

EVIL & SUFFERING

On demand lecture-series for
students of A Level Religious Studies

With Dr Peter Vardy and Charlotte Vardy

On-demand Lectures

1. A Grand Design?
2. St. Augustine and the Problem of Free Will
3. The Logical Problem of Evil (Inc. Hick's Irenaean Theodicy)
4. The Evidential Problem of Evil

BONUS: Debate "This house believes that evil disproves the existence of God!"



Dr. Peter Vardy was Vice Principal of Heythrop College, University of London (1999-2011); he is internationally well-known as a leader in the fields of Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics and Values Education. Peter's many books – including the bestselling "Puzzle of" series for HarperCollins – demonstrate his ability to communicate complex ideas with clarity, accuracy and humour. For more than three decades schools and colleges have looked to Peter to provide outstanding conferences, resources and CPD / INSET, both to support their work in RS and Philosophy and more broadly.

Charlotte Vardy combines teaching Religious Studies across the age and ability range in an outstanding Church School with her work in planning our events and creating our resources. With 20 years' experience in schools, including in Senior and Middle Leadership, she has worked as an educational consultant and teacher-trainer since 2007, for organisations including examination boards. She has a Masters' Degree with distinction in Philosophy from the University of London, attended the Universities of Oxford (BA Theology) and Cambridge (PGCE Secondary RS), and has written four books for students of A Level Religious Studies.



Candle Conferences on demand lecture series for students of A Level Religious Studies are unique. As always, the lectures are pacy and engaging, designed to provoke deep thought and further discussion and debate. Each lecture is accompanied by detailed student resources, providing an overview of the content, useful scholars and quotations, suggestions for extra reading and learning activities. **Overall, the lecture series offers 4+ hours of video content accompanied by 40+ pages of digital resources.**

Evil & Suffering

Exploring content specified by ALL ENGLISH EXAMINATION BOARDS for A Level Religious Studies, and aiming to develop higher-level AO2 essay skills, these lectures will take students on a "deep dive" into the Problem of Evil and Suffering. Each of the first four lectures will explore a different aspect of the problem in detail, before the final lecture takes the form of a debate, to which students will be encouraged to contribute their own, reasoned arguments.

1. A Grand Design?

Does the teleological argument succeed in using evidence of order and purpose to demonstrate the existence of God... or is the universe better characterised by disorder and dysteleological suffering, suggesting a limited God, an evil God... or no God at all? Reflecting on more than a century of horrors, not least the suffering occasioned by COVID 19, as well as on the majesty of creation, this introductory lecture will encourage students to make and defend an academic judgement.

2. St. Augustine and the Problem of Free Will

The second lecture will explore St Augustine's multi-layered response to the Problem of Evil and Suffering, considering his argument that evil is only a lack of good and that God allowing it can be justified in terms of both the principle of plenitude and human free-will. The free-will defence will then be evaluated in more detail, including as it is presented by Alvin Plantinga.

3. The Logical Problem of Evil (Inc. Hick's Irenaean Theodicy)

The third lecture will begin by exploring JL Mackie's article *Evil and Omnipotence* (1955), which sets out the logical problem of evil and then argues that there is no adequate solution to it. It will then go on to evaluate John Hick's attempt to provide a "Theodicy for Today" through his *Evil and the God of Love* (1966). At the end of the lecture, advice will be given on how to tackle a typical essay-question.

4. The Evidential Problem of Evil

The fourth lecture will consider William Rowe's attempt to use evil to disprove the existence of God in *The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism* (1979). Is it really fair to say that there are instances of dysteleological suffering in the world? Must an omnipotent, wholly good God always prevent suffering when doing so would not result in a worse outcome?

To Book

A school licence to access the Evil & Suffering lecture series for the academic year 2022-23 costs £50, which includes the right to show the videos in class and copy the student resources.

Individual students or teachers can purchase access for £5, but this only includes personal use of the videos and resources

<https://candleconferences.com/events/evil-and-suffering-on-demand/>

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