



Neighborly Apologetics

The Problem of Evil - Part I

The Royal Law

James ...fulfill **the Royal Law** according to the scripture... **love your neighbor** as yourself... -James 2:8

Paul For the whole law is fulfilled in one word... **love your neighbor** as yourself. -Gal 5:14

For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this one word:
... **love your neighbor** as yourself. -Romans 13:9

Jesus Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: **Love your neighbor** as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commands. -Matt 22:37-40

The Royal Law

Love your neighbor

Love a steadfast, sacrificial zeal that seeks the true good of another

Neighbor 'plosion' - one who lives near

a steadfast, sacrificial zeal that seeks the true good of the one who **providentially** lives near you

Do we see our neighbor this way?



The Royal Law
Love your neighbor

God has entrusted the primary work
of the Kingdom to the common
Christian family



This is ground zero in the work of the Kingdom

We will build real relationships with those providentially in our Jerusalem, through prayer and action, with grace and wisdom and truth, being attractively winsome, tearing down walls, building up trust, **doing the work of the Kingdom.**

memory verse I

“...but in your hearts **honor Christ** the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to *make a defense*** to anyone **who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it with **gentleness and respect.**” -1 Peter 3:15

“Apologia”

memory verse 2

Conduct yourselves with **wisdom** toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. **Let your speech always be with grace**, as though **seasoned with salt**, so that you **might know how to respond to each person**. -Colossians 4:5-6

Godly wisdom is not primarily for yourself, but for the shalom of another

wisdom and discernment

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wisdom and discernment

relationships

believer

non-believer

biblical worldview

no biblical worldview

open to God

closed to God

Truth Project

Engagement Project

Engagement Project

wisdom and discernment

relationships

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“Ken was wise to know that he could only share truth as deep as our relationship could stand” Rosaria Butterfield

memory verse 3

The Lord's servant must **gently** instruct his opponents...“**in the hope that God will grant them repentance** leading them to a knowledge of the **truth**, and that they will **come to their senses** and escape from the **trap of the devil**, who has taken them **captive** to do his will.” -2 Timothy 2:24-26

Academic Apologetics

vs.

Neighborly Apologetics

↑
we need this

↑
to do this

but we can't lead with this

we must lead with significant relationships

**Neighborly Apologetic
Categories:**

- 1. Evil and Suffering*
 - 2. Absolute Truth and Relativism*
 - 3. “Only One Way” and Religious Pluralism*
 - 4. Faith and Reason*
 - 5. Free Will and Sovereignty*
 - 6. God’s Existence and Nature*
 - 7. Goodness of Man, Judgment and Hell*
 - 8. Hypocrisy and Christian Crimes of the Past*
 - 9. The Claims of Jesus and the Resurrection*
 - 10. Miracles*
 - 11. Science and Evolution*
 - 12. The Veracity of the Bible and “Contradictions”*
- Plus: Burning Issues of our Day*

Evil and Suffering

The problem of evil and suffering has three forms:

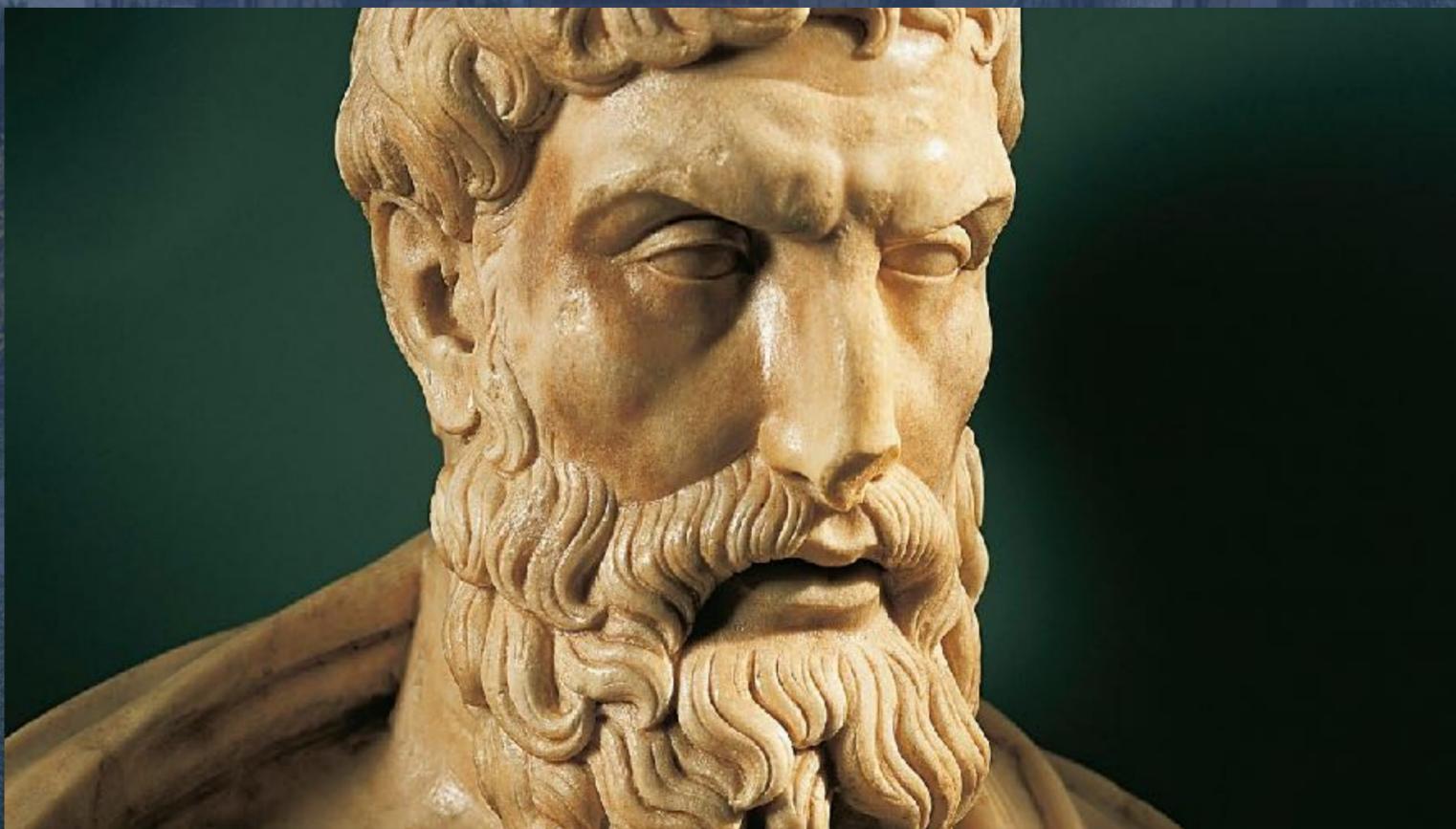
1. The logical argument:

If God were omnipotent and omniscient, He could prevent evil;

If He were truly good, He would want to prevent evil;

Therefore, since evil exists,

God cannot exist or He isn't omnipotent, omniscient, and good.



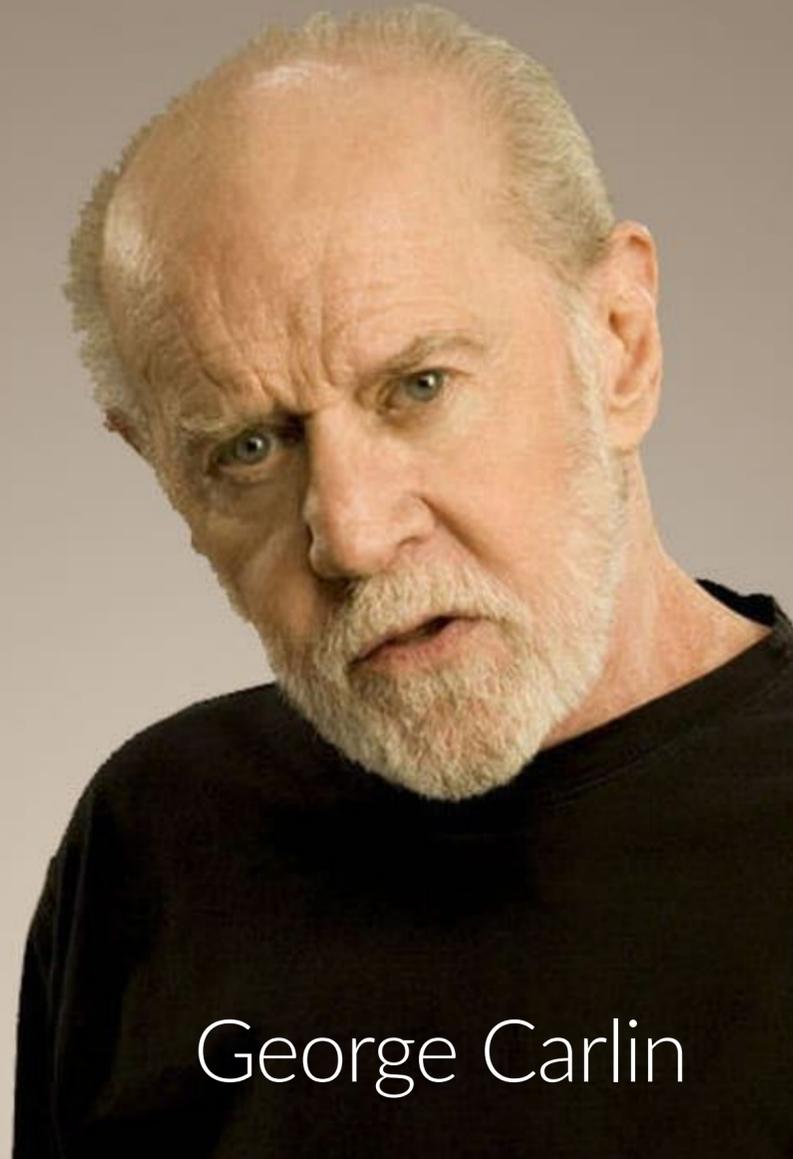
Epicurus, 341-270 BC

Evil and Suffering

The world is full of suffering has three forms:

1. T

2. T



George Carlin

“Something is wrong here. War, disease, death, destruction, hunger, filth, poverty, torture, crime, corruption, and the Ice Capades. Something is definitely wrong. This is not good work. If this is the best God can do, I am not impressed. Results like these do not belong on the resume of a Supreme Being.”

Evil and Suffering

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2. The evidential argument:

Because there is so much horrific evil everywhere in the world, and there is no evidence of a God who cares, it is hard to believe God exists.

3. The personal argument:

Where was God? He could have stopped the evil and suffering! But He didn't and so I hate Him; I'm angry at Him; I reject Him

wisdom and discernment

relationships

believer

non-believer

biblical worldview

no biblical worldview

open to God

closed to God

Evil and Suffering

begins with sympathy, empathy, asking questions about the circumstances and thinking behind the personal worldview

Evil and Suffering

preparing ourselves first

how do we look at evil and suffering...
from a Biblical Worldview

1. we live in a fallen world and man has a fallen nature

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moral evil

...the creation waits in eager expectation... for the creation was subjected to frustration... in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay... the whole creation has been groaning...up to the present time...we ourselves, groan inwardly...

-Romans 8:20-23

natural evil



Evil and Suffering

preparing ourselves first

how do we look at evil and suffering...
from a Biblical Worldview

1. we live in a fallen world and man has a fallen nature
2. God is righteous, holy, just, merciful, compassionate, loving and good, always

Evil and Suffering

Then Job replied to the Lord:

I know that You can do anything
and no plan of Yours can be thwarted.

You asked, “Who is this who conceals My counsel with ignorance?”

Surely I spoke about things I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me to know.

You said, “Listen now, and I will speak.
When I question you, you will inform Me.”

I had heard rumors about You,
but now my eyes have seen You.

Therefore I take back my words
and repent in dust and ashes.

-Job 42:1-6

1. we live

2. God is

d, always

Evil and Suffering

preparing ourselves first

how do we look at evil and suffering...
from a Biblical Worldview

1. we live in a fallen world and man has a fallen nature
2. God is righteous, holy, just, merciful, compassionate, loving and good, always
3. God will, in His proper time, restore all things and there will be no more evil

Evil and Suffering

preparing ourselves first

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

-Romans 5:1-5

Evil and Suffering

a Biblical Worldview gives us a solid basis to answer
the Problem of Evil and Suffering

1. What is evil?

2. Where does evil come from?

3. What is the solution for evil and suffering?

Evil and Suffering

a Biblical Worldview gives us a solid basis to answer
the Problem of Evil and Suffering

1. What is evil?

evil is anything that is contrary to God's design and order

2. Where does evil come from?

evil results from rebelling against God's design and order

3. What is the solution for evil and suffering?

Christ's atonement; God's justice and restoration of all things

Evil and Suffering

the dilemma of the non-biblical worldview

1. What is evil?

Dr. William Provine: no ultimate foundation for ethics

In Naturalism, all actions have to be amoral

In 2023 Western Civilization, evil is defined by an amalgamation of homo deus and might makes right and a new worldview; anything that denies the homo deus divinity

Evil and Suffering

the dilemma of the non-biblical worldview

2. Where does evil come from?

not from man, for he is basically good or amoral

Maslow and Carl Rogers: social institutions

In 2023 Western Civilization, evil comes from that which is “systemic” rather than personal “sin”; from those who promote “old” views of human sexuality or sin

Evil and Suffering

the dilemma of the non-biblical worldview

3. What is the solution for evil and suffering

Maslow: getting in touch with your real inner self

Since evil comes from social institutions, all efforts to solve “evil” and “suffering” are focused on social institutional reform or replacement

In 2023 Western Civilization, the solution is also increasingly viewed as cancelling, silencing, marginalizing those who hold or speak “old” ethical notions

Evil and Suffering

a Biblical Worldview gives us a solid basis to answer
the Problem of Evil and Suffering

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

-Ephesians 6:12-13

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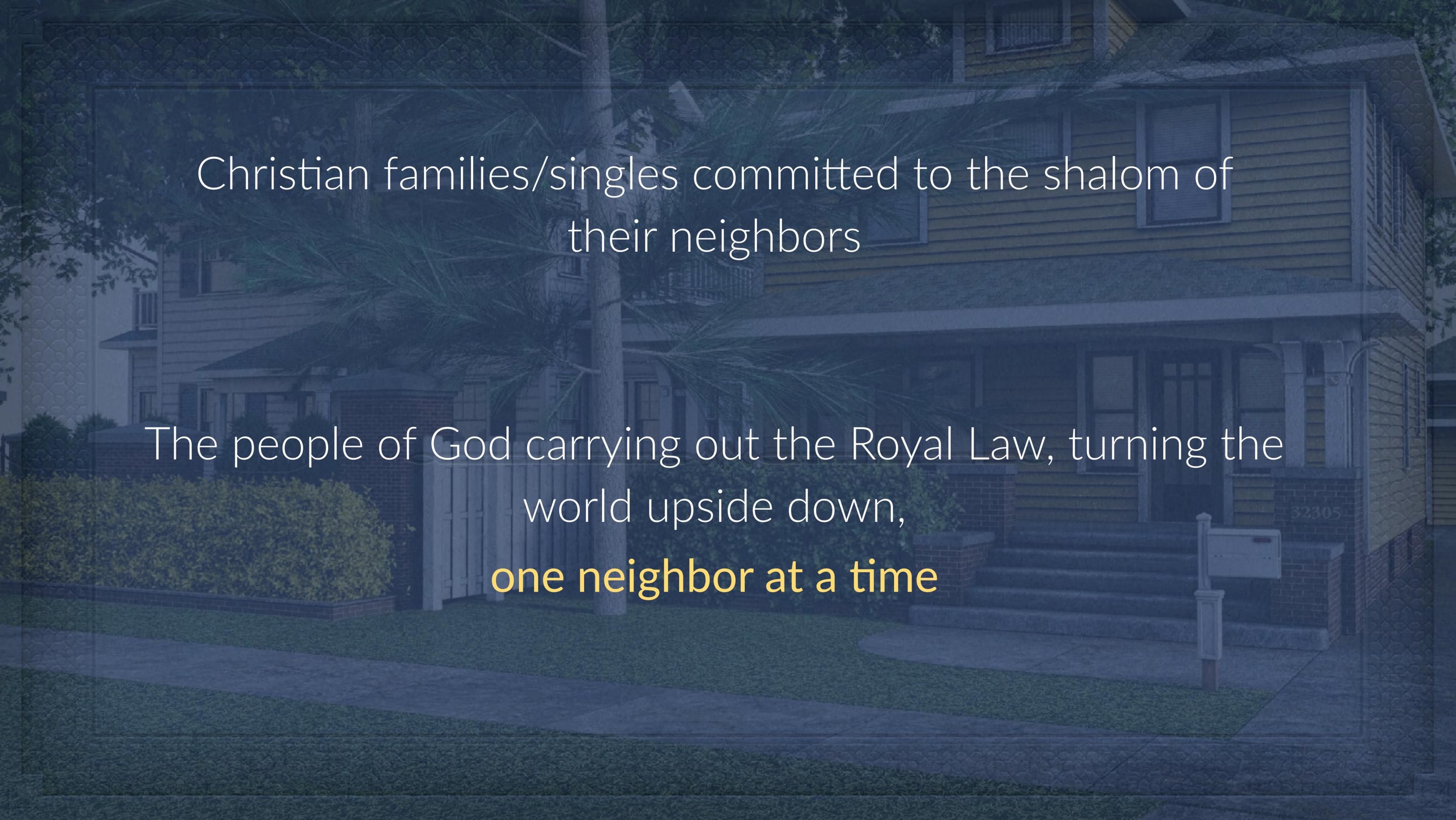
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begins with sympathy, empathy, asking questions about the circumstances and thinking behind the personal worldview



Christian families/singles committed to the shalom of
their neighbors

The people of God carrying out the Royal Law, turning the
world upside down,

one neighbor at a time



Neighborly Apologetics

The Problem of Evil - Part I