

Summer RUF-Study Guide #3

Chapter 5- Parasite

1-Plantinga argues that evil will always appear in tandem with goodness... it's never solely on its own. *What are some examples of this?*

2- Why aren't their just saints and demons? How do you make sense of the goodness and wickedness in the world and in you?

3- To illustrate the complexities and ironies of sin, Plantinga breaks down the traditional deadly sin of pride.

-Let's see if we can hash this out. Why is pride evil?

-Why, culturally speaking, do we have a hard time calling pride sin?

-Does the reason someone is "proud" change whether or not it's evil?

-What if it stems from insecurity?

-What if stems from some great accomplishment? Like Winston Churchill?

-Do our motives and reasons for pride excuse it?

-What does this discussion of the complexity of pride illustrate about sin?

4-Let's rehash this one again, why is sin always abnormal, even if it's familiar?

-Biblically speaking, why is sin always referred to in relation to the good that it is against? (Ex. Anti-righteousness, injustice, godless, etc.)

-How is sin an intruder, the antagonist and problem of the biblical story?

-How does sin, and evil for that matter, play off of what is good and righteous?

5-How is sin a parasite?

-How does seeing sin as a parasite help make sense of why good and evil are often found growing together? (In other words, how does this help us understand the complexity of goodness and evil in a person?)

-How does this make sense of why good people do bad things and why bad people do good things?

-Can we really say that sin is like a virus if people are actually drawn to sin and do so willingly?

-How does the gospel heal our sin?

6-What are some takeaways from this chapter? What questions do you still have about it?

Chapter 6- Masquerade

1- Why did Plantinga begin this chapter with a brief introduction to psychopaths?

-What point was he trying to illustrate?

2- Why is it often so hard to distinguish good from evil?

-Why must evil do to prevail?

-how are we to evaluate if something is good or evil then?

3-Plantinga's originally wrote his book in the mid-90's. *How well do you think his evaluation of culture then fits our cultural milieu today?*

-Do you think, culturally speaking, we still struggle with making morality judgements?

-What is our culture's standard for morality?

-What are some examples of how our culture is talking about morality? What are some areas where it's taboo to speak about right or wrong?

4-Take a look at the final paragraph on p. 103. Why do different groups of people have different blind spots, different sins, that they choose to acknowledge or ignore?

-Where do you find yourself in all of this? What "sins" do you find it easy to talk about?

Which ones are harder for you?

5-How do we self-deceive to make our "worldviews" fit with the raw data of the world?

-What is self-deception?

-How in our self-deception, do we masquerade evil as good?

-How in our self-deception, do we make God in our own image?

-Why do we minimize sin in ourselves and highlight it in others?

-How do we combat this?

-How do we let God, in his fullness, combat and challenge us?

-Plantinga suggests self-suspicion may be a good place to start. What do you think this means?

6- What are some big takeaways from these two chapters that you want to think more deeply about?