

First paper assignment

PHIL 20810: Philosophical Theology

Due: March 5, at 5:00.

Please submit the paper as an email attachment.

Plagiarism is a serious and growing problem at Notre Dame and other universities. It is your responsibility to acquaint yourselves with the University's honor code, as well as with the philosophy department's guidelines regarding plagiarism. Both are linked from the course web site and you should contact your TA or me if you should have any questions.

This paper has three parts, which should be clearly demarcated.

Part 1. Argue for or against any one of the following theses:

- (1) If a situation is impossible, then even God cannot bring it about.
- (2) Some situations are possible, and yet God cannot bring them about.
- (3) The ability to do evil is important enough that God was justified in giving us this ability, despite the suffering it has caused.
- (4) If a perfectly good being could omit a horror from the world without making the world any worse, he would.
- (5) It is possible for God to do evil.
- (6) It is impossible for a being to be both essentially perfectly good and omnipotent.

Part 2. Clearly state what you take to be the strongest objection to the argument given in Part 1.

Part 3. Do your best to respond to the objection given in Part 2.

The three parts, taken together, should not exceed 1500 words.

See below for further information.

1. As an alternative to doing this assignment, you may come up with your own topic, though you must get the written approval of me or your TA by email first. If you do this, the question that I or your TA approves should be on the first page of your essay.
2. A late penalty of 3 points per day, including weekends, will be assessed for any papers which are handed in late.
3. You are welcome to get comments from your TA on a rough draft of the paper. To do this, the draft must be submitted 7 days before the paper is due.