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Topic Outline:

* The nature of the problem across a range of religious traditions,
* types of evil and suffering, moral and non-moral.
* The challenge to religious belief posed by the inconsistency of the nature of God and the evident existence of evil and suffering challenging belief in the existence of God.

*With reference to the ideas of D Hume and J Mackie.*

Theodicies and solutions to the problem of suffering:

* Belief that creation was good; evil and suffering is a privation of good due to the fall of the angels and man because of the misuse of free will, soul-deciding, significance of reconciliation.
* Belief that creation is a mix of good and evil linked to the vale of soul making theodicy, including free will defence, best of all possible worlds, epistemic distance, eschatological justification.
* Process theodicy: God is not responsible for evil and suffering, but he is co-sufferer and cannot coerce the free will of human agents.
* Strengths and weaknesses of theodicies and solutions: compatibility or otherwise with modern views about origins of life, nature of God, innocent suffering, hypothesis of life after death.

*With reference to the ideas of Augustine and Irenaeus.*



* The Nature and Purpose of Religious Art.
* Religion, art and popular culture. Including;
* Humour and Religion;
* Fiction and Religion;
* Cyber Religion and TV Religion.
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