Phil. 114 2/15/2016

**Basic Free Will Defense**

Commitment: Freedom is a great value

Account: God wanted us performing free actions, but to allow for that required God to allow for the possibility of evil

**Basic Compatibilist Objection:** Compatibilism is/may be true, so God could have gotten what God wanted without any risk of evil by determining us to freely do only good

**Replies**

**a. Plantinga’s terminological reply**: I don’t have to fight over the truth of incompatibilism. Suppose the compatibilist is right about “free.” I’ll just make a new term, “unfettered” (semi-technical: meaning free and undetermined), and change “free” in the Account of the FWD to “unfettered”

Problem: But now you have to also change “Freedom” is your commitment to “Unfetterdness”, and that’s a much more controversial commitment, and one the compatibilist will have no reason to accept

**b. Incompatibilism is true!**

OK, but that is a much more substantial commitment

**c. Change: commitment to: Unfettered actions occur and have an important value not had by actions that are determined**.

Still a much more substantial commitment than the FWD started with, but not as strong as that required by response (b), b/c….

**Ways to accept (c):**

1. Be an incompatibilist or

2. Be a compatibilist who thinks that unfettered/uncaused actions are valuable in a way/to an extent that determined actions are not or

3. Be uncommitted between 1 and 2

(3) is the strongest position

What you’re really committed to is the **special value of unfettered actions**

Special: not had by actions causally determined (by events over which the agent had no control)

**Playpen objection:** God could have had what God wanted without any real harm resulting by putting us in a playpen: by allowing us to freely do good, but in situations where our going wrong wouldn’t result in any substantial harm

Reply: add “in situations of great moral significance” to the commitment to the special value of unfettered actions

But, you ask, don’t we experience quite the opposite in the world? For the worst often happens to the best, and not only innocent beasts, but also humans are injured and killed, even tortured. In the end, the world appears to be a certain confused chaos rather than a thing ordered by some supreme wisdom, especially if one takes note of the conduct of the human race. I confess that it appears this way at first glance, but a deeper look at things forces us to quite the contrary view. From those very considerations which I brought forward it is obvious a priori that everything, even minds, is of the highest perfection…

And indeed, it is unjust to make a judgment unless one has examined the entire law, as lawyers say. We know but a small part of the eternity which extends without measure, for how short is the memory of several thousand years which history gives us. But yet, from such meager experience we rashly make judgments about the immense and the eternal….Look at a very beautiful picture, and cover it up except for some small part. What will it look like but some confused combination of colors, without delight, without art…But as soon as the covering is removed, and you see the whole surface from an appropriate place, you will understand that what looked like accidental splotches on the canvas were made with consummate skill by the creator of the work. What the eyes discover in the painting, the ears discover in music. Indeed, the most distinguished masters of composition quite often mix dissonances with consonances in order to arouse the listener, and pierce him, as it were, so that, anxious about what is to happen, the listener might feel all the more pleasure when order is soon restored….He who hasn’t tasted bitter things hasn’t earned sweet things, nor indeed, will he appreciate them. Pleasure does not derive from uniformity, for uniformity brings forth disgust and makes us dull, not happy: this very principle is a law of delight. –Leibniz, “Ultimate Origination,” AG, p. 153