providence and the Problem of Evil** - Richard Swinburne 1998-08-27 Why does a loving God allow humans to suffer so much? This is one of the most difficult problems of religious belief. Richard Swinburne gives a careful, clear examination of this problem, and offers an answer: it is because God wants more for us than just pleasure or freedom from suffering. Swinburne argues that God wants humans to learn and to love, to make the choices which make great differences for good and evil to each other, to form our characters in the way we choose; above all to be of great use to each other. If we are to have all this, there will inevitably be suffering for the short period of our lives on Earth. But because of the

good that God gives to humans in this life, and because he makes it possible for us, through our choice, to share the life of Heaven, he does not wrong us if he allows suffering. Providence and the Problem of Evil is the final volume of Richard Swinburne's acclaimed tetralogy on Christian doctrine. It may be read on its own as a self-standing treatment of this eternal philosophical issue. Readers who are interested in a unified study of the philosophical foundations of Christian belief will find it now in the tetralogy and in his trilogy on the philosophy of theism.

**God, Suffering, and the Value of Free Will** - Laura W. Ekstrom 2021-02-23

For many of us, the question of whether or not God exists is one of the most perplexing and profound questions of our lives, and numerous philosophers and theologians have debated it for centuries. Laura Ekstrom here takes a new look at the issue of God's existence by examining it against the reality of human suffering, bringing to the fore contentious presuppositions concerning agency and value at the core of the matter. When we survey the world, we observe an enormous amount of pain, including virtually unspeakable kinds of maltreatment and agony, many instances of which seem patently unfair, unearned, and pointless. This book argues that, in light of these observations, it is reasonable to conclude that God does not exist. The book unravels the extent and power of arguments from evil. Ekstrom provides a close investigation of a largely overlooked claim at the heart of major free-will-based responses to such arguments, namely that free will is worth it: sufficiently valuable to serve as the good that provides a God-justifying reason for permitting evil in the world. Through fresh examinations of traditional theodicies, Ekstrom develops an alternative line called divine intimacy theodicy, and makes an extended case for rejecting skeptical theism. The book takes up an argument from evil concerning a traditional doctrine of hell, which reveals a number of compelling issues concerning fault, agency, and blameworthiness. In response to recent work contending that the problem of evil is toothless because God is indifferent to human beings, Ekstrom defends the essential perfect moral goodness of God. She further tackles the question of whether or not it is possible to live a religious life as an agnostic or as an atheist. Through rigorous reflection, with deep respect for religious thought and experience, and with sensitivity to the range and kinds of suffering so many endure, Ekstrom firmly advances discussion of the problem of evil and paves the way for further scholarship in the philosophy of religion.

**The Moor's Account** - Laila Lalami 2015-09-22

An "exquisite piece of historical fiction" (Winnipeg Free Press), *The Moor's Account* is "brilliantly imagined fiction...rewritten to give us something that feels very like the truth" (Salman Rushdie). In 1527, the conquistador Pánfilo de Narváez left the port of San Lucar de Barrameda in Spain with a crew of more than five hundred men. His goal was to claim what is now the Gulf Coast of the United States for the Spanish crown and, in the process, become as wealthy and as famous as Hernán Cortés. But from the moment the Narváez expedition reached Florida it met with incredibly bad luck—storms, disease, starvation, hostile Indians. Within a year, there were only four survivors: the expedition's treasurer, Cabeza de Vaca; a Spanish nobleman named Alonso del Castillo Maldonado; a young explorer by the name of Andrés Dorantes; and his Moroccan slave, Mustafa al-Zamori. The four survivors were forced to live as slaves to the Indians for six years, before fleeing and establishing themselves as faith healers. Together, they traveled on foot through present-day Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, gathering thousands of disciples and followers along the way. In 1536, they crossed the Rio Grande into Mexican territory, where they stumbled on a group of Spanish slavers, who escorted them to the capital of the Spanish empire, México-Tenochtitlán. Three of the survivors were asked to provide testimony of their journey—Castillo, Dorantes, and Cabeza de Vaca, who later wrote a book about this adventure, called *La Relación*, or *The Account*. But because he was a slave, Estebanico was not asked to testify. His experience was considered irrelevant, or superfluous, or unreliable, or unworthy, despite the fact that he had acted as a scout, an interpreter, and a translator. This novel is his story.

**God Is Not Great** - Christopher Hitchens 2008-11-19

Christopher Hitchens, described in the *London Observer* as "one of the most prolific, as well as brilliant, journalists of our time" takes on his biggest subject yet—the increasingly dangerous role of religion in the world. In the tradition of Bertrand Russell's *Why I Am Not a Christian* and Sam Harris's recent bestseller, *The End Of Faith*, Christopher Hitchens makes the ultimate case against religion. With a close and erudite reading of the major religious texts, he documents the ways in which religion is a man-made wish, a cause of dangerous sexual

repression, and a distortion of our origins in the cosmos. With eloquent clarity, Hitchens frames the argument for a more secular life based on science and reason, in which hell is replaced by the Hubble Telescope's awesome view of the universe, and Moses and the burning bush give way to the beauty and symmetry of the double helix.

**Christianity and the Roots of Morality** - 2017-06-06

*Christianity and the Roots of Morality* combines philosophical, early Christian and empirical studies to cast light on the role of religion, especially Christianity, in morality, pro-social behavior and altruism.

**When Religion Becomes Evil** - Charles Kimball 2002-09-03

An expert on religion and the Middle East seeks to distinguish between "authentic" and "corrupt" forms of religious expression, identifying the ways in which the major religious traditions are vulnerable to corruption and how they can be corrected.

**Under the Banner of Heaven** - Jon Krakauer 2004-06-08

NATIONAL BESTSELLER • From the author of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air*, this extraordinary work of investigative journalism takes readers inside America's isolated Mormon Fundamentalist communities. Defying both civil authorities and the Mormon establishment in Salt Lake City, the renegade leaders of these Taliban-like theocracies are zealots who answer only to God; some 40,000 people still practice polygamy in these communities. At the core of Krakauer's book are brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a commandment from God to kill a blameless woman and her baby girl. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this appalling double murder, Krakauer constructs a multi-layered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, polygamy, savage violence, and unyielding faith. Along the way he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.

**God and the Problem of Evil** - Chad Meister 2017-05-16

The problem of evil has produced many responses and elicited vigorous debate. In this multiview book, five philosophical theologians discuss and defend different solutions to this ancient problem: Phillip Cary on the classic view, William Lane Craig on Molinism, William Hasker on open theism, Thomas J. Oord on essential kenosis, and Stephen Wykstra on skeptical theism.

**Tempting Faith** - David Kuo 2006-10-16

David Kuo came to Washington wanting to use his Christian faith to end abortion, strengthen marriage, and help the poor. He reached the heights of political power, ultimately serving in the White House under George W. Bush, after being policy adviser to John Ashcroft and speechwriter for Ralph Reed, Pat Robertson, and Bob Dole. It was a dream come true: the chance to fuse his politics and his faith, and an opportunity for Christians not just to gain a seat at the proverbial table but to plan the entire meal. Kuo spent nearly three years as second in command at the president's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Yet his experience was deeply troubling. It took both the Bush White House and a severe health crisis to show him how his Christian values, and those of millions of Americans, were being corrupted by politics. Instead of following the teachings of Jesus to serve the needy, Kuo found himself helping to manipulate religious faith for political gain. Public funds were used in battleground states, for Republican campaign events. The legislative process was used as a football, not to pass laws but to deepen purely symbolic fault lines. Grants were incestuously recycled to political cronies. Both before and after 9/11, despite lofty rhetoric from the president claiming that his faith-based program was one of his most important initiatives, there was no serious attempt to fund valuable charities. Worst of all was the prevailing attitude in the White House and throughout Washington toward Christian leaders. Key Bush aides and Republican operatives spoke of them with contempt and treated them as useful idiots. It became clear, during regular conference calls arranged from the White House with a key group of Christian leaders, that many of these religious leaders had themselves been utterly seduced by politics. It is time, Kuo argues, for Christians to take a temporary step back from politics, to turn away from its seductions. *Tempting Faith* is equal parts headline-making exposé, political and spiritual memoir, and heartfelt plea for a Christian reexamination of political involvement.

**Mere Christianity** - C. S. Lewis 2009-06-02

In the classic *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis, the most important writer of the 20th century, explores the common ground upon which all of those of Christian faith stand together. Bringing together Lewis' legendary broadcast talks during World War Two from his three previous books *The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behavior*, and *Beyond Personality*, *Mere Christianity* provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and

nonbelievers alike to hear this powerful apologetic for the Christian faith.  
**Evil in Modern Thought** - Susan Neiman 2015-08-25

Whether expressed in theological or secular terms, evil poses a problem about the world's intelligibility. It confronts philosophy with fundamental questions: Can there be meaning in a world where innocents suffer? Can belief in divine power or human progress survive a cataloging of evil? Is evil profound or banal? Neiman argues that these questions impelled modern philosophy. Traditional philosophers from Leibniz to Hegel sought to defend the Creator of a world containing evil. Inevitably, their efforts--combined with those of more literary figures like Pope, Voltaire, and the Marquis de Sade--eroded belief in God's benevolence, power, and relevance, until Nietzsche claimed He had been murdered. They also yielded the distinction between natural and moral evil that we now take for granted. Neiman turns to consider philosophy's response to the Holocaust as a final moral evil, concluding that two basic stances run through modern thought. One, from Rousseau to Arendt, insists that morality demands we make evil intelligible. The other, from Voltaire to Adorno, insists that morality demands that we don't.

**Theodicy** - Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz 2010-07-01

In this 1710 treatise, Gottfried Leibniz's only book-length work, he applies the idea of philosophical "optimism"--that we live in the best of all possible worlds--to the "problem of evil"--If a benevolent God exists, why do terrible things happen? He explores the possibility that humanity's happiness is not necessarily part of God's plan. Much of Leibniz's thinking in the realm of the sciences flowed from his philosophy--he believed the universe to operate under simple, intelligible, interconnected rules. Understanding how he approached the metaphysical world and humanity's place in it is vital to understanding his contributions to modern science. The impact of the work of German mathematician GOTTFRIED WILHELM LEIBNIZ (1646-1716) on modern science and technology is all but incalculable. His notation for infinitesimal calculus--which he developed independently of Newton--remains in use today, and his invention of binary counting is the basis for modern computing. He was a powerfully influential philosopher as well, and is still considered, alongside Descartes and Spinoza, one of the great 17th-century rationalists.

**Heaven and Hell** - Bart D. Ehrman 2020-03-31

A New York Times bestselling historian of early Christianity takes on two of the most gripping questions of human existence: where did the ideas of heaven and hell come from and why do they endure? What happens when we die? A recent Pew Research poll showed that 72% of Americans believe in a literal heaven and 58% believe in a literal hell. Most people who hold these beliefs are Christian and assume they are the age-old teachings of the Bible. But eternal rewards and punishments are found nowhere in the Old Testament and are not what Jesus or his disciples taught. So where did these ideas come from? In this "eloquent understanding of how death is viewed through many spiritual traditions" (Publishers Weekly, starred review), Bart Ehrman recounts the long history of the afterlife, ranging from The Epic of Gilgamesh up to the writings of Augustine, focusing especially on the teachings of Jesus and his early followers. He discusses ancient guided tours of heaven and hell, in which a living person observes the sublime blessings of heaven for those who are saved and the horrifying torments of hell for those who are damned. Some of these accounts take the form of near death experiences, the oldest on record, with intriguing similarities to those reported today. One of Ehrman's startling conclusions is that there never was a single Greek, Jewish, or Christian understanding of the afterlife, but numerous competing views. Moreover, these views did not come from nowhere; they were intimately connected with the social, cultural, and historical worlds out of which they emerged. Only later, in the early Christian centuries, did they develop into notions of eternal bliss or damnation widely accepted today. In this "elegant history" (The New Yorker), Ehrman helps us reflect on where our ideas of the afterlife come from. With his "richly layered-narrative" (The Boston Globe) he assures us that even if there may be something to hope for when we die, there certainly is nothing to fear.

**The Beautiful Side of Evil** - Johanna Michaelsen 1982-01-01

The last 15 years have witnessed an unprecedented explosion of interest in psychic phenomena. Johanna Michaelsen shares an extraordinary story about how she became a personal assistant to a psychic surgeon and witnessed miraculous healings, yet realized the true occultic source behind The Beautiful Side of Evil. Over 235,000 sold!

**Bad Religion** - Ross Douthat 2013-04-16

Traces the decline of Christianity in America since the 1950s, posing controversial arguments about the role of heresy in the nation's downfall

while calling for a revival of traditional Christian practices.

**The Problem of Pain** - C. S. Lewis 2001-02-06

Why must humanity suffer? In this elegant and thoughtful work, C. S. Lewis questions the pain and suffering that occur everyday and how this contrasts with the notion of a God that is both omnipotent and good. An answer to this critical theological problem is found within these pages.

**The Good And Evil Serpent** - James H. Charlesworth 2010-01-01

The serpent of ancient times was more often associated with positive attributes like healing and eternal life than it was with negative meanings. This groundbreaking book explores in plentiful detail the symbol of the serpent from 40,000 BCE to the present, and from diverse regions in the world. In doing so it emphasizes the creativity of the biblical authors' use of symbols and argues that we must today reexamine our own archetypal conceptions with comparable creativity.-- From publisher description.

**The Oxford Handbook of Psychology and Spirituality** - Lisa J. Miller 2012-08-23

Postmaterial spiritual psychology posits that consciousness can contribute to the unfolding of material events and that the human brain can detect broad, non-material communications. In this regard, this emerging field of postmaterial psychology marks a stark departure from psychology's traditional quantum measurements and tenets. The Oxford Handbook of Psychology and Spirituality codifies the leading empirical evidence in the support and application of postmaterial psychological science. Sections in this volume include: - personality and social psychology factors and implications - spiritual development and culture - spiritual dialogue, prayer, and intention in Western mental health - Eastern traditions and psychology - physical health and spirituality - positive psychology - scientific advances and applications related to spiritual psychology With chapters from leading scholars in psychology, medicine, physics, and biology, The Oxford Handbook of Psychology and Spirituality is an interdisciplinary reference for a rapidly emerging approach to contemporary science. This overarching work provides both a foundation and a roadmap for what is truly a new ideological age.

**Evil** - Andrew P. Chignell 2019

The code of conduct for a leading tech company famously says "Don't Be Evil." But what exactly is evil? Is it just badness by another name--the shadow side of good? Or is it something more substantive--a malevolent force or power at work in the universe? These are some of the ontological questions that philosophers have grappled with for centuries. But evil also raises perplexing epistemic and psychological questions. Can we really know evil? Does a victim know evil differently than a perpetrator or witness? What motivates evil-doers? Satan's rebellion, Iago's machinations, and Stalin's genocides may be hard to understand in terms of ordinary reasons, intentions, beliefs, and desires. But what about the more "banal" evils performed by technocrats in a collective: how do we make sense of Adolf Eichmann's self-conception as just an effective bureaucrat deserving of a promotion? Evil: A History collects thirteen essays that tell the story of evil in western thought, starting with its origins in ancient Hebrew wisdom literature and classical Greek drama all the way to Darwinism and Holocaust theory. Thirteen interspersed reflections contextualize philosophical developments by looking at evil through the eyes of animals, poets, mystics, witches, librettists, film directors, and even a tech product manager. Evil: A History will enlighten readers about one of the most alluring and difficult topics in philosophy and intellectual life, and will challenge their assumptions about the very nature of evil.

**Ecstatic Religion** - I. M. Lewis 2003

First Published in 2004. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

**Evil and the Justice of God** - N. T. Wright 2012-01-03

A fascinating analysis and response to the fundamental questions that face any believer today. Sadly becoming daily more topical, this book explores all aspects of evil - our contemporary and theological understanding, and the ways in which evil presents itself in society today. Fully grounded in the bible, sparkling, erudite and provocative. Within the context of NT Wright's other works, this book is similar in writing/reading level to The Challenge of Jesus.

**Escaping Islam** - Mano Bakh 2008-11-14

The world remains confused, and lacks understanding regarding the culture of the Middle East. Escaping Islam is a provocative and timely story that is rich with historical events, giving the reader verbal exposure to the dangers brought about by Iran's support of radical Muslim ideology. Mano Bakh was a high ranking officer in Iran's Imperial Navy when, in 1979, during the Islamic revolution, he miraculously escaped

with his life. The harrowing experiences he was subjected to, currently exemplifies the free world's necessity to deal with the ongoing aggressive Islamic movement, and the oil money that supports it. This living story begins with an introduction to Iran's history and Persian customs. It continues by encompassing the development of OPEC, the amazing Khark Island oil project in the Persian Gulf, and relating the happy life of a young boy growing up in his grandmother's house in Tehran. Tunnels connected the homes of the thirty two family members who enjoyed the daily ceremony of dining together around an antique Persian carpet, adorned with a white Sofreh, "table cloth," while grandmother smoked her water pipe. \*\*\*\*\* Mr. Bakh was born a Muslim, but became disenchanted with the religion whose mission was to kill or convert all who did not believe in the teachings of the Koran. His candid understanding of what happened to a country that was once America's best friend and then turned into an Axis of Evil, will educate the reader as to why that Evil might not be realized until it is too late. Joy, laughter, prosperity, hope and respect in Iran's society, quickly changed to hate, revenge, misery and mourning!

**When Religion Becomes Lethal** - Charles Kimball 2011-04-12

A compelling look at today's complex relationship between religion and politics In his second book, bestselling author Charles Kimball addresses the urgent global problem of the interplay between fundamentalist Abrahamic religions and politics and moves beyond warning signs (the subject of his first book) to the dangerous and lethal outcomes that their interaction can produce. Drawing on his extensive personal and professional knowledge of, experience with and access to all three traditions, Kimball's explanation of the multiple ways religion and politics interconnect within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam will illuminate the problems and give readers a hopeful vision for how to chart a safer course into a precarious future. Kimball is the author of *When Religion Becomes Evil*, one of the most acclaimed post 9/11 books on terrorism and religion Reveals why religion so often leads to deadly results The author has scholarly knowledge and expertise and extensive personal experience with the peoples, cultures, and leaders involved Readable and engaging, this book gives a clear picture of today's complex political and religious reality and offers hope for the future.

**God, Freedom, and Evil** - Alvin Plantinga 1975

*When Religion Becomes Evil* - Charles Kimball 2009-10-13

In this thoroughly revised and updated edition, leading religion and Middle East expert Charles Kimball shows how all religious traditions are susceptible to these basic corruptions and why only authentic faith can prevent such evil. The Five Warning Signs of Corruption in Religion 1. Absolute Truth Claims 2. Blind Obedience 3. Establishing the "Ideal" Time 4. The End Justifies Any Means 5. Declaring Holy War

*Becoming Evil* - James Waller 2002-06-27

Political or social groups wanting to commit mass murder on the basis of racial, ethnic or religious differences are never hindered by a lack of willing executioners. In *Becoming Evil*, social psychologist James Waller uncovers the internal and external factors that can lead ordinary people to commit extraordinary acts of evil. Waller debunks the common explanations for genocide- group think, psychopathology, unique cultures- and offers a more sophisticated and comprehensive psychological view of how anyone can potentially participate in heinous crimes against humanity. He outlines the evolutionary forces that shape human nature, the individual dispositions that are more likely to engage in acts of evil, and the context of cruelty in which these extraordinary acts can emerge. Illustrative eyewitness accounts are presented at the end of each chapter. An important new look at how evil develops, *Becoming Evil* will help us understand such tragedies as the Holocaust and recent terrorist events. Waller argues that by becoming more aware of the things that lead to extraordinary evil, we will be less likely to be surprised by it and less likely to be unwitting accomplices through our passivity.

**Not in God's Name** - Jonathan Sacks 2015-10-13

\*\*\*2015 National Jewish Book Award Winner\*\*\* In this powerful and timely book, one of the most admired and authoritative religious leaders of our time tackles the phenomenon of religious extremism and violence committed in the name of God. If religion is perceived as being part of the problem, Rabbi Sacks argues, then it must also form part of the solution. When religion becomes a zero-sum conceit—that is, my religion is the only right path to God, therefore your religion is by definition wrong—and individuals are motivated by what Rabbi Sacks calls “altruistic evil,” violence between peoples of different beliefs appears to be the only natural outcome. But through an exploration of the roots of

violence and its relationship to religion, and employing groundbreaking biblical analysis and interpretation, Rabbi Sacks shows that religiously inspired violence has as its source misreadings of biblical texts at the heart of all three Abrahamic faiths. By looking anew at the book of Genesis, with its foundational stories of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Rabbi Sacks offers a radical rereading of many of the Bible's seminal stories of sibling rivalry: Cain and Abel, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, Rachel and Leah. “Abraham himself,” writes Rabbi Sacks, “sought to be a blessing to others regardless of their faith. That idea, ignored for many of the intervening centuries, remains the simplest definition of Abrahamic faith. It is not our task to conquer or convert the world or enforce uniformity of belief. It is our task to be a blessing to the world. The use of religion for political ends is not righteousness but idolatry . . . To invoke God to justify violence against the innocent is not an act of sanctity but of sacrilege.” Here is an eloquent call for people of goodwill from all faiths and none to stand together, confront the religious extremism that threatens to destroy us, and declare: Not in God's Name.

**The Case for God** - Karen Armstrong 2009-09-22

From the bestselling author of *A History of God* and *The Great Transformation* comes a balanced, nuanced understanding of the role religion plays in human life and the trajectory of faith in modern times. Why has God become incredible? Why is it that atheists and theists alike now think and speak about God in a way that veers so profoundly from the thinking of our ancestors? Moving from the Paleolithic Age to the present, Karen Armstrong details the lengths to which humankind has gone to experience a sacred reality that it called God, Brahman, Nirvana, Allah, or Dao. She examines the diminished impulse toward religion in our own time when a significant number of people either want nothing to do with God or question the efficacy of faith. With her trademark depth of knowledge and profound insight, Armstrong elucidates how the changing world has necessarily altered the importance of religion at both societal and individual levels. And she makes a powerful, convincing argument for structuring a faith that speaks to the needs of our dangerously polarized age.

**If God Is Good** - Randy Alcorn 2014-06-17

Suffering is, in the end, God's invitation to trust him. “As he did in his best-selling book, *Heaven*, Randy Alcorn delves deep into a profound subject, and through compelling stories, provocative questions and answers, and keen biblical understanding, he brings assurance and hope to all.” —Publishers Weekly Every one of us will experience suffering. You may be in such a time now. We see the presence of evil in the headlines every day. It all raises questions about God—Why would an all-good and all-powerful God create a world full of evil and suffering? How can there be a God if suffering and evil exist? Atheists such as Richard Dawkins and even former believers like Bart Ehrman answer the question simply: The existence of suffering and evil proves there is no God. But in this illuminating book, best-selling author Randy Alcorn challenges the logic of disbelief, and brings a fresh, hopeful, and thoroughly biblical insight to the issues these important questions raise. Alcorn offers insights from his conversations with men and women whose lives have been torn apart by suffering, and yet whose faith in God burns brighter than ever. He reveals the big picture of who God is and what God is doing in the world—now and forever. And he shows the beauty of God's sovereignty—how it ultimately triumphs over suffering and evil in our lives and the world around us.

**The Great Transformation** - Karen Armstrong 2009-02-24

From one of the world's leading writers on religion and the highly acclaimed author of the bestselling *A History of God*, *The Battle for God* and *The Spiral Staircase*, comes a major new work: a chronicle of one of the most important intellectual revolutions in world history and its relevance to our own time. In one astonishing, short period – the ninth century BCE – the peoples of four distinct regions of the civilized world created the religious and philosophical traditions that have continued to nourish humanity into the present day: Confucianism and Daoism in China; Hinduism and Buddhism in India; monotheism in Israel; and philosophical rationalism in Greece. Historians call this the Axial Age because of its central importance to humanity's spiritual development. Now, Karen Armstrong traces the rise and development of this transformative moment in history, examining the brilliant contributions to these traditions made by such figures as the Buddha, Socrates, Confucius and Ezekiel. Armstrong makes clear that despite some differences of emphasis, there was remarkable consensus among these religions and philosophies: each insisted on the primacy of compassion over hatred and violence. She illuminates what this “family” resemblance

reveals about the religious impulse and quest of humankind. And she goes beyond spiritual archaeology, delving into the ways in which these Axial Age beliefs can present an instructive and thought-provoking challenge to the ways we think about and practice religion today. A revelation of humankind's early shared imperatives, yearnings and inspired solutions - as salutary as it is fascinating. Excerpt from *The Great Transformation*: In our global world, we can no longer afford a parochial or exclusive vision. We must learn to live and behave as though people in remote parts of the globe were as important as ourselves. The sages of the Axial Age did not create their compassionate ethic in idyllic circumstances. Each tradition developed in societies like our own that were torn apart by violence and warfare as never before; indeed, the first catalyst of religious change was usually a visceral rejection of the aggression that the sages witnessed all around them. . . . All the great traditions that were created at this time are in agreement about the supreme importance of charity and benevolence, and this tells us something important about our humanity.

Just Babies - Paul Bloom 2014-11-11

A leading cognitive scientist argues that a deep sense of good and evil is bred in the bone. From John Locke to Sigmund Freud, philosophers and psychologists have long believed that we begin life as blank moral slates. Many of us take for granted that babies are born selfish and that it is the role of society—and especially parents—to transform them from little sociopaths into civilized beings. In *Just Babies*, Paul Bloom argues that

humans are in fact hardwired with a sense of morality. Drawing on groundbreaking research at Yale, Bloom demonstrates that, even before they can speak or walk, babies judge the goodness and badness of others' actions; feel empathy and compassion; act to soothe those in distress; and have a rudimentary sense of justice. Still, this innate morality is limited, sometimes tragically. We are naturally hostile to strangers, prone to parochialism and bigotry. Bringing together insights from psychology, behavioral economics, evolutionary biology, and philosophy, Bloom explores how we have come to surpass these limitations. Along the way, he examines the morality of chimpanzees, violent psychopaths, religious extremists, and Ivy League professors, and explores our often puzzling moral feelings about sex, politics, religion, and race. In his analysis of the morality of children and adults, Bloom rejects the fashionable view that our moral decisions are driven mainly by gut feelings and unconscious biases. Just as reason has driven our great scientific discoveries, he argues, it is reason and deliberation that makes possible our moral discoveries, such as the wrongness of slavery. Ultimately, it is through our imagination, our compassion, and our uniquely human capacity for rational thought that we can transcend the primitive sense of morality we were born with, becoming more than just babies. Paul Bloom has a gift for bringing abstract ideas to life, moving seamlessly from Darwin, Herodotus, and Adam Smith to *The Princess Bride*, Hannibal Lecter, and Louis C.K. Vivid, witty, and intellectually probing, *Just Babies* offers a radical new perspective on our moral lives.