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A PROCESS THEODICY - AN ALTERNATIVE

Final Seminar Paper
December 30, 1982
Jo Alexander
# A Process Theodicy—An Alternative

## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I  Historical Review of Christian Theodicy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. St. Augustine(A.D. 354-430)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Irenaeus(A.D. 130-202)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II A Process Theodicy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Pastoral Counseling</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Process Theodicy--An Alternative

Introduction

Why is there so much suffering in the world? If there is a God who is perfect in goodness and power, why do the righteous suffer along with the unrighteous? Would an all-powerful, all-loving and caring God allow or cause floods, earthquakes, wars and famines. Would He permit innocent little children to suffer?

Throughout the Judaeo-Christian age, Mankind has been searching for a theodicy that will more adequately and consistently defend the righteousness of God when there is obviously so much suffering and evil in the world. Western Christianity, especially, has projected the notion of a God who is perfect in goodness, and unlimited in power, and so far no adequate justification has been developed.

The central point of this problem is the conception or definition of the nature of power—in particular, the nature of the divine power. Process theology, which has its foundation in the philosophical and theological thought of Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne, has bravely ventured forth in reformulating an alternative notion of the power that has been attributed to God.

Process theology's notion of divine power is one of persuasive love. This is quite different from the coercive power that other, more popular theodicies formulated.
Despots, kings, dictators and imperialists were prevalent during the time that the early church fathers were developing their doctrines. Many church fathers gave to God the attributes associated with these authoritative figures. The notions of Whitehead, Hartshorne, and other Process theologians of divine power is that of a persuasive (not coercive), tender, caring God whose power is found in His persuasive love. This persuasive God is luring all the Cosmos towards a more complex and higher state of ordered intensity—towards greater value and perfection.

Process theologians do not attempt to solve the problem of evil and suffering in the world by claiming that there is no "genuine evil," as various theologies do, but say that suffering and evil do exist. However, they (Process theologians) maintain that God not only does not cause all suffering, but that He can not prevent it. God is responsible for evil and suffering, but He is not indictable for it. God's omnipotence is qualified.

In this paper I will explore the problems of reconciling an all-good, all-powerful God with the existence of suffering and evil, and how Process theology offers a theodicy that is more consistent with the Christian faith of a loving and caring Deity of limited omnipotence. To give more clarity to the process theodicy, and to keep the problem in balance, I will do an historical review of the theodicies as formulated by St. Augustine in the fifth century, and of Irenaeus of the second century. I will then proceed to the theodicy based on Process theology. Special emphasis will be put on developing a broad and in-depth meaning of power. There is good reason for this. Even with
an all-loving God, there is no problem about evil and suffering until God is described in unqualified, omnipotent terms. Therefore, I feel it necessary to focus a major portion of this paper on the nature of power.

After discussing the process theodicy, I want to articulate how I feel that this alternative Christian view is of special value, and offers a new resource in a field of service that I am involved in—Pastoral Counseling.

Part I

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF CHRISTIAN THEODICIES

In the review of historical Christian theology, it is of interest that the earlier Christian writings of Irenaeus correlate more closely with the doctrines of contemporary Christian theology as depicted by Process theology than do the later writings of St. Augustine. Even though Augustine's theodicy was developed several centuries later than that of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, I wish to present it first. One reason is because of the profound and lasting influence that St. Augustine's doctrines have had on western Christian thought. Secondly, Augustine's theodicy is much more in contrast to Process Theology's views than is that of Irenaeus.

A. ST. AUGUSTINE (A.D. 354-430)

The aspects of Augustine's theology that I feel are appropriate and relevant to this discussion are his positions on Man's nature when he was created, the origins of evil, Man's free will, and the nature of God's power. According to Augustine,
Man was created perfect, but because of the misuse of his free will, Man lost his perfection, fell from grace, and was condemned to a life of sin and guilt. Not only did the first Man fall from grace, but all of Mankind inherited the sin and guilt of these first parents.

Augustine often stressed God's unlimited power and all-goodness. This is precisely where Augustine had problems articulating a consistent theodicy. If God was both all-powerful and all-goodness, why was there so much evil and suffering? Augustine yearned to bestow both unlimited power and perfect goodness to his notion of God, and he attempted to answer the problem of evil and suffering in such a way that God's omnipotence would be safeguarded. He maintained that Man's misuse of his free will is what causes evil, and that although God created free will, He (God) is not responsible for its negative product—evil. As David Ray Griffin points out in his book, God, Power and Evil: A Process Theodicy, Augustine goes further in his defense of God's goodness and non-responsibility for evil by saying that God "is justified in inflicting evil as a punishment for sin." 1

Many of Augustine's arguments, that sin and suffering were caused only by Man's evil willing, are not compatible with other of his writings where he declares God's unlimited power. In his book, Griffin quotes the following statement by Augustine:
The Almighty sets in motion even in the innermost hearts of men the movement of their will, so that He does through their agency whatsoever He wishes to perform through them....God works in the hearts of men to incline their wills whithersoever He wills, whether to do good deeds according to His mercy, or to evil after their own desserts.  

If St. Augustine truly believes this, how can he maintain that Man has sinned? If Man has not willed freely, how can it be said that he/she is performing a sin? (In the remainder of this paper, when I use masculine or feminine pronouns it is to be understood that I mean to be genderless.) It appears that Augustine wants to proclaim the nature of God's power as unlimited in all things. In the above quotation he (Augustine) implies quite clearly that Man is not making free choices, and although God has created free wills, He is still controlling them. Augustine had earlier stated that the only true sin comes from Man's evil willing. The question arises: Can Man will not to act? It does not seem justifiable to say that Man is responsible for the evil or suffering that her will incurs if she is not willing freely. In this position, Augustine unwittingly gives God the responsibility for sin.
This Augustinian view of God's omnipotence impels one to wonder about God's perfect goodness, especially since Augustine says that all Man would not be saved from damnation, and that those who would be saved are entirely dependent upon God's grace. Can a just and good God unilaterally or randomly select from the mass of Mankind those He wishes to save, desert, or leave to damnation? To answer this dilemma (inadequately) Augustine drew upon the doctrine of original sin. He maintained that all Mankind has sinned and therefore deserves punishment. Adam and Eve were created perfect, and with their free will chose to sin. As a result of this, all Mankind, as children of these first parents has inherited this sin and is responsible for it. Therefore, since all Man deserves punishment, God is showing His mercy and goodness by electing to save even a few of them. He is therefore merciful and good in saving some, and just in punishing the rest. 

In further development of His theodicy in the defense of God, Augustine denied that there is "genuine evil" in the world. He maintained that there is nothing in nature that is intrinsically bad or evil. Elements in nature that may cause suffering are not evil in themselves, but are good in their nature. Even if these elements (irrational elements) cause us suffering they are of value to the universe as a whole--contributing grace and beauty. Therefore, this can not be considered a "genuine evil." Augustine also maintained that the suffering that is inflicted upon us by the rational realm (human) is not "genuine evil." Since all Man has sinned, this suffering is inflicted upon us as a punishment for past sins. Another Augustinian statement quoted
by Griffin shows how Augustine saw this suffering on the human level as justified:

Nor can any other nature which is less than divine be hurt unjustly. No doubt some people by sinning do hurt unjustly. Their will to harm is counted against them, but the power by which they are permitted to do the harm comes only from God, who knows, though they do not, what these ought to suffer whom he permits them to harm. 4

To summarize Augustine's free will defense of reconciling sin and suffering with an omnipotent and just God, one can say that his view is that there is only one thing in the universe that is a "genuine evil" and that is the sin that is brought about by Man's misuse of his free will. All sufferings that come from evils are apparent evils because they are justified. They are either just punishments for past sins, or they contribute to the whole of the universe.

Augustine's approach to the problem of evil differs substantially from that of Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, and an earlier church father, who wrote his doctrines in the second century. Although he did not work out a systematic theodicy, his writings were later expanded by a 19th century Protestant theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher.

B. IRENAEUS (A.D. 130-202)

The writings of Irenaeus did not have the impact and lasting
influence on Western Christianity as did those of Augustine. Nonetheless, I feel it important to bring them into this discussion because his doctrines on the problem of evil were being formulated during the earliest days of Christian thought. Secondly, while the doctrines of Augustine (a Latin father) were profoundly influential on the very foundation of Western Christianity, the doctrines of Irenaeus (a Greek-speaking father) have continued to this day to have a firm foothold in the Eastern Orthodox Church. 5

The theme of Irenaeus that is most in contrast to Augustine, and which has an important bearing on his approach to the problem of evil, is found in his notion of the nature of Man as he was created by God. Where Augustine and other traditional theologians maintained that Man was created perfect, but then fell into sin and guilt because of his evil willing, Irenaeus offers another viewpoint. He asserted that Man was created imperfect or immature, and through a process of spiritual and moral growth is developing toward God's aim for him—a state of perfection.

Irenaeus made a distinction between the "image" of God and the "likeness" of God. He said that Man was created in the "image" of God. By this he meant that Man was created with intelligence, was a responsible and morally free being, and was capable of fellowship with God. He (Man) is endowed with the potential to respond to God, and to grow spiritually toward the "likeness" or perfection of God. The "image" of God, then, (according to Irenaeus' definition) is Man's nature, and his potential to grow toward perfection. "Likeness" of God
represents the more perfected state of Man's personal life as he matures and is nourished by the Holy Spirit.

In answer to those who question: if God is omnipotent, why did He not create Man perfect from the beginning?, Irenaeus rested his defense on the following grounds. Since Man was created as an immature being, he was unable to receive the higher gifts of grace and perfection. Irenaeus went on to say that created things were inferior to the creator. The created things are younger, childlike, and immature. In an attempt to give support to this argument, Irenaeus used an analogy and it is quoted in John Hick's book, *Evil and the God of Love*, as follows:

But created things must be inferior to Him who created them, from the very fact of their later origin; for it was not possible for things recently created to have been uncreated. But inasmuch as they are not uncreated, for this very reason they come short of the perfect. Because as these things are of a later date, so are they unaccustomed to, and unexercised in, perfect discipline. For as it is certainly in the power of a mother to give strong food to her infant (but she does not do so), as the child is not yet able to receive more substantial nourishment; so also it was possible for God himself to have made man perfect from the first, but man could not receive this (perfection) being as yet an infant.
Unlike Augustine, Irenaeus did not see the plight of Man in his state of imperfection as caused by Man's own free willing, or deliberately going against God's plan. Irenaeus interprets it as something that happened in the very early history of Man, and was caused by his immaturity and inability to receive the grace of God. He felt that this state of being called for compassion rather than condemnation. It was not a rebellious crime laden with sin and guilt to be passed on to all Mankind. Neither did Irenaeus consider the suffering and evil in the world as punishment for Man's sin—rather he viewed the world as a place mixed with good and evil, where Man could freely choose and grow into the "likeness" of God. As for the need for the existence of evil, and to excuse God from its responsibility, or at least His being indictable for it, Irenaeus said that is was necessary for evil to be present in the world so that Man could learn between the contrast of it and good. Man needs to experience both good and evil, and thereby learn to choose between them—freely choosing, and constantly growing toward perfection.  

Part II

A PROCESS THEODICY

A process theodicy projects a more compatible, and consistent solution than that of Augustine, and a more developed system than that of Irenaeus. The word "process" is of utmost importance. Process thought rests on the premise that the universe and all that is in it, is in process. God, humans, and all sub-human elements
are in the process of becoming. God is changing as he suffers the failings, and rejoices in the triumphs of His universe. He responds, and is changed, by the process of His creation.

The definition of power, and how it relates to God, is fundamental to process theology's answer to the problem of suffering. In its notion of a rejoicing, suffering, and changing God, process theology implies a close relationship of loving care and involvement between God and His creation. He is not the unmoved mover of Aristotle and Aquinas. Some criticisms of the notion of a suffering and changing God are that it shows helplessness, weakness, and changeability—a Deity that does not justify worship. In our customary and popular concept, the terms helplessness and changeability imply a tone of weakness—certainly not worship.

In defense of this criticism, and to give more dimension to the concept of power, a brief discussion of the deeper and broader meanings of the word "power" will be helpful. This discussion will involve our popular unilateral conception of power, and how many of the early church fathers applied its coercive overtones to their notion of God. Then I will go into process theology's alternative conception of persuasive power (a relational, two directional power) whose very strength is based on love.

As Bernard Loomer notes in an article, "Two Conceptions of Power," Webster's Dictionary gives one definition of power as the ability to effect change, or the ability to undergo change or influence. Unfortunately, our traditional notion of power
has taken in only one aspect of this definition, and that is the ability to effect change. Therefore, life and thought in the Western world has been dominated by the concept of power as a controlling, one directional, manipulative force. We often judge the value of persons, groups or institutions by how much power they have. This unilateral, and limited conception of power has helped create the notion of the all-powerful, unmoved God that many traditional theologists attributed to the Deity. So often divine power has been depicted as a coercive power. As stated earlier, during the early days of Christianity, when the Church fathers were formulating their notions about the nature of God, they patterned God after the images of the authoritative kings, tyrants and despots of their times. As Whitehead said, "The church gave unto God the attributes which belonged exclusively to Caesar." 10 This definition of an all-powerful God has had a lasting and profound influence on the Western Christian church and, therefore, Western civilization. This image of a coercive, omnipotent God has created many unanswered questions concerning the problems of suffering and evil.

Process theology moves away from this controlling, uninvolved image of God to the notion of a loving God who cares for and is actively involved in the process of His creation. This view emphasizes a persuasive loving God, not one who controls or is able to control all details of the Cosmos. The idea that all the actual realities in the universe are self-determinate
(as process theologians maintain) implies that Man has free will, and is in a relational companionship with God in the creative advancement of the universe. In order for there to be a relational companionship between God and His Cosmos [presupposes that God is changeable--not only does He have the capacity to effect change, but He also has a deep dimension in His capacity to undergo change.

To give more understanding to what I mean by being in relational companionship with God, it will be helpful at this time to discuss two aspects of God's nature as formulated by Alfred North Whitehead, and further expanded upon by Charles Hartsorne. The two aspects of God's nature as defined by Whitehead, and which are relevant to this discussion, are His (God's) Primordial and Consequent Aspects (the latter will be discussed later in this paper). The Primordial Aspect furnishes the element of order which is associated with God. This element of order and vision lures all actuality toward a continuing creative advance of higher and higher modes of ordered intensity. God's unlimited wealth of ideal forms, pure possibilities, and potentials rest in this Primordial Aspect. It (Primordial) is that principle that brings order out of the complexity of possibilities--bringing about a perfect unity. It provides a stabilizing effect on the many forms that transform and unite with other progressing forms. The Primordial nature saves the world from falling into complete chaos. It enables the universe to make a creative, higher ordered advance forward.
Process theology emphasizes two evils—disorder, and monotony (a state of static harmony, not venturing out into novelty). God's primordial nature lures the Cosmos from the evil of monotony if it chooses to be led. Whitehead labels this lure for creative advancement toward Beauty as the "initial aim." Each occasion or actuality receives from God an "initial" persuasion to move toward transforming and uniting with other occasions into even higher or richer modes of order; but within the context of what will be the best for the particular actuality at a particular time. 11 As Griffin paraphrases Whitehead's statement, the "subjective aim" is the aim which the subject actually chooses, and hence that possibility which it in fact actualizes. 12 If the subject is highly conscious of the potentials of Beauty, and chooses as close to the "initial aim," which is offered by God, the possibility of drifting into disorder or becoming monotonous in a stagnant harmony is diminished.

Whitehead is explicit in stating that this "initial aim" is not forced upon the subject. The Cosmos is still determining how it will approach, receive, and respond to this "initial aim." The completion and transformation of it, no matter what the results, are determined by the subject. If the subject fails in the actualization of the "initial aim" in such a way that there is no creative advancement into novelty, then the evils of disorder or monotony occur.
Whitehead maintains that in this view of the universe in its process of Becoming, as it chooses between the multitude of eternal forms, seeking perfect unity prevents the Cosmos from resting in a static condition. No actuality can be static; it either advances or becomes more trivial than it could have been. It drifts into false harmony, thus falling into the evil of monotony. However, stepping outside this state of harmony also incurs risks.\textsuperscript{13} The adventure towards an ordered unity of greater complexity necessitates being open to more novelty. Some of these forms of novelty may clash, causing the subject to experience conflicts and suffering. In this context, process theologians say that God, in luring the Cosmos into greater novelty, is responsible for evil and suffering. He is responsible but not indictable. However, without the adventure into novelty, there is the danger of being cemented in "low grades of harmony." To tenaciously hold on to something that could be realized in a fuller and richer mode is actually turning away from the good, \textsuperscript{14} and produces only trivial occasions.

Again I repeat that Process Theology maintains that God does not force these "lures" toward creative advancement, nor can He prevent the universe from sometimes slipping into chaos, or standing in a state of trivial harmony.\textsuperscript{15}

The question then arises as to whether God is powerless. Did He not have the power to create a perfect world—a world where there would be no risks of falling into disorder, or a world that would not be in danger of resting in a static harmony—eventually dissolving into nothing? A perfect world, according to Process Theology, would be merely an extension of the Creator.
What would a world without creative self-determinant subjects be like? Hardly a world at all. Process theologians say it is metaphysically impossible to create a non-evolving, perfect world. As John F. Haught says in his book, *Nature and Purpose*:

> The only conceivable world that would be compatible with the notion of God is one in which there is a possibility of creative advance, or adventure with its inevitable risk of discord. 16

This brings me back to the consequent aspect or nature of God. As an answer to the question of God's power, Process Theology depicts a God whose power is persuasive love—giving freedom to the Cosmos. This power is stronger than coercive power. In the consequent aspect of God, He tenderly watches over the Cosmos as He "lures" it toward its divine purpose. God rejoices in the universe's creative advance, or suffers with its falling away from His "initial aim" for it. God is not the unmoved mover. He is involved in the world, and has woven His physical feelings into the universe, and draws all the suffering, failings, joys, and triumphs into His very being. God is sharing, and being shared, in the painful and joyful process of His creation.
There is a limitation to the degree of rightness or goodness that God can achieve at any particular time or occasion. He shares with each Occasion its actual "state of being," meeting it where it is and gently persuading it with tender loving care as far as it has the capacity to advance. 17 This idea is relevant to Irenaeus' claim that Man in his immature state is able to receive only a limited amount of grace at one time.

To give more clarity to the nature of the power found in the changing (creating and being created), and suffering aspects of God's consequent nature, it will be useful to explore an article that was printed in the quarterly, Process Studies. The article, "Two Conceptions of Power," was written by Bernard Loomer. He discusses the one directional (unilateral) meaning of power. He then goes into his conception of relational power, and that is the power that is relevant to this paper. This type of power is more compatible with the notion of a loving God than is the coercive unilateral power. Hartshorne says that this relational type power is innate to process modes of thought.

In relational power, there is the capacity to undergo an effect, as well as a capacity to cause an effect. Loomer uses the analogy of the actor and the audience being in a state of relational power--with the audience helping to create the actor. To give power to someone who speaks (the actor), someone must listen (the audience), and from this interplay of interwoven influences, the "concrete drama" emerges. The drama can be
considered a higher value of intensity than the separate components of speaking and listening. This concrete drama is emergent from the relationship of the actor and audience.

Loomer says that an "individual begins life as an effect produced by the many others in the world of his immediate past." However, this individual is not merely a sum of these past effects, nor does he remain in this "state of being." He helps to create his subjective self by deciding how to utilize the various effects and influences he has received. An individual's "subjective aim" (Whitehead's term) assures freedom. This "subjective aim" combined with the individual's relationships with other subjects determines the individual. This concrete self then joins with other concrete selves in a more complex system--advancing into a creative future.

To insure that the greatest amount of qualitative energy will emerge from a relationship, those involved must be open to one another. If one is open to another it frees the other to receive, as well as freeing oneself to receive from the relationship. When this happens an atmosphere of mutual trust emerges. This type of relationship requires patience, and a great deal of strength (power).

Loomer points out that with unilateral or coercive power it is feasible to have a "fairly ordered society." However, the price we have to pay for this ordered society is the suppression of much human freedom and values. If we choose to transcend
this suppressed order (or what Whitehead would call Monotony) we must be prepared to experience confusion and clashes in the society. This, like Whitehead's adventure into novelty, runs the risks of suffering and agony. The capacity to endure this suffering, and to continue with creative open relationships, requires an abundance of strength, patience, and relational power. 19 This relational power is the essence of the power found in Whitehead's notion of God's consequent nature. In opening Himself to His creation--to suffer, rejoice and be changed--God is making it possible for the Cosmos to be open to Him, and to be effected by His primordial and consequent natures.

Part III
PASTORAL COUNSELING

This notion of a God whose power is persuasive love, and is involved with His creation as He "lures" in a process toward creative advancement, has provided me with improved tools and resources for a special concern of mine, Pastoral Counseling. While studying at St. Elizabeths Mental Hospital, I found that some of the causes of suffering by the patients was rooted in their conception of God. These conceptions often centered around the notion of a coercive God of unilateral power, who caused or allowed things to happen to him (the patient). Many times patients concluded that they must be bad, because a loving all-powerful God wouldn't cause a good person to suffer.
What alienation this can cause. With their view of God, and their relationship to him, the patient (or any ordinary person) has little expectation of being able to reach into her inner being, and to start putting her life back into functional order, enabling her to cope with the outside world.

The image of a tender loving God, urging the patient or client into a process of creative adventure should foster a more hopeful attitude. If the counselor and the patient can view the patient's situation as an "occasion" in process, and not a static dead end, there is always the possibility of hope. If the counselor keeps in mind that the patient is in process (even as the patient sits in her office), the tendency to analyze or put labels on the patient is greatly diminished. Not only are these labels often incorrect, but they have a detrimental effect on the patient's emotional state. Hope in its more creative form can be an energizing element for the patient. The possibility of seeing herself cured or advancing into a more stable emotional condition gives added strength and courage.

To see or conceive of God as a tender loving Deity, who suffers with creation, while offering, but not forcing one to partake of the multiple choices or ideals, helps keep the integrity and freedom of the individual intact. A "loving tenderness" is good medicine or cure for many negative and emotional problems.
Unfortunately, the word tenderness doesn't seem to correlate with the idea of power or strength. Tenderness so often projects images of softness, weakness, sentimentality, or femininity—not the notion of an all-powerful, masculine God that resides in the patient's psyche.

To present tenderness as a compatible and consistent aspect of the notion of power, as depicted by process theologians, an exercise in semantics will be helpful. Let's explore various definitions of the words "tend" and "tender" from which the word tenderness originates. The following definitions are an abstraction from the numerous meanings found in the American College Dictionary.

One definition of tend is "to look after, watch over and care for, minister to or wait on with service." Several definitions for tender certainly apply to the consequent nature of the notion of God that Whitehead and other process thinkers describe. In various passages tender is listed as "sympathetic, easily touched, compassionate, and acutely or painfully sensitive." Other meanings say tender is to "present formally for acceptance," or "one who tends to or takes charge of something." These definitions are very compatible with the notion of strength or power.

To the deeply disturbed person coming for pastoral counseling, much comfort, acceptance, and hope can be obtained by viewing one's God within the context of the above definitions of tenderness.
The main thing that many of the patients at St. Elizabeths were seeking was to be accepted, understood, and loved.

Two ideas of Process Theology—the notion of a persuasive, tender, caring God, and the view of the universe (in this case the patient's emotional state) in process—give pastoral counseling a more positive dimension. What a valuable tool for the counselor to view the patient's illness as part of a process instead of a state of fixity. If the counselor is able to give the client insight into viewing herself as "in a state of temporary unstableness," rather than labeling her with a negative personality trait which seems to stick, there is more of a possibility for the client to have hope. It is crucial for the patient to realize that all of humanity goes through these same processes—some with lesser or greater degrees of suffering—and that she does have some degree of self-determinacy.

Conclusion

In presenting this process theodicy, no claim is made that it represents an absolute answer to the problem of suffering and evil. Rather, it is presented as another Christian view to give a more consistent and adequate answer to the problem. The concept of a God whose power is based on persuasive love, One who has limited power as far as controlling all details of the Cosmos, and One who is in process and changing with the
Universe, is in sharp contrast to many of the more traditional and popular western Christian notions of God. Some process thinkers maintain that God's nature is best revealed to Man through the life of Jesus of Nazareth. 21 A fundamental message of Jesus was to love one another. Even Jesus could not prevent all suffering—not even his own.

In Process Theology Man's free will or self determinacy is declared in the notion of the "subjective aim." Augustine also proclaimed Man's free will; however, in his desire to claim God's unqualified omnipotence in every detail, sometimes his arguments leave the concept of the free will in question—an inconsistency. In Process Theology, the position that evil exists and is a metaphysical necessity in an evolving Cosmos, is more compatible and consistent with the notion of an all-good God. It seems a more adequate answer to the problem than Augustine's views that evil was either a punishment for past sins, or that no "genuine evil" really exists.

This process theodicy is another Christian approach, as all the others are. Each approach has its merits, adding greater dimension to the notion of God, His power, and His all-goodness. However, I feel that Process Theology's notion of a loving, caring God, One who is compassionate and non-coercive, and One whose fundamental aim for all the Universe is to experience higher grades of enjoyment, answers more adequately and consistently the problem of evil and suffering.
FOOTNOTES


2 Ibid., p. 64.

3 Ibid., p. 58.

4 Ibid., pp. 69-70.


6 Ibid., pp. 212-214.

7 Ibid., p. 212.

8 Ibid., pp. 214-215.


12 Griffin, God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy, p. 280.


14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., p. 104.

16 Ibid., pp. 66-67.

17 Wilmont, Whitehead and God, p. 6.


19 Ibid., pp. 5-32.


21 Griffin, God, Power, and Evil: A Process Theodicy, p. 27.
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