

Neighborly Apologetics

Dr. Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar Series

26-0311wc - Neighborly Apologetics, 2 - Evil & Suffering, Dr. Del Tackett

This detailed summary by Grok / X, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Neighborly Apologetics Transcript

26-0311-Transcript: 2 - Evil & Suffering, Part 2 (0:04 - 1:03:03)

Facilitator: Scott Reynolds

(0:31) Let me go ahead and share my screen here and see if we can get our slides up. (0:49) Well, let me welcome all of you again to this session. (0:56) We're going to be dealing with the problem of evil again, part two, and my guess is we (1:03) could probably spend four or five more, at least if, you know, probably a whole lot more, (1:10) I suspect.

(1:10) And I'll mention that as we go through her today, just in terms of the, what we're attempting (1:16) to do here and talking about neighborly apologetics rather than just an academic approach to this, (1:24) but we wanted to at least spend another, uh, another session on this, uh, to look at some (1:32) things that I think are very important to drive, drive us down a little more deeply (1:36) than we did before. (1:39) And so that is what we're going to be doing. (1:43) However, I had to, I have to begin with this because, uh, Mark and I just came back from, (1:49) uh, uh, North Pole, Alaska, just got back, uh, what, the day before yesterday, uh, we (1:55) were up there doing, uh, an engagement project, uh, training conference.

(1:59) I had a wonderful time, uh, with the folks up there. (2:03) It was, uh, minus 34 degrees on the morning we woke up to go to the conference. (2:10) Uh, I don't think I've been in, in a weather that cold, uh, before, but it was absolutely (2:17) gorgeous.

(2:18) Um, and this is a picture of, um, that I took, uh, from, from the plane, uh, uh, the (2:27) valley and, um, and you can see a large, um, glacier there on the right portion, uh, of (2:35) the picture. (2:36) And, but it gives me also an opportunity to do a little advertising here because, um, (2:43) as soon as I'm done here tonight, I'm going to head to Nashville, uh, not tonight, but (2:50) I'm going to head to Nashville, uh, where we're going to be doing a premier, uh, the (2:55) is Genesis history sequel, uh, entitled the rise of mountains. (3:00) And so this, uh, is an appropriate picture to talk, uh, about that.

(3:06) I'm very excited about, about the movie. (3:08) And, uh, so we'll just did a premier last week and Cedarville, and then we'll do the (3:14) premier in Nashville this, uh, this Thursday, uh, the film

will be released (3:20) probably the end of March. (3:22) It will be released in a, in a streaming mode.

(3:26) So, okay, let's begin, uh, with this, uh, and I, I'm going to do a little bit of a (3:33) review for you and, and there's a strong reason for that. (3:37) Uh, we're doing neighborly apologetics simply because of the Royal law. (3:43) Uh, uh, the scripture boils everything down to, uh, the Royal law.

(3:49) We talked about this last time that we're to love our neighbor and, uh, not, uh, the (3:59) definition that we use today for love, uh, love from understanding the character and (4:05) nature of God and his love for us. (4:08) And that is that we're having a steadfast sacrificial zeal. (4:11) This is a true good of the one who providentially lives near you, near us.

(4:18) And so that is the command of our Lord. (4:20) And I, and that is how the body of Christ spread for the first 200 years. (4:24) And, um, in the engagement project, we're attempting to call people back to that (4:29) vision, uh, that he has entrusted the primary work of the kingdom to the common (4:33) Christian family.

(4:35) And that is, that's how the word intended it, uh, in, in the, the Royal law. (4:42) I think that's, this is the ground ground zero and the work of the kingdom. (4:46) That's why we're doing neighborly apologetics, uh, and are strong (4:51) ambitions for the family.

(4:53) We're going to build, build real, uh, relationship, deep relationships with (4:57) those were providentially in our Jerusalem, uh, through prayer and action (5:02) with grace and wisdom and truth, being attractively winsome, (5:08) tearing down walls, building up trust, doing the work of, of the kingdom. (5:14) And that is what the, the Royal law drives us to. (5:17) And that's what is driving us to, uh, neighborly apologetics.

(5:21) And why we're even doing this whole series. (5:25) I'm going to review it. (5:25) The first are our three verses quickly.

(5:29) They will provide the framework for what we're doing from first Peter three, (5:35) that in your heart's honor, Christ, the Lord is Holy, always being prepared to (5:39) make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. (5:43) Yet do it with gentleness and respect. (5:49) And it is within that gentleness and respect that our, uh, neighborly (5:55) apologetics is always going to be couched because first that's what the (6:00) scripture tells us.

(6:01) And I think from this standpoint of the times in which we live, we're going to (6:04) find that that's about the only way we're going to be able to engage people at all. (6:11) And from Colossians four, um, conduct yourself wisdom towards outsiders, making (6:17) the most of the opportunity to let your speech always be with grace as though seasoned (6:24) with salt so that you might know how to respond to each person. (6:28) As I confessed many times before, most of my Christian life was not driven by this.

(6:34) I did not conduct myself with wisdom toward outsiders. (6:38) I conducted myself according to my agenda towards outsiders. (6:43) Um, I didn't season my speech at all.

(6:47) And it was probably one could say it wasn't with grace. (6:53) And I certainly wasn't, um, tailoring it, uh, to each individual. (6:59) And it was according to my, uh, my agenda.

(7:03) And we mentioned last time that Godly wisdom, uh, is not primarily for me as I (7:11) used to

think most of my Christian walk. (7:13) The wisdom was for me, but it's for the, the true good, the shalom of, of another (7:19) wisdom and discernment. (7:20) As we do this, uh, we talked about how we're going to see our neighbors and to (7:27) enter that wisdom and to discernment, to understand, are we dealing with a (7:32) non-believer or a believer? (7:34) And is that non-believer closed to God or are they open to God? (7:38) Um, are we dealing with a believer that has a good, solid biblical worldview or (7:44) a believer who does not have a good, solid biblical worldview? (7:49) And as we suggested, uh, if you have a neighbor who is a believer and they do (7:54) not have a solid biblical worldview, then take them to the truth project and (7:58) then, uh, the engagement project.

(8:01) So this is going to help, uh, frame how we deal with people in light (8:08) of the Colossians passage. (8:09) How with, we need to deal with wisdom toward outsiders and we need to know (8:15) how to respond to each person. (8:17) And that wisdom and discernment, first of all, is going to help us understand, (8:24) are they a believer, non-believer? (8:25) Are they open to God? (8:26) Are they closed to God? (8:27) Do they have a solid biblical worldview or not? (8:30) And all of this, of course, especially in the times in which we live is going to (8:36) have to be couched in a deep relationship.

(8:39) That's the only way that we're going to be able to see God work as we pray (8:45) diligently for these people, build a relationship with them. (8:49) And as we talked about last time, uh, that hopefully in that process of (8:54) relationship, they'll begin to ask questions as, as we saw happen with Dr. (8:59) Rosaria (8:59) And as we see happened in the, in the book, I once was lost to every one of the (9:04) college students who came to Christ.

(9:06) That it first begins with a trusted relationship. (9:08) That's the reality of the, of the world in which we live. (9:13) And our third verse was the second Timothy, Lord certainly must gently again, (9:17) that, that quote, uh, aspect of how we deal with people and, and, um, and our (9:24) approach to people, uh, must gently instruct his opponents in the hope that (9:30) God will grant their repentance.

(9:32) And as we mentioned before, we need to have this constantly in our mind that (9:37) we are not going to be the ones that are going to move people to repentance. (9:42) God is the one who's going to do that. (9:44) And we, and that is why we must constantly praying for people that God (9:48) will grant them repentance, leading them to a knowledge of the truth, that they (9:52) will come to their senses, uh, which is maybe even more important than ever in a (9:58) culture where it's possible that God has given our culture over to a depraved (10:03) mind, that we're going to have to be praying for them, uh, that will come to (10:09) their sense and escape from the trap of the devil. It's the devil who's taking them (10:13) captive and we need to see them as captives, (10:16) Uh, who's taking them captive to do, uh, his will. (10:20) And so we mentioned the difference between academic apologetics (10:24) and neighborly apologetics. (10:25) We need academic apologetics.

(10:28) And again, we need to be thankful for all those who have labored and worked for (10:35) years and years, forefathers and beyond who have labored, uh, to study and write (10:42) down the academic apologetic, because we need that, we need that wisdom and (10:49) understanding that they bring to this, but, um, we need that in order to do (10:56) neighborly apologetics, but in the times in which you live, we can't, we can't (11:01) lead anymore with the academic apologetic. (11:04) We have to lead with significant relationships and in those relationships, (11:09) those trusted relationships, and they've begun to ask the questions, as Rosaria (11:13) said, I began to ask

the questions that my worldview couldn't answer that we (11:18) will then be able, uh, to share the truth of God's word with them, uh, from (11:27) in the context of a neighborly apologetic. (11:30) These are the categories that we're, we're trying to cover in these webinars (11:34) that the Lord allows us to do.

(11:37) So, uh, tonight we're looking at the first one, evil and suffering and the (11:42) second, the second part of that. Last time, remember, we talked about the three forms that the problem of evil brings to us. (11:52) Uh, the first is that logical argument, as we mentioned, and I want to remind you (11:56) again, odds are that you are not going to run across this with your neighbor.

(12:02) Odds are very low that you will have an academic, uh, who is going to lay (12:08) out this logical argument for you. (12:11) If so, uh, it's good for you to understand that and to know that, and to (12:16) understand that there are, uh, many, many people have addressed that logical argument. (12:24) And that is basically if God were omnipotent, he was all powerful, all (12:29) knowing he could prevent evil.

(12:31) And if he were truly good and benevolent, he would want to therefore prevent evil. (12:36) Uh, therefore, since evil exists, then God can't be all powerful. (12:41) He can't be all knowing, he can't be good and benevolent.

(12:44) So that's the logical argument that is laid before us. (12:47) As we talked about last time, that it was all about to Epicurus and, and has (12:53) been around for thousands of years. (12:57) The second is, is probably more appropriate, uh, for what we're going to (13:02) be dealing with and seeing as the evidential argument and the evidential (13:06) argument comes from seeing, uh, all the horrific evil that is all around us in (13:12) the world, and, uh, since there's no evidence of a God who cares, uh, because (13:18) it goes on, then it's hard to believe God exists.

(13:24) And this is the, uh, this is the argument that, that we're going to see most (13:30) likely, uh, and that's the personal argument. (13:33) These are people who have been struck deeply, uh, by evil and suffering. (13:40) And basically the question, where is God? (13:43) And all this, he could have stopped it, um, um, but he, he didn't.

(13:49) And that then forms the reason for people to reject God, uh, to (13:54) question God, um, and so forth. (13:57) So that's that personal argument that you and I are most likely going to, uh, (14:02) run across and that's why it's important for us to, to approach neighborly (14:10) apologetics with wisdom and discernment. (14:13) Uh, not the way I did.

(14:15) We don't approach it from my agenda. (14:18) Uh, you know, the one size fit all, that's not being wise and it's not being (14:24) discerning, it's not seasoning our speech in order to know how to respond to each (14:29) person. (14:30) And so we need to understand and ask God for that wisdom and discernment of to (14:37) where our neighbors are in terms of the continuum that I put up there.

(14:43) And so we're going to begin, uh, neighborly, the neighborly apologetics (14:47) and especially in the area of evil and suffering with empathy and sympathy. (14:53) And, uh, we'll be attempting as we build that relationship with them to ask (14:57) questions about the circumstances, uh, in their lives, uh, and what has brought (15:04) them to their thinking and what is that thinking, uh, behind their, their (15:09) personal worldview.

(15:09) We talked about how important it was to prepare ourselves, to prepare our (15:13) families,

um, before we even begin, uh, uh, to do this, to do this work. (15:22) You can build this. (15:22) We need to build this relationship.

(15:25) As we've mentioned before, for example, we find that Mrs. (15:28) Smith is, uh, it's bitter towards God and therefore bitter towards everybody. (15:35) Um, no one likes her. (15:36) Her attitude has become so soured because of her experience, her husband (15:42) dying a horrible death of cancer.

(15:44) She asked God to, uh, to help her, to heal her husband and all those things. (15:52) And of course in her eyes and mind, God didn't come through and now, and now she (15:58) is filled with all kinds of bitterness and anger. (16:02) And so we recognize that as we begin to build that relationship with Mrs. (16:06) Smith, and we then begin to discuss that within our family, that, you know, this (16:12) is what Mrs. (16:12) Smith is wrestling with.

(16:14) And if we, if we don't understand that enough, then we're going to prepare (16:18) ourselves as we build a relationship with Mrs. (16:21) Smith in order to be able to engage her, uh, with gentleness and respect. (16:29) And so we talked about how we need to prepare ourselves. (16:32) We talked about three things are critical for us to understand, uh, from, (16:37) from a biblical worldview, number one, we live in a fallen world.

(16:41) Man has a fallen nature and we're subject then to two kinds of evil. (16:47) Um, one comes from nature. (16:51) The other comes from man himself.

(16:54) Uh, so there is natural evil and there is moral evil. (16:58) And, uh, I wish we had more time tonight to be able to talk about discerning (17:03) those, but I'll just mention that we need to discern our people, uh, (17:07) struggling from the results of natural evil, or are they struggling (17:12) from the roots of moral evil? (17:15) Um, and, and those, those require different, um, different (17:21) kinds of engagement with people. (17:23) Uh, number two, what we understand from a biblical worldview is that God is (17:28) righteous because people are going to be questioning God, even people who (17:32) don't believe in God will question God.

(17:34) It's amazing how much people who, uh, don't believe in God talk about God. (17:40) And so, um, there will be accusations, charges, uh, against God, but we (17:48) understand from biblical worldview that God is unchanging, he is righteous. (17:52) And he is holy and, but he is just and merciful and compassionate.

(17:58) Uh, he is loving and good. (18:00) And that is always true. (18:01) He does not change.

(18:03) Uh, he does not, he's not subject. (18:06) Uh, to whims, uh, subject to the wind blowing him one way or the other. (18:14) He doesn't get angry at you because you have now, uh, made the (18:19) same mistake over and over again.

(18:21) Uh, that is, that's not how God is. (18:25) It's not his nature. (18:26) It's important for us to always keep that in mind.

(18:30) And then the third one is that looking forward to the fact that God will (18:35) in this time, uh, restore all things and there will be no more pain. (18:41) There'll be no more suffering, no more evil. (18:43) And all of that will be resolved.

(18:46) Those are critical things for us as, as we understand the problem, um, that (18:53) exists in

the world with people who do not have that, that biblical worldview. (18:59) And so this allowed us to answer the fundamental questions that (19:04) this problem brings to us. (19:05) The person, what is evil? (19:07) Uh, where does evil come from? (19:08) What is the solution for evil? (19:10) Let me just summarize these.

(19:12) Uh, and that is evil is anything that is contrary to God's design and, and order. (19:19) And evil then, uh, where does evil come from? (19:23) Evil results from rebelling against God's design and order. (19:29) And that even brings us to natural evil.

(19:31) Natural evil is the result of a fallen world, uh, that, uh, came about as a (19:36) result of God, of man rebelling against, against God. (19:41) And, um, so the solution for evil ultimately is going to be the, the (19:48) atonement that Christ made and then the restoration of all things. (19:52) And I want to mention this, uh, preparing our families.

(19:56) So for the issue of evil and suffering, I want to point you back (20:00) again to the truth project, you know, I don't try to, uh, to say this simply (20:06) because it was, um, it was, um, my tour that I took people on, uh, that I think (20:13) there's some valuable things in her for you. (20:15) And so I'll point you back to the truth project for two or three, uh, where we (20:20) talk about who is man anthropology and understand the various states of man. (20:26) Um, we'll mention a few of the things that we found and talked about there (20:31) in two or three, and also two or four, where we talk about philosophy and (20:34) ethics, um, what is the basis for saying anything is right and wrong.

(20:39) So, uh, I commend you to those things as resources for preparing yourself. (20:45) If you're running into this issue with, with a neighbor, uh, help prepare (20:50) your family, uh, to deal with Mrs. (20:52) Smith. (20:54) So I want to revisit now the dilemma that, uh, uh, the, those who have a (21:00) non-biblical worldview have and take it a little bit deeper than we did last (21:03) time, um, and then we'll, we'll move forward from this, but I think it's (21:09) important for us to go a little deeper than what we did last time.

(21:12) The first thing in answering the question, what is evil in a naturalistic (21:18) worldview, and if you're dealing with someone who is not a believer, it is (21:23) most likely that they have been infused with this naturalistic worldview because (21:30) it is, it is everywhere in our culture. (21:34) And, and so it's important to understand how we deal with, with this, uh, how we (21:41) can discuss this and that answering people's questions, uh, in naturalism. (21:47) Uh, the dilemma that naturalism has when it comes to evil and suffering is (21:52) that all actions have to be, uh, amoral and I think we referred to Dr. (21:59) Provine in the last, I'm going to go a little, little more specific with you (22:02) on that, uh, because his, his position was a very honest, a very open, a very (22:09) logical position that was resting on, um, evolutionary naturalism.

(22:17) And so if, uh, if the cosmos is all that is, or was, or will be, as Carl Sagan (22:23) said, uh, then in, in that framework, in a naturalistic philosophy, in a, in a, (22:31) in a worldview that sees the entire universe and all reality as captured in (22:38) nothing but matter and energy, then his conclusions are, are logical. (22:46) And Dr. (22:46) Provine said, well, if you, if you come to the summary of all of this, there are (22:52) no gods, there are no purposing forces, which they can't be if everything is (22:57) just a natural realm, uh, there can no, no longer be any notion of free will (23:02) in man because man's mind is nothing but cause and effect machine. (23:07) Um, it is a, is a stimuli response mechanism.

(23:12) Uh, and in the Truth Project, I think we talked a little bit about the, the (23:17) problems associated with, with that conclusion about man, uh, it's not our (23:22) purpose here tonight, uh, there is no life after death, there is no meaning (23:26) in life, and therefore there is no ultimate foundation for ethics. (23:32) I think all of these are very, very important points, uh, that can be (23:37) brought up in a conversation, uh, with our neighbor, uh, when our (23:41) relationship can stand those, uh, to talk about the hopelessness associated (23:48) with the naturalistic perspective, because there, there is no meaning in (23:54) life and, uh, there are no purposing forces and fundamentally there is (24:00) no ultimate foundation for ethics. (24:02) So if there is no foundation for ethics and in the naturalistic framework, (24:08) the, and there is nothing outside of that cosmic cube, as we called it, and (24:13) everything inside is simply the result of energy and matter, then there is (24:18) nothing within that box that can be labeled good or bad, nothing that can (24:23) be labeled righteous or evil.

(24:26) Everything has to be a, um, amoral without any ethical right or wrong. (24:33) In fact, and that's why Dr. (24:36) Provine said there's no ultimate foundation for ethics. (24:39) Uh, he, if you recall, he said that there are lots of proximate, uh, uh, reasons (24:46) for ethics, but those are all pragmatic.

(24:48) And then I think we, we dealt with that before. (24:52) But this is a valid argument and a valid apologetic for us to do it the proper (25:01) time with people who are caught up in this, because many people have (25:07) never thought this through. (25:08) They've never really spent the time trying to go further with the (25:15) implications of what that naturalistic worldview leaves them with.

(25:22) And so it is, it is a contradiction for someone to talk about evil. (25:29) If they are naturalistic in their philosophy, to talk about evil is to (25:38) be contradictory with that philosophy. (25:41) And there has to be a basis then for them to be able to point at anything (25:46) and say that it's, that it's evil.

(25:49) In fact, I think last time we even talked about the whole notion of evolution (25:54) presents a deep dilemma, uh, to people in naturalism because evolution itself (26:02) would state that the strong, uh, destroying the weak and the weak being (26:11) removed is actually the ethical good in evolution. (26:18) Um, no, we, we wouldn't buy that today, but it's the contradiction (26:23) associated with people who have, have these, these contradictions in (26:28) their worldview that we, um, I think in a proper phase of our relationship (26:35) with them, we'll be able to point out. (26:39) So in naturalism, all actions have to be amoral, they can't be there.

(26:44) There is no, uh, righteousness and evil associated with the naturalistic world. (26:52) And there is no ultimate foundation for ethics. (26:54) And so as we mentioned, uh, last time, if we look at the time zones, we live (27:00) therefore in Western civilization today, that evil is defined by (27:06) this amalgamation of homo Deus.

(27:10) The, the selfishness of man has, has progressed to the point where, where (27:17) people think that they are divine and their heart will tell them what is (27:21) right and what is wrong, what is true and what is false and, and, um, and (27:27) quickly the notion of might makes right in that kind of a civilization. (27:32) And that's what we're seeing happening in Western civilization as we, as we (27:37) reject God and reject any notion of, of, of a transcendent, um, foundation (27:44) or ethics based upon the nature of God and the word of God, then we will (27:49) listen to might makes right. (27:52) Uh, and the new world worldview that is, that is sweeping our culture.

(27:58) And so anything that denies this, uh, divine proclamation of, of the homo (28:05) Deus, uh, if I declare that these are my personal pronouns, then that is (28:10) assumed to be a divine proclamation. (28:12) And everyone must bow down to that, uh, as an ethical divine ethical proclamation. (28:22) And if, if you do not use those personal pronouns and you are sinning against (28:27) that divine proclamation, you you'll be dealt with, um, according to (28:32) the blasphemy laws of the culture.

(28:35) Uh, so number two, the second dilemma for those who do not hold a biblical (28:40) worldview is the question, where does evil come from? (28:43) And I want to spend some work, some time here, or driving this down a little (28:46) bit more deeply for us, because I think it's just very, very important for us (28:51) and for our families to have a good understanding of this and how, how to (28:55) talk about how to communicate it. (28:58) Um, but number one, that evil can't come from man, uh, because man is basically (29:03) good if he is a naturalistic beast. (29:06) Uh, if he is nothing but a cause and effect machine, uh, a stimuli response (29:12) mechanism, uh, then evil can't come from him basically good, or he is basically, (29:20) uh, amoral, and if we look at Abram Maslow, who was famous for the hierarchy (29:28) of needs, of course, and other, uh, other things, Abram Maslow made the (29:33) same, as far as I know, we just don't have any intrinsic instincts or evil.

(29:38) So Maslow is speaking from this non-biblical worldview that we're (29:42) talking about, so man doesn't have any intrinsic instincts for evil. (29:48) So evil doesn't really come from man himself. (29:52) Carl Rogers, um, considered somewhat the founder of humanistic psychology, (30:00) uh, said basically the same thing.

(30:02) I do not find that evil is inherent in human nature. (30:08) So man is basically amoral. (30:09) It didn't really start with these two guys.

(30:11) You can go all the way back to Rousseau, uh, if man is good by nature, as I (30:16) believe to shown him to be, it follows that he stays like that as long as not (30:21) informed him, corrupts him. (30:23) So here we have man as an inherently good, um, individual. (30:32) And that, as we have mentioned many times before, is what is behind the (30:38) homo Deus, that the individual and the heart of the individual is assumed (30:43) to be the pure and good and divine.

(30:46) And that is why we have this, um, this desperate search for people to find (30:52) their true selves, uh, even extending down into grade school where people (30:59) were young children have now been, uh, left with this desperate search to (31:04) understand their identity, their gender identity. (31:08) Um, the search is not for how they were made, but the search is for who I am. (31:13) And so this, who I am becomes a divine, uh, position.

(31:19) And, and Rousseau was basically stating that, uh, from a naturalistic (31:23) perspective, that, uh, man is basically good. (31:27) And the only thing that crops him is if something from the outside, uh, does (31:33) that well, then, you know, Maslow, where does he will come from? (31:38) Well, he says that sick people are made by the culture. (31:41) That's what Rousseau was saying. (31:43) in essence,

uh, Maslow is now using the word culture that (31:48) people are basically good. (31:50) How do they get sick? (31:52) How do they, uh, how do they, um, act in a way that's not good (31:57) is because of, of a sick culture. (32:00) And, uh, if we had a healthy culture, then people would remain, remain healthy.

(32:06) Uh, Carl Rogers, I'm just using these two guys, uh, to be consistent here. (32:11) He said the same thing. (32:12) Experience leads him to believe that it is cultural influences, which are (32:16) the major factor in human behaviors.

(32:19) And so this, um, answer to the question, where does evil come from? (32:26) Uh, it's not from man. (32:27) He's amoral, uh, Maslow and Rogers will then point to social institutions, (32:34) culture and social institutions. (32:35) Those are the problem.

(32:37) That's what brings about evil in a culture. (32:40) And so therefore, if we look at, um, the times in which we live, uh, we have (32:47) to simply bought that form of the argument and worldview, uh, that evil (32:52) comes, uh, from, uh, from, uh, a systematic thing rather than a personal sin. (33:03) So it's not, it is not the sin of an individual, uh, that we look at.

(33:08) And if you're careful, if you see things that happen, um, and how, how we (33:14) approach, when we see evil, it occurs. (33:17) We don't talk about, um, sin within an individual. (33:22) We talk about how that individual has been shaped by some, uh, some evil, uh, (33:28) systemic form or cultural form or social institutional form.

(33:33) Um, and so that, um, that is consistent with a naturalistic worldview, (33:42) but it brings great problems. (33:44) And so, uh, with a biblical worldview, um, you know, we can ask these questions, (33:51) but the dilemma of the non-biblical worldview leaves them with a lot of (33:56) issues and a lot of problems. (33:58) And that's part of what we're going to be doing.

(34:01) Uh, when we engage people in that relationship to be able to help them see (34:06) those, and of course that has to be couched in deep and sincere prayer, (34:12) because God is the one, remember, who's going to have to open their eyes. (34:15) He's the one who's going to have to soften their heart and, and, uh, open (34:19) their ears, uh, to give them the ability to hear and see and process, uh, logic, (34:26) especially in, in a culture that may have been given over to a depraved mind. (34:33) So, uh, what's the solution for all of this? (34:36) Well, Maslow, of course, was pointing us to get in touch with your real good (34:42) inner self in this higher gear of need, self-actualization, uh, Carl Rogers, uh, (34:48) talked about the same, uh, about the same thing.

(34:51) Um, Rogers believed that a person reaches the self-actualization level when (34:55) they achieve their goals, wishes, and desires at all stages of their life. (35:00) And this is really true that we see, uh, today in terms of this, the (35:05) homo Deus, that I will be happy and I'll be content, uh, and I'll be healthy. (35:14) Uh, when I, when I am able to live according to who I am and, uh, my (35:21) heart and, and how that leads me.

(35:26) So it is, it is oppressive social institutions that stand in the way of (35:34) the individual, the homo Deus being able to achieve that wellness and health. (35:42) That it is oppressive social institutions. (35:45) And in particular, um, we can talk about the church in general terms (35:51) there and it's absolute ethical values.

(35:54) And so those, those ethical values of a biblical worldview are increasingly (36:00) now viewed as that, which is standing in the way of the personal health (36:07) of an individual and the cultural health, uh, in general of, of our society. (36:14) And that, so that's what keeps people from being able to self-actualize. (36:19) So in summation here, uh, getting in touch with your real good self is the (36:24) homo Deus, uh, search, uh, evil comes from social institutions and all efforts (36:31) now, and we see this increasingly in Western civilization around us, all (36:36) efforts to

solve evil and suffering.

(36:40) The answers are always going to be on focused on the social institution, (36:44) reforming that institution, pouring more money into the institution, (36:48) replacing an institution. (36:50) Um, all of that, that will be the focus because, um, we cannot focus on the (36:57) individual, uh, and the notion of individual, individual sin. (37:02) Okay.

(37:03) So that is the solution that we're, uh, we're, um, we're working toward in. (37:11) In 2023. (37:13) Okay.

(37:13) So here's, here's what is really critical about all of this. (37:18) I think now for us to, uh, having again, laid that foundation is talk (37:23) about not just evil anymore, but talk about suffering. (37:29) That is most likely the thing that we're going to be running (37:32) into in the problem of evil.

(37:34) It's going to be the problem associated with suffering. (37:37) Suffering is a result of evil. (37:39) Uh, suffering is the result of natural evil, moral evil.

(37:43) Um, suffering in many pieces of mind, just because I don't know why I'm suffering. (37:49) And so I, the best way I think for us to do this is to, is to (37:54) draw us back into the scripture. (37:58) God has been very gracious, uh, to allow us, uh, to look at the notion of suffering.

(38:05) And he's talked about it a lot. (38:07) In fact, he dedicated a whole book. (38:09) Um, the book of Job to this whole issue of suffering and how we (38:16) answer the questions of, of suffering.

(38:19) Uh, you remember the story? (38:21) So, uh, Job, uh, as we see now in this picture, uh, who was, uh, extremely (38:27) wealthy, uh, a wonderful family with children and married and grandchildren. (38:34) And all of this, he's now lost it all. (38:37) He's lost everything.

(38:39) Uh, and Job is now suffering terribly with boils and sores. (38:45) And, um, he's in a miserable, miserable, uh, situation. (38:51) And then, uh, just in somewhat almost a humorous, uh, humorous way, the (38:57) scripture tells us that Job has three friends who arrive, uh, to comfort him.

(39:05) As the scripture says in the beginning, and in the end they do anything but (39:10) comfort him, and at one point Job, uh, calls them, uh, liars and, and, uh, (39:19) whitewashing, whitewashing and so forth. (39:23) And so, uh, these three friends, um, that, uh, that come to comfort, uh, (39:30) Job, uh, in the end are really not presenting, uh, the right way to deal (39:37) with someone who is suffering. (39:38) And so it gives us a great, great, um, illustration and example, uh, in the (39:45) scripture for us to learn how not to deal with suffering, to learn much more (39:52) about suffering, to learn about God.

(39:54) And so, uh, basically these three friends, uh, are saying, and this is an (40:03) oversimplification to some extent, but basically these three friends each take (40:07) turns, uh, lecturing Job, uh, and Job then responds to them. (40:14) And we have three cycles of that. (40:16) So, uh, we have, uh, one friend lectures Job, Job responses, then the next (40:22) friend, Bildad, and then Job responses.

(40:24) Then Zophar, and so we do go through that three cycles and basically what (40:29) they're saying to Job, uh, and they say a lot of good things. (40:34) And that's why, uh, reading Job requires a

lot of wisdom and discernment. (40:41) It requires a good biblical worldview to read Job, to be able to discern, uh, (40:48) when these three friends are speaking, uh, truth about God and when they become (40:54) faulty in their application of that, of that truth.

(40:58) Uh, in the end of the book, God takes these three to task, um, for not speaking (41:05) as God says, for not speaking right, uh, about God. (41:08) So that is why we have to be discerning when we read, um, these, these passages (41:15) in Job when, when these people are speaking. (41:18) And we also need to have discernment when Job is speaking because Job is (41:22) speaking out of, out of his misery as well.

(41:26) So these three friends are basically, um, giving this statement that Job is (41:33) suffering because he's guilty of some sin. (41:38) Uh, Job's response is, is, is couched in this summation. (41:43) And that is, uh, I'm innocent.

(41:45) I'm blameless. (41:47) Uh, so there's something wrong with God here. (41:50) There's something wrong.

(41:51) Uh, in an often case, Job says there's something wrong with God. (41:54) What, why you're, you're not being just here. (41:57) And so these are the two positions that we see back and forth in, in Job.

(42:04) Um, your suffering is because you're, you, you've been guilty of some sin. (42:09) You need to repent of that sin. (42:11) Job says, look, I, I'm blameless.

(42:13) I haven't done anything wrong. (42:14) And so God is being unjust to you. (42:18) Well, these, uh, and what's interesting in this dialogue is going on over there.

(42:24) I, I really liked this picture because you see over there on the left, um, (42:30) a lie who, um, kind of his hand on the head and my mind is kind of like he's (42:36) saying, you know, because he's hearing this, uh, and he speaks in the end. (42:44) And, uh, and he speaks with wisdom and discernment. (42:47) God does not take him to task.

(42:49) Um, but he speaks in wisdom and discernment and almost summarizes the (42:53) whole, the whole thing for us at the end of the book, but the other thing that's (42:57) important is that God is listening to all of this and I think one of the important (43:01) things for us to keep in mind, and especially if, um, if our neighbor is a (43:08) believer, um, and they're suffering, uh, that the reality is God is not far away. (43:16) Oftentimes when we're suffering, we think that God has left us. (43:19) We think God has turned his back on us, that he's gone far, far away.

(43:23) Job accuses God of doing that. (43:26) Um, in some cases, he even wants God to go away because he thinks the suffering (43:29) would go away if God would just go away. (43:32) But God is there.

(43:33) He hears, he sees, he is, as we read in the scripture, he is El Roy. (43:38) Uh, the God who sees. (43:41) And, and so God is listening to all of this.

(43:45) Uh, he doesn't get involved until the very end of the book, but he's hearing (43:49) all of these accusations, uh, that are going back and forth, uh, the friends (43:55) accusing Job, Job accusing them and accusing God, uh, and Elihu going away. (44:03) Okay. (44:03) So, um, so here's the faulty premise.

(44:08) It's important for us to understand, uh, when we try to understand (44:12) this whole notion of suffering. (44:14) Uh, the faulty premise here that we do not want to fall into. (44:17) And I would submit to you that, that we fall into this all the time.

(44:22) And so this is important for us, a very instructive for us when (44:27) we're dealing with suffering. (44:28) Whether that's suffering in our own life, uh, suffering within our family, (44:33) or it's the suffering that we now see in our neighbors as we begin to build (44:38) that relationship with them. (44:40) Uh, the faulty premise here, number one, is that suffering (44:43) is a result of personal sin.

(44:45) And that is what these three friends continue, uh, to accuse Job of, um, (44:52) that suffering, if you're suffering, it must be because of personal sin. (44:58) And in conjunction with that is personal righteousness, uh, will (45:04) always bring physical blessings. (45:05) And so the friends are saying, look, Job, you've sinned.

(45:10) Uh, it's obvious you've sinned. (45:12) That's why you're suffering. (45:13) And if you would repent of that sin, then you would receive physical blessings.

(45:19) Um, and my guess is that right now you're probably thinking of your mind that yes, (45:23) we have pastors, uh, who claim the name of Christ today, who make the same argument. (45:30) Uh, if people would be righteous, in many cases, righteous by giving more money. (45:35) Uh, then there will be physical blessings that will come to them.

(45:38) If they do not have this physical blessings, it's because they (45:40) haven't had enough faith. (45:42) Uh, they haven't been righteous enough or whatever that is. (45:46) Um, so, and, and in addition to that, if you're suffering, uh, then, then, uh, (45:54) you're suffering because of personal sin.

(45:56) And the way for you to get rid of your suffering is to, um, is to repent of that (46:02) sin and therefore God will bless you physically. (46:05) So those are, this is the faulty premise that we see throughout, uh, throughout (46:10) Job and of course, God then comes and sets, uh, sets everybody straight about this. (46:17) Now, the reality is that there is a special situation here with Job.

(46:21) Um, and that is that from the very beginning in chapter one and chapter two, (46:26) we were told, uh, that Job is blameless, uh, before God, uh, but he is caught up (46:33) in the larger story of things that are going on and the accuser has come before (46:39) God and God has allowed Satan to, uh, to touch Job. (46:44) And so Job, but see, and Job is, is, uh, declaring himself, look, I'm, I'm (46:51) innocent, but he makes also, uh, he's basing his, his, uh, response on the (46:58) faulty premise because he's look, I, I'm innocent here, so I should be physically (47:04) blessed. (47:04) I'm innocent, so I should have all of these physical blessings.

(47:08) Therefore, there's something wrong with God. (47:10) God is not just and so forth, but God is just. (47:14) And, uh, oftentimes it's important for us to recognize that we are caught up in a (47:19) larger story that we didn't know.

(47:21) That's what God comes to Job in the beginning. (47:24) And Job finally repents of that when he says, look, I, uh, I repent that I don't (47:31) know everything. (47:32) I don't, I don't have the ability to see everything.

(47:35) I can't see, uh, all of your purposes and all your plans and what you're working (47:39) out.

(47:42) Uh, and so, uh, let's see, Mark, I'm going to try and see if I can, uh, well, I (47:48) can't move that stuff. (47:50) So, uh, I have, I think some on my laptop that are laying over the top of the, of (47:59) the text here.

(48:00) So I'll do my best to get through it. (48:03) Um, so this is from Luke, uh, there were, there were some present at the time who (48:08) told you about, uh, uh, about the, um, the Galileans, his blood pilot admits with (48:15) their sacrifice. (48:16) Jesus, uh, answered.

(48:19) Do you think that these Galileans are worse centers than all the other Galileans (48:23) because they suffer this way? (48:24) This is very, very important for us, uh, in what Jesus is saying here, because the, (48:29) these faulty premises that we were seeing all the way back in Job are, are present (48:34) here, even, uh, in the time of Jesus, because people were thinking that there (48:39) was a connection between righteousness and physical blessings. (48:44) Now that if, if some tragedy happens to someone, it's because of their sin, Jesus (48:51) is saying, no, uh, I tell you, no. (48:55) Uh, but unless you were content, you will perish.

(48:58) Or then he talks about the 18 who died when the tarps. (49:00) So long ago now we don't have, there was nothing in the scripture, uh, that, that (49:05) points us to these historical events. (49:08) We know they happened.

(49:09) Jesus was referring to them, but we don't have any other place in the (49:13) scripture that elaborates on them. (49:16) But Jesus is pointing to these events, um, and, and telling me, do you think (49:21) that that happened to them? (49:23) Uh, because you know, they, they had sinned more than somebody else. (49:27) And Jesus, I tell you, no, um, but unless you repent, you too will all perish.

(49:32) And so all of us are under the, the weight of a fallen nature. (49:38) All of us are guilty, uh, before God, but Jesus is, is, um, is doing away with (49:46) this notion that physical blessings come because of my righteousness. (49:51) And if I righteous, I then will have physical blessings.

(49:55) And Jesus is saying, no, that's just not, that is not the case. (50:00) And so, uh, what we learned from, from Joe over the rest of scripture and (50:05) talk dealing with suffering is that again, we have to have wisdom and (50:10) discernment here because we need to, we need to think about and pray and ask (50:16) God for the wisdom concerning our neighbor is our neighbor suffering (50:20) because these things can happen. (50:23) We can suffer because of our own personal poor choices.

(50:28) You know, if someone is suffering, um, from lung cancer because of years and (50:35) years of smoking, uh, their suffering is coming as a result of their personal (50:42) poor choices, sometimes people can suffer as a result of another's poor (50:47) choices and the evil that comes from something else. (50:49) We've seen that many, many times. (50:52) We see that, uh, in a, in a, in an abused wife and children.

(50:57) Uh, we, we see that, uh, in, in people who are put in, in ovens, um, by the (51:03) Nazis and people suffer because of someone else's evil actions. (51:08) Uh, third, it will suffer because of natural people. (51:12) Are they suffering from natural evil or are they suffering from moral evil? (51:16) And finally, are they, are we suffering, uh, in the larger story of God? (51:25) And that as a believer, we must always keep before us and understand that, uh, (51:32) our suffering, if we are suffering, yes, it can be done, it can be the (51:38) result of secondary causes, but from a biblically

worthy perspective, we must (51:42) always remember, and we can't always express that to someone who's a non (51:48) believer, and sometimes it'd be hard to express it to a believer who doesn't (51:51) have a solid biblical worldview, but that's part of our wisdom and discernment (51:56) in how we're going to speak to people.

(51:59) But from our perspective, to always understand that behind all of this, (52:05) regardless of whether my suffering is from poor choices that I've made, uh, (52:10) evil choices that someone else has made because of a natural event and so forth, (52:15) that it is a sovereign, uh, work of God and the purposes of God's that (52:19) are being carried out here. (52:21) And my response now is, is, is one that has to be made in the light of (52:30) that understanding of who God is. (52:32) So Job is a great example for us.

(52:35) Um, Job, God calls him blameless and yet Job is suffering. (52:42) He's taken for cast because God, because Job is accusing God for being unjust. (52:47) And God says, look, I'm not being unjust here.

(52:49) You are part of a larger story that you don't understand. (52:52) And then, you know, it takes Job to the whole thing. (52:54) Were you there with this? (52:55) Were you there with this? (52:56) And so forth.

(52:57) And Job has finally realized that his place is in the larger story of God. (53:04) And the way that God is using him and desiring for Job to honor God and to (53:12) glorify God, even in the midst of his suffering, even when he can't figure (53:18) out why he is suffering and his Job's problem again, what was the premise (53:23) that he deserved good things. (53:25) And I would submit to you that, uh, when we suffer and we start to complain, (53:31) it's going to be because we think we deserve something better than what we're (53:37) getting.

(53:37) And so this is why we have to have wisdom and discernment, uh, when we're (53:41) dealing with the issue of suffering. (53:43) Uh, not only to know where people are, but to know what circumstances to find (53:49) themselves in. (53:51) Um, and by the way, I, I started to lay out a lot of, um, suggestions for how (53:57) then we deal with each of these, but it got to be so huge.

(54:00) I, I said, there's no way, no way we can do that. (54:03) And maybe as we go on, uh, the plan is to publish an article on each of these (54:09) things and we can drive these down, uh, a little further than what we can do, (54:16) that we can do here. (54:19) So talking about this, um, whole issue of being in the larger story of God, um, (54:27) you know, Jesus came across this man who is, who is born blind and, and his (54:35) disciples are caught up in the same premise.

(54:38) Do you see it here now? (54:40) They're caught up in the same premise. (54:42) Rabbi, who sent this man or his parents? (54:45) He was born blind. (54:46) In other words, the premise is the physical blessings or the physical (54:50) suffering of an individual is based upon their righteousness.

(54:54) Uh, and of course, Jesus said, neither this man or his parents, but this happened (55:01) so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (55:06) And that of course, uh, reaches this fulfillment in Christ. (55:11) What we read, uh, in Isaiah 53, he was despised and rejected by mankind, a man (55:18) of suffering, uh, and familiar with the pain, like ones from whom people hide (55:22) their faces, he was despised.

(55:24) And we held him in low esteem. (55:26) Surely he took our, our pain and bore our suffering.

(55:32) And so Jesus is, is the ultimate example of suffering and his suffering is part of (55:41) the larger story, the larger story of God, which is set from, you know, before (55:46) the foundation of, of the world that he would suffer for us and that we then (55:53) share in that suffering, we read it in Romans eight, if we are children, then (55:57) we're heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs of Christ.

(55:59) If indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his (56:06) glory, I consider our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the (56:10) glory that will be revealed in us. (56:12) All of these are, are just a few verses. (56:16) And if you want to do a search, there are over 150 different verses that (56:20) talk about suffering in the scripture that give us a help in how we are to (56:26) see these sufferings, but all of them are couched in the understanding is that (56:31) God is good and he's working out his pleasure in us and our response is to (56:37) glorify him even in our sufferings.

(56:40) And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. (56:42) Not only so, we also glory in our sufferings. (56:45) We glory in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance, (56:49) perseverance, character, and character.

(56:52) Oh, dear Francis from Peter, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has (56:57) come upon you to test you. (56:59) Is there something strange for happening to you? (57:01) There'll be twice as much as you dissipate in the sufferings of Christ, that you may (57:06) be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. (57:09) If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you're blessed, for the spirit (57:12) of God and glory of God are on you.

(57:14) If you suffer, it should not be as a murder or any kind of criminal or meddler. (57:20) However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God wide. (57:27) And this is important for us, especially as we go forward and in Western (57:31) civilization and the times which you live, because it is apparent to me that (57:38) people, Christians, who are going to stand for what is right and true and good, (57:46) stand for righteousness, are going to be increasingly persecuted.

(57:52) You may lose your business, as a good friend of mine in Denver is facing again. (57:58) Jack Phillips, as a baker, facing again, is being targeted once again. (58:05) There's suffering there, and he's suffering as a result of his stand.

(58:10) But the important thing I wanted to bring to your attention here is the connection (58:15) the scripture makes with the resurrection of Christ. (58:19) Even Jesus was speaking of this in Mark 8, he began to teach them that the Son of (58:24) man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the (58:29) teachers of law, that he must be killed, and after three days rise again. (58:32) And this connection between suffering of Christ and the resurrection, we see it (58:37) in Luke, he told them this is what is written, the Messiah will suffer and rise (58:41) from the dead on the third day.

(58:43) Paul speaks of this, Paul went into the synagogue and on three Sabbath days, he (58:48) reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that the Messiah (58:52) had to suffer and rise from the dead. (58:58) Paul again was, in Acts 20, 27, I'm saying nothing beyond what the prophets and (59:05) Moses said would happen, that the Messiah would suffer, and as the first to rise (59:09) from the dead would bring the message of life to his own people and to the Gentiles. (59:14) And so, ultimately the solution to evil and suffering is found in the (59:20) resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(59:23) And so, we'll read this from 1 Corinthians 15, and then I think it's going to be (59:29) time for us to draw this to a close. (59:32) For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be (59:38) changed. (59:39) For the perishable, this is the flesh that carries the aging and the dementia and (59:46) the pain and the agony and the suffering of this life, for the perishable must (59:50) clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

(59:55) When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with (1:00:00) the mortality, then the saying that is written will come true. (1:00:03) Death has been swallowed up into victory. (1:00:06) Where, O death, is your sting? (1:00:11) And so, that is why what I'd like to do next time in our webinar, it will be (1:00:20) just the week before Easter, because there is such a close tie between (1:00:25) suffering and the resurrection of Christ that we're going to spend a couple (1:00:30) weeks, a couple sessions on the resurrection, the claims of Jesus and the (1:00:35) resurrection, and we'll point you to the 40 articles I wrote around the (1:00:42) resurrection for the 40 days after the resurrection that lead up to the (1:00:48) ascension of Christ.

(1:00:51) Okay, Mark, that's it from this side over to you. (1:00:58) All right. (1:00:59) I'll just make a couple of quick comments, and then if you could close (1:01:01) our time, Dr. (1:01:03) Tackett, that would be awesome.

(1:01:05) Just two things. (1:01:06) We will be sending out the recording link to the live stream recording. (1:01:12) Along with that will be the slides.

(1:01:15) If you have missed any previous webinars or live stream events, you can see that (1:01:21) on the website, www.delltackett.com forward slash webinars dash two, and I'll (1:01:31) include that in a follow-up email following our time tonight. (1:01:35) Thanks everyone for being here. (1:01:37) I know it's a sacrifice to take out time of your schedule, but really (1:01:42) appreciate your attendance here tonight.

(1:01:44) Dr. (1:01:44) Tackett? (1:01:46) Yes. (1:01:47) Father, thank you again for your word, for revealing yourself to us. (1:01:53) Lord, even for this book job that has been so difficult and yet what a (1:01:58) precious tool it is for us to understand who you are and who we are, and to (1:02:05) remind ourselves who we are, that when we suffer and we have a tendency to begin (1:02:11) to complain and complain against you and complain against others, that father, (1:02:18) we might instead glorify you in the midst of our sufferings and so prove to (1:02:25) others who you are and who we are.

(1:02:28) Lord, I pray for each of these people. (1:02:30) No doubt there is suffering that exists in just the numbers that are here. (1:02:35) And Lord, that you would begin to open their eyes and ears, draw them closer (1:02:40) and closer to you, that father, let me give you glory in the midst (1:02:44) even of their sufferings.

(1:02:47) All for your glory, not for ours at all. (1:02:50) In Jesus name. (1:02:51) Amen.

(1:02:52) Thank you for being with us here tonight. (1:02:56) Thank you. (1:02:57) I'll stay on just a little bit longer.

(1:02:58) If you've got a question you'd like to include, you can do that in the chat. (1:03:02) Uh, but we'll see.