

# The Problems of Disbelievers in Heaven and Believers in Hell

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**Abstract:** What should God do to heaven-dwellers who disbelieve that he exists? What should God do to hell-dwellers who believe that he exists? Theists might give the following answers: (i) since heaven-dwellers see God, they cannot but believe that he exists; (ii) God sends disbelievers in heaven to hell and believers in hell to heaven; (iii) heaven-dwellers are so virtuous that they cannot but believe that God exists, and hell-dwellers are so vicious that they cannot but disbelieve that he exists. I argue that all of these answers are untenable.

**Keywords:** free will, God, heaven, hell, vicious character, virtuous character.

## 1. Introduction

Imagine that theists are sent to heaven. In heaven, however, they become arrogant and start disbelieving that God exists. What should God do to such heaven-dwellers? This question raises an interesting philosophical problem that I call ‘the problem of disbelievers in heaven.’ According to Pascal’s Wager (Hájek 2018), the blessed in heaven enjoy *eternal* happiness, which implies that heaven-dwellers would not be sent to hell no matter how strongly and for how long they disbelieve that God exists. However, such a treatment of heaven-dwellers is unfair, given that hell-dwellers are in hell on the grounds that they disbelieved that God exists while they existed in this world, which was only about a hundred years.

Imagine also that atheists are sent to hell. In hell, however, they regret that they disbelieved that God existed while they were in this world and start believing that God exists. What should God do to such hell-dwellers? This question raises an interesting philosophical problem that I call ‘the problem of believers in hell.’ According to Pascal’s Wager (Hájek 2018), the damned in hell suffer *eternal* unhappiness, and, according to the Bible (Luke, 16: 26), no one can cross over the great chasm between hell and heaven. Pascal’s Wager and the Bible commonly imply that hell-dwellers would not be sent to heaven, no matter how deeply they repent that they were atheists in this world and no matter how strongly and for how long they believe that God exists. Such a treatment of hell-dwellers is unfair, given that heaven-dwellers enjoy eternal bliss in heaven on the grounds that they believed that God exists while they existed in this world, which was only about a hundred years.

This paper explores and critically examines several possible attempts to solve the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell. In Section 2, I criticize the suggestion that heaven-dwellers see God, so they cannot disbelieve that he exists. In Section 3, I raise difficulties against the suggestion that disbelievers in heaven are sent to hell and believers in hell are sent to heaven. In Section 4, I raise objections to the suggestion that heaven-dwellers are so virtuous that they cannot but choose good deeds, including believing that God exists, and to the suggestion that hell-dwellers are so vicious that they cannot but choose bad deeds, including disbelieving that God exists. In Section 5, I argue against the view that heaven-dwellers choose good deeds over bad ones, and against the view that heaven-dwellers have the free will to choose some good deeds over other good ones. In Section 6, I argue that the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell are comparable to the problem of evil in that they all pose threats to the belief that God exists. This paper should be of interest to those who wonder what will happen to us after we die and whether God exists.

## **2. To See Is to Believe**

How would theists respond to the problem of disbelievers in heaven? They might argue that to see is to believe: heaven-dwellers see God, so they cannot but believe that he exists. Since there are no disbelievers in heaven, God does not need to send any heaven-dwellers to hell, and the problem of disbelievers in heaven does not even arise.

However, it is problematic to assume that once heaven-dwellers see God, they cannot but believe that he exists, because we have no idea how to recognize him when we encounter him. Suppose that someone approaches you in this world, and that he says that he is God. He shows his palm to you. There is the word 'God' on his palm. You would not be convinced that he is God. The same thing might happen to heaven-dwellers. Even if someone shows to heaven-dwellers his palm on which there is the word 'God,' they might not be convinced that he is God. As a result, some of them might disbelieve that God exists. Thus, we are back to the original question: what should God do to disbelievers in heaven?

Moreover, some heaven-dwellers might have been exposed to the Cartesian story of the evil demon while they were on earth. As a result, they might entertain the possibility that the sensations from God might be caused by the evil demon. It is not clear how God can prove to them that their sensations are not caused by the evil demon but rather by him. Furthermore, even if they initially form the belief of God (the belief that God exists), they might regularly and habitually perform anti-religious rituals to foster the disbelief of God. As a result, the belief of God might be replaced with the disbelief of God. Therefore, the cliché that to see is to believe does not help theists solve the problem of disbelievers in heaven.

Another problem arises with the suggestion that to see is to believe. What about hell-dwellers? Do they also see God? If they see him, they cannot but believe that he exists. Thus, the problem of believers in hell arises. Theists might suggest

that God does not show himself to hell-dwellers, so they cannot believe that God exists, and God does not need to send any of them to heaven. A problem with this suggestion is that even if hell-dwellers do not see God, they might regularly and habitually perform religious rituals to foster the belief of God, and, as a result, they might form the belief of God. This objection parallels Pascal's contention that if we behave for a long time as if we believe that God exists, we might end up believing that God exists. He advances this view in response to his critics who complain that they cannot believe that God exists due to the absence of a convincing argument for the existence of God.

Theists might object that hell-dwellers would not perform the religious rituals to foster the belief of God, and that hell-dwellers would rather shun such rituals out of hatred for God. In my view, this objection is built upon the problematic assumption that hell-dwellers hate God. According to Pascal's Wager, the belief of God is a necessary condition to go to heaven, which implies that many hell-dwellers are in hell not because they hated God, but rather because they disbelieved that he existed. Just because they disbelieved that he existed, it does not follow that they hated him. On the contrary, since they disbelieved that he existed, it is likely that they did not hate him. In general, it is psychologically implausible for us to hate an entity that we do not take to be real. It is a symptom of irrationality to say, for example, "I disbelieve that unicorns exist, and I hate them." By parity of reasoning, it is a symptom of irrationality to say, "I disbelieve God exists, and I hate him." Therefore, it is likely that the hell-dwellers who disbelieved that God exists did not hate him.

If theists insist that all hell-dwellers hate God, and that hatred for God is a necessary condition for going to hell, they owe us an answer to the following perplexing question: if not to hell, where does God send the disbelievers who did not hate him? Theists would not say that he sends the disbelievers to heaven, for they believe that heaven is a place only for believers who love God. Therefore, they owe us an account of where the disbelievers go after they die.

### **3. Single Evaluation vs. Multiple Evaluations**

Theists might seek an alternative route to solve the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell, suggesting that disbelievers in heaven are sent to hell, and that believers in hell are sent to heaven. I raise objections to this suggestion in this section.

Let me first distinguish between two hypotheses that I call 'the single evaluation hypothesis' and 'the multiple evaluation hypothesis.' According to the single evaluation hypothesis, once you are sent to heaven or hell, you will permanently be in heaven or hell. God evaluates you only once, viz., right after you die and right before he sends you either to heaven or to hell, and afterwards he does not evaluate you again. The single evaluation hypothesis goes hand in hand with what Greg Janzen (2011) says about Pascal's Wager. According to Janzen, Pascal's Wager implies that if "it turns out that God exists, then the loss is

potentially infinite.” (Janzen 2011, 331) The single evaluation hypothesis also goes hand in hand with what the Bible says. As we noted in Section 1, the Bible says that hell-dwellers cannot move to heaven due to the great chasm.

According to the multiple evaluation hypothesis, by contrast, God evaluates heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers multiple times, sending disbelievers in heaven to hell and sending believers in hell to heaven. The multiple evaluation hypothesis meshes well with John Donnelly’s view that heaven-dwellers have the free will to sin, so they can earn an ‘eviction from Heaven.’ (Donnelly 2006, 27) It appears that, unlike the single evaluation hypothesis, the multiple evaluation hypothesis gets around the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell.

On close examination, however, the multiple evaluation hypothesis is not a solution to the two problems. The vulgar, who embraced the hypothesis, might not care whether God exists or not. In the context of the debate about the problem of evil, John Hick (1966) claims that evil improves our characters, i.e., that we can appreciate the value of good more if we have experienced evil. Persuaded of Hick’s insight, the vulgar might think that they will appreciate heaven more if they experience hell for a while, and that it is not a bad idea to drop by hell before they go to heaven. In short, the multiple evaluation hypothesis, once conjoined with theists’ attempt to defend the belief of God against the problem of evil, ends up supporting the carefree attitude toward God.

In addition, a technical problem arises for those who embrace the multiple evaluation hypothesis. How often does God evaluate heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers? Every ten years? Every one hundred years? Why? Suppose that God evaluates heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers every one hundred years. Some heaven-dwellers might disbelieve that God exists for thirty years, sixty years, ninety years, etc. Where does God draw a line between those who deserve to stay in heaven and those who deserve to be sent to hell? Why? The same questions can be asked *mutatis mutandis* with respect to hell-dwellers. Some hell-dwellers might believe that God exists for thirty years, sixty years, ninety years, etc. Where does God draw a line between those who deserve to stay in hell and those who deserve to be sent to heaven? Why? Whatever answers theists might give to those questions, their answers should reflect the traditional view of God that he has the three properties of being omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient, which implies that God’s evaluation system should be perfect.

In response, theists might suggest that God sends heaven-dwellers to hell the moment they start disbelieving that he exists, and that he sends hell-dwellers to heaven the moment that they start believing that God exists. A problem with this suggestion is that God does not send humans to heaven the moment they start believing that God exists, and he does not send them to hell the moment they start disbelieving that God exists. He waits until they die, which means that he waits for a while before sending them either to heaven or to hell. Therefore, he should also wait for a while before sending disbelievers in heaven to hell and believers in hell to heaven.

## 4. Characters

### 4.1. Virtuous Characters

Timothy Pawl and Kevin Timpe contend that “In heaven, the blessed will be incapable of willing any sin, just as we are incapable of willing the particular sin of torturing an innocent child for a nickel, and just as Teresa is incapable of willing to swindle from a homeless shelter for a luxurious vacation.” (2009, 408) In this spirit, theists would suggest that heaven-dwellers are so virtuous that they cannot disbelieve that God exists. Since there are no disbelievers in heaven, God does not need to send any heaven-dwellers to hell, and the problem of disbelievers in heaven do not even arise. I argue against this suggestion in this subsection.

We first need to think about what it means for one to be virtuous and whether heaven-dwellers are bound to believe that God exists due to their virtuous character. Plato (1941, 45) provides a useful test to determine whether one is virtuous. Suppose that you wear the ring of Gyges, and as a result you become invisible. If you do only good deeds, you are a virtuous person; if you do bad deeds, you are not a virtuous person. Thus, on Plato’s account, to be virtuous is to do good deeds independently of reward and to refrain from bad deeds independently of punishment. This definition of ‘virtuous’ indicates that, if you believe that God exists in the hope that you will go to heaven, you are not a virtuous person. More importantly, even if you are virtuous, you might disbelieve that God exists. Consequently, even if heaven-dwellers are all virtuous, as Pawl and Timpe contend, some heaven-dwellers might disbelieve that God exists.

Moreover, a dilemma can be constructed for theists. Do heaven-dwellers sometimes covet their neighbors’ spouses? If theists say ‘Yes,’ they have the burden of explicating the relevant difference between coveting neighbors’ spouses and disbelieving that God exists that would justify their position that heaven-dwellers sometimes covet their neighbors’ spouses but they never disbelieve that God exists. Why is it that they sometimes covet their neighbors’ spouses but they never disbelieve that God exists? If they say ‘No,’ they owe us a story of where, if not to heaven, God sends the believers who sometimes coveted their neighbors’ spouses while they were in this world. To send them to hell for sometimes coveting their neighbors’ spouses is more unjust than executing people for coughing.

Another problem with the second horn of this dilemma is that, if no bad thoughts are available to heaven-dwellers due to their virtuous characters, they do not have the free will to choose between good and bad thoughts, and they are merely good-thinking machines. If the disbelief of God is unavailable to them due to their virtuous characters, they are merely believing machines. Why does God reward those machines? In general, we reward our fellow humans so that they continue to behave well and/or so that others follow their example. This attitude presupposes that our fellow humans are capable of doing both good and bad deeds,

i.e., they are not good-behaving machines. It is not clear what motivates God to keep rewarding the good-behaving machines in heaven.

There is another problem with the suggestion that heaven-dwellers are so virtuous that they cannot disbelieve that God exists. The suggestion does not go along with the traditional view of God that he has the three properties of being omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient. If he had these properties, humans would be incapable of disbelieving that he exists and heaven-dwellers would be capable of disbelieving that he exists, and as a result we would all go to heaven and enjoy maximum freedom in heaven. The fact that he did not design our psychological structures in this way is an indication that he is not omnibenevolent and/or not omnipotent.

Let me turn to Pawl and Timpe's suggestion that heaven-dwellers acquired their virtuous characters in purgatory. They state that "the traditional doctrine of purgatory allows the soul to continue forming the proper dispositions and character." (Pawl and Timpe 2009, 409) In my view, this suggestion solves the problem of disbelievers in heaven, but creates the following two new problems. The first new problem, which might be called "the problem of disbelievers in purgatory," holds that some purgatory-dwellers might start disbelieving that God exists, thinking that they are bound to be sent to heaven no matter what they do in purgatory. What should God do to such purgatory-dwellers? The second new problem is that the alleged purification process that some souls go through in purgatory amounts to the process of transforming them into virtuous machines, machines that are perfectly designed to keep receiving the reward from God in heaven. It is not clear what motivates God to do such a thing.

#### 4.2. Vicious Characters

Let me now turn to the issue of what God should do to hell-dwellers who believe that he exists. In Pawl and Timpe's spirit, theists might suggest that hell-dwellers are so vicious that they are incapable of believing that he exists. To use an analogy, psychopaths are so vicious that they "do not feel empathetic pain when they kill innocent people." (Park 2013, 1) Just as psychopaths cannot feel sympathy for their victims due to their vicious characters, hell-dwellers cannot believe that God exists due to their vicious characters. Since no hell-dwellers believe that God exists, he does not need to send any hell-dwellers to heaven, and the problem of believers in hell evaporates. I expose problems with this suggestion in this subsection.

It is agreeable that psychopaths cannot be sympathetic to their victims due to their vicious characters. After all, if they were sympathetic to their victims, they would not be vicious in the first place. It is disagreeable, however, that hell-dwellers cannot believe that God exists due to their vicious characters. To be vicious does not preclude the belief of God, i.e., even if one is vicious, one might believe that God exists. There should be an account of why it is that hell-dwellers are so vicious that they cannot believe that God exists. In the absence of such an

account, to say that hell-dwellers cannot believe that God exists because they are vicious is unilluminating.

Moreover, a dilemma can be constructed for theists. Do some hell-dwellers love their neighbors? If theists say 'Yes,' they have the burden of explicating the relevant difference between loving one's neighbors and believing that God exists that would justify their position that some hell-dwellers love their neighbors but they never believe that God exists. If they say 'No,' they owe us a story of where, if not to hell, God sends the disbelievers who loved their neighbors while they were in this world. When theists provide the story, they need to take into account what Pascal's Wager asserts: the belief of God is a necessary condition for going to heaven. Pascal's Wager indicates that morally good people are sent to hell, provided that they disbelieved that God existed, and hence that some hell-dwellers love their neighbors.

If no good thoughts are available to hell-dwellers due to their vicious characters, they do not have the free will to choose between good and bad thoughts, and they are merely bad-thinking machines. In addition, if the belief of God is unavailable to them due to their vicious characters, they do not have the free will to choose between the belief and the disbelief of God, and they are merely disbelieving-machines. Why does God keep punishing those machines? In general, we punish our fellow humans so that they behave well and/or so that others do not follow their example. This attitude toward punishment presupposes that our fellow humans can do otherwise, i.e., they are capable of doing both good and bad deeds.

Theists might reply that God punishes hell-dwellers so that we believe that he exists while we are in this world. This reply, however, implies that God uses hell-dwellers merely as a means to have us believe that he exists. An omnibenevolent and omnipotent being would use a better means to achieve that end.

Theists might suggest that hell-dwellers acquired their virtuous characters in a place which might be called 'taintory.' In taintory, souls are tainted with bad qualities, and good qualities are removed from them. After the tainting process is completed, they are sent to hell. In my view, this suggestion solves the problem of believers in hell, but creates the following two new problems. The first new problem, which might be called 'the problem of believers in taintory,' holds that some taintory-dwellers might start believing that God exists, repenting that they did not believe that God exists while they were in this world. What should God do to such taintory-dwellers? The second new problem is that the alleged tainting process amounts to the process of transforming the souls into vicious machines, machines that are perfectly designed to receive punishment from God in hell. It is not clear what motivates God to do such a thing. Theists would object that there is no such thing as taintory. If they object so, however, they have the burden of responding to the problem of believers in hell.

## 5. Objections and Replies

### 5.1. Choosing vs. Feeling as if Choosing

Steven Cowan (2011) would object that heaven-dwellers are not good-behaving machines, although kept from choosing bad deeds, because they choose good deeds over bad deeds. On his account, they have the free will to choose between good and bad ones, but their characters are so virtuous that they always end up choosing good deeds, including believing that God exists. Cowan says, “The redeemed in heaven, having characters that are perfectly formed to want only what is good and right, will consistently *freely* choose only what is good and right and will be incapable of choosing what is wrong.” (Cowan 2011, 417) I argue against this suggestion in this subsection.

In response to this suggestion, I distinguish between *choosing* right things and *feeling* as if choosing right things. Imagine that a train running on a railroad has consciousness, and that it feels that it chooses its direction. Given that its direction is fixed by the railroad, it does not choose its direction, although it feels that it chooses its direction. The same holds for heaven-dwellers. They might feel that they choose right actions, but it does not follow that they choose right actions. Just as the train does not choose its direction due to the railroad, so heaven-dwellers do not choose their actions due to their virtuous characters. The same is true of hell-dwellers. They might feel that they choose wrong actions, but it does not follow that they choose wrong actions.

Under what conditions can we attribute free will to heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers? We can attribute free will to heaven-dwellers, provided that some of them do good things, while others do bad things, or provided that all of them sometimes do good things and at other times do bad things. The same holds for hell-dwellers. We can attribute free will to them, provided that some of them do good things, while others do bad things, or provided that all of them sometimes do good things and at other times do bad things. If these conditions are not met, we can suspect that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers do not have free will, and that they merely feel that they choose good and bad actions, respectively.

### 5.2. Some Good Deeds Over Other Good Ones

Pawl and Timpe (2009, 408) contend that heaven-dwellers cannot choose bad actions over good ones due to their virtuous characters, but they can choose some good actions over other good ones. For example, they have “the choice either to sing in the heavenly choir or to play the harp.” (Pawl and Timpe 2009, 408) These actions are all good, and heaven-dwellers can choose any of them. Consequently, heaven-dwellers have free will, they are not machines, and it is justifiable for God to reward them. I argue against this suggestion in this subsection.

First of all, it is reasonable to attribute to heaven-dwellers the free will to choose between singing in the choir and playing the harp, provided that they

sometimes sing in the choir and play the harp at other times, or provided that some of them sing in the choir and others play the harp. This claim is congruent with my previous claim that it is reasonable to attribute the free will to choose between good and bad deeds to heaven-dwellers, provided that some heaven-dwellers do good things and other heaven-dwellers do bad things, or provided that they sometimes do good things and at other times do bad things.

The reasoning that heaven-dwellers are praiseworthy because they have the free will to choose between competing good deeds is similar to the absurd reasoning that murderers are blameworthy because they have the free will to choose between killing innocent victims on Monday and Tuesday. Why is this reasoning absurd? The wrong kind of free will is cited to blame murderers. It is not the free will to choose between killing on Monday and Tuesday, but rather the free will to choose between killing and not killing, that makes them blameworthy. After all, there is no significant difference between killing on Monday or Tuesday, but there is a significant difference between killing and not killing.

Similarly, the wrong kind of free will is cited in the reasoning that, since heaven-dwellers have the free will to choose some good deeds over other good deeds, they are not machines and they deserve rewards from God. It is not the free will to choose between competing good deeds, but rather the free will to choose between good and bad deeds, that would make it justifiable for God to reward heaven-dwellers. After all, there is no significant difference between some good deeds and others, but there is a significant difference between good and bad deeds. In a nutshell, the right kind of free will is required to make it justifiable for God to reward heaven-dwellers.

It is useful to distinguish between what I call 'broad free will' and 'narrow free will.' Broad free will is the free will to choose between good and bad deeds, and narrow free will is the free will to choose between competing good deeds, and the free will to choose between competing bad deeds. Heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers, as depicted by Pawl and Timpe, do not have broad free will, but only have narrow free will. It is not narrow free will, but rather broad free will, that is required for God to reward heaven-dwellers and to punish hell-dwellers.

## **6. Against the Belief of God**

In this section I elucidate how the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell clash with the belief that God, as defined by Christianity, exists.

As noted in Subjection 5.1 above, Cowan asserts that heaven-dwellers cannot disbelieve that God exists due to their psychological limitations, yet they choose the belief over the disbelief of God, so they have the free will to choose the belief over the disbelief of God. He might also assert that hell-dwellers cannot believe that God exists due to their psychological limitations, yet they choose the disbelief over the belief of God, so they have the free will to choose the disbelief over the belief of God. As noted in Subsection 5.2 above, Pawl and Timpe would assert that heaven-dwellers cannot disbelieve that God exists due to their

psychological limitations, yet they have the free will to choose between competing good deeds. They might also assert that hell-dwellers cannot believe that God exists due to their psychological limitations, yet they have the free will to choose between competing bad deeds.

These actual and possible positions have the following common problem. Why is it that free will is available to heaven-dwellers but the disbelief of God is not? What is the relevant difference between free will and the disbelief of God that justifies the position that free will is available to heaven-dwellers but the disbelief of God is not? Why is it that free will is available to hell-dwellers but the belief of God is not? What is the relevant difference between free will and the belief of God that justifies the position that free will is available to hell-dwellers but the belief of God is not? In the absence of answers to these questions, it is merely an assumption that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers have free will, yet the disbelief of God is unavailable to heaven-dwellers and the belief of God is unavailable to hell-dwellers. This assumption has the following two competitors.

The first competitor states that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers do not have free will, and thus they are merely machines perfectly designed to be rewarded and punished by God. God rewards and punishes the machines because he does not have all three properties of being omnibenevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient. It might be that he is unjust, and thus he makes heaven-dwellers happy forever for believing that he exists while they were in this world, and he makes hell-dwellers suffer forever for disbelieving that he exists while they were in this world. Or it might be that he is not omnipotent, and thus he does not have the ability to stop rewarding the machines in heaven and punishing the machines in hell. Or it might be that he is not omniscient, and thus he does not know that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers do not have free will and they are merely machines. As a result, he keeps rewarding and punishing the machines.

The second competitor states that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers have free will, and thus some heaven-dwellers disbelieve that God exists, and some hell-dwellers believe that God exists, or both heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers sometimes believe and at other times disbelieve that God exists. However, God does not have all of the three properties. It might be that he is unjust, and thus he does not care whether heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers believe or disbelieve that he exists. Or it might be that he is not omnipotent, and thus he is incapable of sending disbelievers in heaven to hell and believers in hell to heaven. Or it might be that he is not omniscient, and thus he does not know that some heaven-dwellers disbelieve that he exists and that some hell-dwellers believe that he exists.

Objectors might say that I have misconstrued heaven and hell, so the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell are spurious. I have characterized heaven as the place where believers are rewarded and hell as the place where disbelievers are punished, but the right characterization is that heaven is a state of loving communion with God while hell is a state of alienation

from God. On this alternative characterization of heaven and hell, the blessed are in a state of loving communion with God, while the damned are in a state of alienation from God.

My response to this possible objection is to recast the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell as follows. What if the blessed become arrogant and start disbelieving that God exists after enjoying loving communion with God for a while? Will they be alienated from God? What if the damned repent of having disbelieved that God exists and start believing that God exists after suffering alienation from God for a while? Will they acquire loving communion with God? If theists say 'Yes' to these questions, the vulgar might not care whether God exists or not, thinking that it is not a bad idea to be alienated from God for a while. If they say 'No' to those questions, they imply that God's evaluation system is not perfect.

## 7. Conclusion

The problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell hold that it is not clear what God should do to disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell, respectively. Pawl and Timpe would argue that heaven-dwellers cannot but believe that God exists due to their virtuous characters, and that hell-dwellers cannot but disbelieve that God exists due to their vicious characters.

In response, I constructed a dilemma for Pawl and Timpe. Do heaven-dwellers sometimes covet their neighbors' spouses? Do hell-dwellers sometimes love their neighbors? If Pawl and Timpe say 'Yes,' they face the following two questions: why is it that heaven-dwellers sometimes covet their neighbors but they never disbelieve that God exists? Why is it that hell-dwellers sometimes love their neighbors but they never believe that God exists? If Pawl and Timpe say 'No,' they face the following two questions: if not to heaven, where does God send believers who sometimes coveted their neighbors' spouses? If not to hell, where does God send disbelievers who sometimes loved their neighbors? It would be interesting to see how Pawl and Timpe would handle this dilemma.

In addition, I argued that if heaven-dwellers are so virtuous that they cannot entertain bad thoughts, including the disbelief of God, they do not have the free will to choose between good and bad thoughts and they are merely good-thinking machines, and that if hell-dwellers are so vicious that they cannot entertain good thoughts, including the belief of God, they do not have the free will to choose between good and bad thoughts and they are merely bad-thinking machines. It is unjustifiable for God to reward good-thinking machines and to punish bad-thinking machines.

Cowan would object that heaven-dwellers are not machines because they choose good actions over bad ones, and that hell-dwellers are not machines because they choose bad actions over good ones. I replied that it is unreasonable to attribute free will to them, given that the courses of their actions are fixed due

to their psychological limitations. Heaven-dwellers merely feel that they choose good actions, and hell-dwellers merely feel that they choose bad actions.

Pawl and Timpe would object that heaven-dwellers are not machines because they have the free will to choose between competing good deeds, and that hell-dwellers are not machines because they have the free will to choose between competing bad deeds. I retorted that it is not narrow free will but rather broad free will that is required for God to reward heaven-dwellers and to punish hell-dwellers.

Finally, Cowan assumes that heaven-dwellers and hell-dwellers have free will but they cannot but believe and disbelieve, respectively, that God exists. This assumption competes with an alternative assumption that they do not have free will and that God does not have all of the three properties, and with another assumption that they have free will and that God does not have all of the three properties. In sum, the problems of disbelievers in heaven and believers in hell are comparable to the problem of evil in that they all undermine the belief that God exists.

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