

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Answering Ecualegacy, Pt. 2

Recall that [Aaron had asked Ecualegacy](#) who created evil, if the god which allegedly created the universe did not create it. Ecualegacy's answer was:

The short answer to this question is, "We did!" (and Satan too).

Then Ecualegacy followed this declaration with the following accusation:

I believe you're taking "God's will is always done" to a literal absurdity.

I responded:

This isn't Aaron's fault; the very idea of a god is itself already a literal absurdity. Aaron is simply trying to interact with someone who has committed his life to believing a literal absurdity.

Ecualegacy now states:

That is an opinion. And coming from such a finite being, a very weakly positioned one indeed. I'd ask for specifics, but I know where to look on atheist websites and what they argue.

It's statements like this which indicate to me that the believer is always ready to confuse himself with the god he claims to worship. Ecualegacy wants to dismiss my point on the basis that it is "an opinion" which comes "from... a finite being." I claim to be nothing other than a finite being. The problem for Ecualegacy is the fact that I exist, while the god he imagines does not. Unlike the god he imagines, he cannot control what I think and affirm. So the motivation to dismiss my views as mere "opinion" is clear enough. But we should bear in mind that calling my statement an opinion is not an argument, and it does nothing to refute the content of my statement. Nor does the fact that I am a finite being undermine my position. According to my worldview, the actual is always finite.

Unfortunately, Ecualegacy's dismissal works against his position just as effectively as it works against mine. He has offered his opinions. If position statements and affirmations are dismissible on the mere basis that they are opinions, then Ecualegacy's opinions can be brushed aside just as easily as he brushes aside mine. Also, Ecualegacy himself is a finite being, just like me. He may pose as the spokesman for an allegedly infinite being, but this does not overcome the fact that he is just as finite as they come. And if being finite is supposed to indicate fallibility in some way, Ecualegacy is just as fallible as I am. He could be wrong about his claims about the existence of an infinite being. But he does not seem willing to acknowledge this fact.

Ecualegacy had written:

The way I understand it, God wanted to create beings that could genuinely love him. This meant giving them a real choice to accept or reject him...to do good or to do wickedness.

I responded:

To accomplish this, the god you speak of should have at minimum provided its sentient creatures a means by which they could distinguish "God" from imagination.

Ecualegacy now responds:

I believe that God accomplished this spectacularly with the Bible.

Pointing to the bible only makes my point for me. The bible provides a vast collection of *stories*. When we read a story, our imagination makes the story we read come alive in our minds, envisioning the characters and their actions from the details that are supplied, and supplying many details of its own that are not provided in the story itself. We *imagine* what a story describes. Relying on story-telling is an invitation to relying on subjective invention.

For instance, in the story of Jesus coming to one of Jerusalem's gates (cf. Lk. 7:12f), we imagine what the story

describes. We concoct in our minds an image of what he looked like, what he was wearing, who else was there, the time of day, the slope of the road he was traveling on, the packs on his donkey, his companions, the guards at the gate, the people attending the dead man being carried out of the city, etc., etc., etc. Our imagination gives life to the story as we read it and consider it in our minds. The same is the case when we read any story, whether fiction or non-fiction. When we read news stories, we use our imagination to picture what is described, and when we read Harry Potter stories, we do the same thing. Relying on a written source gives us no alternative but to carry what we read over into our imagination.

Ecualegacy has not answered my challenge. But he did continue:

I'm not saying you can "prove" the veracity of the Scripture like heliocentricity or men landing on the moon. But I do think you can narrow the options down to Christianity as the most likely choice. I've written elsewhere about this on my own blog at <http://ravizacharias.blogspot.com/> so I won't repeat myself here. This post is already long enough.

Ecualegacy acknowledges that "the veracity of the Scriptures" is not provable "like heliocentricity or men landing on the moon." This is an important admission. Essentially what he is saying is that there is nothing scientifically truthful in the bible's god-belief claims. Proof requires measurability, and the supernatural is "beyond measure." The supernatural is, according to Bahnsen, "whatever surpasses the limits of nature" (*Always Ready*, p. 177). Whatever "the supernatural" might be, it must be so unlimited that it is beyond any means of measurement. This already puts it outside the realm of rational knowledge, for it violates a basic principle of concept-formation, namely that the measurements belonging to units integrated into a concept "must exist in *some* quantity, but may exist in *any* quantity" (ITOE, p. 12). So whatever it is that theists call "supernatural," it cannot be integrated into the sum of human knowledge (since by its very description it defies a fundamental rule of knowledge integration), and yet we are expected to accept it as knowledge.

In spite of tragic oversights of this nature, Ecualegacy still thinks that we "can narrow the options down to Christianity as the most likely choice." If he thinks Christianity is "the most likely choice," what alternatives has he considered? And if he thinks it's merely a matter of choice - such as "Well, I choose that Christianity is the true worldview" - then he has already long departed from the principle of objectivity.

He says that he has written about this on [his blog](#), but at this time there are only two brief entries to his blog (dated April 11 and April 12, 2007), and neither of them speak to any issue under the present discussion. And yet he says in response to the issue that I raise that he will not bother repeating himself, apparently because he thinks he's already dealt with it. Not that I can see.

I had written:

the way it is now, we field claims about "God" from other human beings, but we have no way of distinguishing what they call "God" from what they may merely be imagining.

Ecualegacy complained:

You're just full of simply false arguments today. No way of distinguishing between real God and false god? Tell me I don't have to get neck deep in epistemology and cult detection with you to explain this.

I offered two observations, and Ecualegacy refers to them as "false arguments," but even then he does not show where any of my statements are false, nor does he offer any counter arguments. I stated that "we field claims about 'God' from other human beings." Ecualegacy is just one of many examples. Is Ecualegacy not a human being? I'm willing to grant that he is, and yet he accuses me of being "full of simply false arguments." Does he realize what he is saying?

I also pointed out that "we have no way of distinguishing what they call "God" from what they may merely be imagining." And as I would expect, Ecualegacy has not identified any procedure by which I can distinguish between what he calls "God" and what he may merely be imagining. In fact, Ecualegacy has apparently missed the challenge that I have posed to him. I did not say "distinguishing between real God and false god," but between what he calls "God" (his "real God") and what he may merely be imagining. Notice that Ecualegacy offers nothing to help us do this. If he wants "to get neck deep in epistemology" [sic], I invite him to bring it on. Let's review the epistemological process by which one gets from "this world" to the "supernatural world." I have already indicated some reasons why this project is doomed from the get-go. See for instance my blog [Is Human Experience Evidence of the Christian God?](#)

But my overall point here should be clear. It may not be clear to Ecualegacy, but it's clear to myself and probably to many of my readers. We learn about the Christian god from other human beings, not from the god itself. A collection of writings is not a supernatural person. Books are inanimate and non-conscious, and persons are animate and conscious. Men claim ancient texts were written by a deity, but their claiming this to be the case does not make it so. Everything I have ever learned about the Christian god has in one way or another been delivered to me by another human being or group of human beings. No deity has ever come and appeared before me. I can assure Ecualegacy and anyone else who believes Christianity's claims, no deity has ever come to me and made its existence known to me personally. Chiding that I'm arrogant for expecting it to do this does not change this fact (indeed, I do not expect the non-existent to do anything). Moreover, my pointing out that no deity has done this does not make me arrogant, unless pointing out facts entails arrogance to begin with.

I wrote:

The bible itself, in Acts chapters 9 and 22 for instance, provides examples of this god personally revealing itself to a doubter and persecutor of believers. The way it is now, these are just stories that we read, very much on the par of a Harry Potter or other storybook.

Ecualegacy responded:

Speaking of absurdities! You're comparing apples with carrots here (or is it ducks with Hippogriffs?). Harry Potter and the Bible don't even belong in the same class of literature! JK Rowling, who we know is the author, doesn't claim her works to be Scripture inspired by God.

Ecualegacy does what he did above: he focuses on a small detail in order to distract attention from a more compelling issue. In my statement above, I allude to the story of a man named by the New Testament as Saul of Tarsus. According to the story that we read in the book of Acts, Saul was a persecutor of the early Christian church. In Saul's pursuit of Christians in Damascus, as the story goes, he was stopped by a visit of the very Jesus he was purportedly persecuting. According to Acts, the two dialogued, there were witnesses to the event, and the event was profoundly real enough to the character of the story that it turned him around 180 degrees in his thinking and he became one of history's leading spokesmen for the Christian religion. Assuming this story is true (which is what Christians want us to do), this man Saul had a personal encounter with the Christian deity. Assuming this story is historically accurate, then, this man Saul had a firsthand basis upon which he could distinguish what he would come to call "Lord" from what he may have merely been imagining. Unfortunately, a story in a book does not accomplish this for its readers. On the contrary, it leaves its readers stranded in an invented realm of the imagination, giving no objective basis for credibility. Nothing Ecualegacy says even comes close to acknowledging this hindrance to belief, let alone settling the matter in favor of Christianity.

As Ecualegacy points out, we know who the author of Harry Potter books is. By contrast, we do not know who the authors of the gospel stories in the New Testament were. This is not my fault as a non-believer, but I am frequently vilified for pointing this fact out. Such reactions indicate that Christians seem to be on the wrong side of facts.

Ecualegacy:

You'll have to do better than this Dawson if you expect to be taken seriously as an accuser against the Living God.

By making statements like this, Ecualegacy is posing as one who would seriously entertain a case against his god-belief if it met certain benchmarks, which of course he nowhere specifies. But since he's already fully accepted his religion's premises as truthful, this is merely a pose. To corroborate this, notice that he does not interact with the points of criticism that I have raised, and in fact has repeatedly attempted to divert attention away from them - either by shifting focus or by simply dismissing them as opinions from a finite being, etc.

I wrote:

If your god is the same god as the one written about in the book of Acts, and it wants us to believe it is real, it knows what to do.

Ecualegacy responded:

Another fallacious argument.

I pointed to the biblical precedent, as given in Acts chapters 9 and 22, to support my point that, if the Christian god were real and truly wanted me to believe in it, it would know what to do. Jesus' appearance to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus was enough to convince an active persecutor of the early church. How much more would a personal visit from an almighty deity to someone like me, turn me around from what believers want to characterize as "evil ways"?

But given Ecualegacy's reaction (he calls my citation of Acts 9 and 22 a "fallacious argument," even though he does not identify any fallacy which my citation allegedly commits), he apparently must think that his god does not know what to do. So we would have to infer from this roundabout admission that his god is not omniscient after all.

Ecualegacy:

God does not merely want you to believe he is real. Ref to James 2:19 "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder." The point is not intellectual belief in God as though he were a fact to read about in a book. The point is to have a relationship with him built on faith and love. Besides, having irrefutable proof of God does not evidentially produce a deeper love for God. Otherwise, we'd have expected that the Israelites would have had a better run.

Again Ecualegacy shifts the issue in order to avoid dealing with the real issue. We were discussing belief, and when I point out that all Ecualegacy's god would need to do to get someone like myself to believe it is real, would be to show itself, just as the New Testament book of Acts says happened to Saul of Tarsus. Instead of acknowledging that this would be an effective approach (according to the storybook, it was certainly effective in the case of Saul of Tarsus), he calls this a "fallacious argument" and now tells us that mere belief is not enough. There's always going to be something more demanded of the initiate once he's bitten the bait. Christian discipleship is always a game of "But wait, there's more." So of course, merely believing isn't enough: Christianity wants the believer to surrender his will in full, like a payment he didn't realize he was committing himself to make. But before this can happen, he must first believe, and that is the issue before us, the issue which Ecualegacy wants to move beyond before the ploy has been exposed. Or, does one first surrender his will, and then he will believe? Perhaps Ecualegacy would like to admit this, but lacks the courage to do so.

Ecualegacy speaks of having "a relationship" with Jesus, one "built on faith and love." But even before one can attempt to have an actual relationship with Jesus, it seems he would first have to at least *believe* that Jesus is actual and not merely imaginary. But if Ecualegacy's god is imaginary, if Jesus is simply a [mood](#), he is doing precisely what I would expect him to do: move around from issue to issue without settling any of them. The intention is to not let the discussion stop long enough for the opposing party to realize that our leg is being pulled.

What Ecualegacy needs to understand is that I have no desire to form a relationship with his Jesus. Why would I want a relationship with a god which requires its worshippers to be willing to kill their own children, just as it demanded of Abraham?

So the issue of belief needs to be explored before we can entertain the idea of willfully entering into a relationship with this invisible Jesus, and that is what I inquired on. The point that I was making to Ecualegacy above in fact has the benefit of biblical precedent, namely the story found in Acts of Jesus paying Saul a personal visit. To believe something is the case rationally, one must first have awareness of it in some manner which provides for distinguishing between reality and imagination. When I see a tree, for instance, I can imagine the tree pulling itself out of the ground and casting itself into the sea (sound familiar?). But when I look back at the tree again, I can see that it is not doing what I have imagined. It remains a tree right where it always was, completely unaffected by my imagination. I can distinguish reality from imagination by comparing what I perceive with what I imagine. Christianity denies the believer this ability when it comes to his god-beliefs.

So what Ecualegacy must be advocating, is a relationship with an [imaginary friend](#). Even adults have been known to indulge in fantasy relationships with imaginary friends. In fact, the Virginia Tech shooter, Cho Seung-Hui, is said to have a fantasy relationship with an imaginary friend. According to [one source](#), Cho had

an imaginary girlfriend by the name of "Jelly," a supermodel who lived in outer space and who called Cho by the name "Spanky" and traveled by spaceship.

Christians need to provide something better than their flimsy apologetic arguments to distinguish their Jesus from simply a more developed version of an imaginary friend.

by Dawson Bethrick

Labels: [Christian god](#), [Christian Psychopathy](#), [Conversion of Saul](#), [Ecualegacy](#), [imagination](#), [problem of evil](#), [the bible](#)

posted by Bahnsen Burner at [6:00 PM](#)

12 Comments:

[Primemover](#) said...

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. (Isaiah 45:7, KJV)

[May 15, 2007 6:20 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

This post has been removed by the author.

[May 16, 2007 7:58 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

But we should bear in mind that calling my statement an opinion is not an argument, and it does nothing to refute the content of my statement.

You made an assertion. Not an argument. When you give me specifics to back up your assertions, I'll deal with them. You're spending an awful lot of time psychoanalysing me. Based on what, I don't know. In the meantime, I've plenty of other things to address.

[May 16, 2007 7:59 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

He could be wrong about his claims about the existence of an infinite being. But he does not seem willing to acknowledge this fact.

Good ol Pascal's Wager BB. If the atheist is right, big deal. Find the road to Christianity, that's something I've addressed elsewhere and won't bother repeating here.

[May 16, 2007 8:02 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

BB - I offered two observations, and Ecualegacy refers to them as "false arguments," but even then he does not show where any of my statements are false, nor does he offer any counter arguments.

Ay Carumbus! You really are begging for a lesson in the basics. Fortunately there are a myriad of apologetics websites out there with the info you need.

[May 16, 2007 8:08 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

And as I would expect, Ecualegacy has not identified any procedure by which I can distinguish between what he calls "God" and what he may merely be imagining.

You mean if you won't go and read the experts' advice, maybe you'll read mine? Fine, go to [My Blog](#) and read about why I'm a Christian.

[May 16, 2007 8:14 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

But given Ecualegacy's reaction (he calls my citation of Acts 9 and 22 a "fallacious argument," even though he does not identify any fallacy which my citation allegedly commits), he apparently must think that his god does not know

what to do. So we would have to infer from this roundabout admission that his god is not omniscient after all.

BB, You know that is not my position and if you knew the Bible half as well as you should you would know why. At this point, my patience with your willful distortion of Scriptural teachings is wearing thin. Go read John 20:29-31.

As for authors of books. I addressed that elsewhere with Aaron. I'm not going to repeat myself today. It's 10:23 pm where I'm at already.

BB - Why would I want a relationship with a god which requires its worshippers to be willing to kill their own children, just as it demanded of Abraham?

You'll have to justify that implied accusation of divine wrongdoing to be taken seriously. How exactly do you accuse the God of the Universe of wrongdoing when He owns it? Had he tortured children and not given them paradise in return, I'd side with you. Really, I would.

Why does God own the Universe? He made it and he claimed it. You going to dispute that? How? By what system of morality will you appeal to? If God exists, how is humanity the measure of all things? If he doesn't exist, then this is just an academic discussion between two sacks of worm food my friend.

[May 16, 2007 8:36 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

BB - Again Ecualegacy shifts the issue in order to avoid dealing with the real issue. We were discussing belief, and when I point out that all Ecualegacy's god would need to do to get someone like myself to believe it is real, would be to show itself, just as the New Testament book of Acts says happened to Saul of Tarsus. Instead of acknowledging that this would be an effective approach (according to the storybook, it was certainly effective in the case of Saul of Tarsus), he calls this a "fallacious argument" and now tells us that mere belief is not enough.

Fine. Have it your way. Behold there is a flaming cross before you. Everyone around says, "ooh, ahhh, there is the Christ. Holy Toledo, he was real after all." And what do I predict will be your response based on what I've read from you? "Jesus, I hate your guts. You're morally repugnant. You're an absentee brother. Your God is an absentee father. Your Christian slaves are self-righteous bigots." And you wonder why he hasn't bothered to come knocking around your door? He isn't wanted by you. Why would he reveal himself to you if he isn't wanted? That's why I'm fond of the saying (my dad passed this along to me once), "Faith in God isn't a problem of evidence but of pride."

[May 16, 2007 8:44 PM](#)

[ecualegacy](#) said...

BB - Christians need to provide something better than their flimsy apologetic arguments to distinguish their Jesus from simply a more developed version of an imaginary friend.

I think I've answered this assertion plenty enough. I'm spending far too much time writing what is already available to you if you would just go and read it for yourself. But you aren't looking. So I doubt you'll find it. And frustrated as I am with you Dawson, I hope someday you'll come to your senses. I'm not an atheist because that worldview simply cannot have relevance past a certain point, namely death. I'm in this game of life for keeps. Since the answer isn't to be found in Atheism, I look elsewhere. What I see as the best answer is Christianity. And my reasons have been enumerated on my own blogsite.

God bless you Dawson.

Brian (aka Ecualegacy)

[May 16, 2007 8:49 PM](#)

[openlyatheist](#) said...

...Stay tuned for Part Three...

[May 16, 2007 11:52 PM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Ecualegacy: "Hey, if you don't want to take responsibility for your own mistakes,

On the contrary, Ecua, I'm not a Christian because I fully intend to take responsibility for my own mistakes, and even my own choices and actions. I am certainly not willing to stand by while someone else takes the punishment for my wrongdoings. This is called character, Ecua. It is what I have which prevents me from adopting something as perverted as Christianity, whose central theme is the evasion of moral responsibility.

Ecualegacy: "You are *assuming* that Abraham didn't question God."

You need to read what I write a little more carefully, Ecua. You quoted me yourself:

Does the story model Abraham even wincing at this, asking why he should do this, or trying to protect his values? No, it does not. The story portrays Abraham going right along with the instruction unquestioningly.

I asked whether the story *models* Abraham asking whether or not he should be willing to kill his son Isaac. Does the story *model* this? If you think it does, tell me where? I'm not assuming anything, I'm just asking questions about what the story does portray. Indeed, it is because I'm not reading details into the story that my questions are what they are.

Ecualegacy: "He certainly did question God about Sodom!"

Sodom? I was inquiring on the story of Isaac and Abraham's instruction to prepare him as a burnt offering. You're mixing stories, Ecua!

Ecualegacy: "let me know so I can get out of the way. I don't like getting hit by lightening or being swallowed up by the ground."

Are you trying to threaten me? Let me tell you something, Ecua. I left Christianity in 1992. That's 15 years ago. No lightning has struck me. No chasm in the earth has swallowed me up. In fact, my life turned drastically for the better once I made the decision to be honest and turn from the nightmare-childishness of god-belief. So if you're afraid of lightning strikes and sinkholes, well, you're afraid of something that's not going to happen, Ecua. You're afraid of what you imagine, and it is these imaginary fears which keep you imprisoned in a failed worldview.

Ecualegacy: "if all is going to a big black pot of oblivion, can anything really matter? No. I don't think it can."

Something can be important to a person only when he is alive. Why does this mean that nothing really matters? The question you ask, Ecua, is one that each individual needs to answer for himself. I see that you have answered it already. My answer is quite different, since I love life, not death. So long as I am alive, things are going to matter to me. This is in line with the purpose I have chosen for my life: To live, and enjoy my life, no matter who disapproves. If you have an argument, let's see it. But simply announcing that you think nothing in this life matters unless you can imagine one beyond the grave that you'll somehow wake up in, is not compelling in any way. It only underscores how delusional and anti-life Christianity requires its believers to be.

Ecualegacy writes: "How exactly do you accuse the God of the Universe of wrongdoing when He owns it?"

Questions like this are all we need to see in order to recognize that the believer's focus on morality is nothing but a sham. It's like asking, 'How exactly do you accuse the owner of the murder weapon of wrongdoing when he owns it?'

Ecualegacy: "Had he tortured children and not given them paradise in return, I'd side with you. Really, I would."

Why? On your view, it owns those little children, so it can do what he wants with them. So you couldn't be siding with me in that case because you think your god has done something wrong. Try to be at least a little bit consistent here, Ecua.

Ecualegacy: "Why does God own the Universe? He made it and he claimed it. You going to dispute that? How? By what system of morality will you appeal to?"

No, that's not how. "Dispute" is not even the right word, since your position can produce absolutely no evidence whatsoever to support your claim rationally. Your position reduces to the primacy of consciousness metaphysics, which is invalid. You confuse imagination with reality. You can say that your god owns the universe because it created and claimed it, but I can say that Wod owns it for the same reasons. How do you dispute that? By appealing to a system of morality? That would beg the question, for your system of morality assumes your god, which is precisely what you need to prove. So my method does two things: first, it exposes the false metaphysics underlying your position, and then it shows how a rival arbitrary claim is sufficient to dunk your arbitrary claim into the drink.

Ecualegacy: "I'm spending far too much time writing what is already available to you if you would just go and read it for yourself. But you aren't looking."

I suppose I could say the same to you, Ecu. You seem quite unread on these objections since you're obviously so unprepared to meet them on their own terms. If you spend your time with your nose in bible-friendly propaganda books, then you may never really understand what people like me are saying.

Ecualegacy: "I'm not an atheist because that worldview simply cannot have relevance past a certain point, namely death."

Two things. First, atheism is not a worldview. Atheism is simply the absence of god-belief, nothing more. Being an atheist tells us only what one does not believe, not what he does believe. This is why there are so many different positions that different atheists take on things. For instance, some atheists affirm a Big Bang cosmology, while other atheists reject it. Some atheists embrace an epistemology of intuitions and instincts, while other atheists reject it. Some atheists endorse a morality of sacrifice, while other atheists reject it. Etc.

Two, your statement here concedes all that I would need it to concede. You're basically admitting that my worldview does have relevance in this life, "before death." Since after we die, we're dead, then we're not going to need any worldview whatsoever. Now, if you want to come back and tell us why we'll need a worldview while in the grave, it's your time, Ecu. We can all imagine waking up after we've died, but this does not make claims about an afterlife true. You need something better than merely a covert appeal to the imaginary.

Regards,
Dawson

[May 17, 2007 5:01 AM](#)

[Bahnsen Burner](#) said...

Just some quick observations and responses...

I wrote: "Van Til believed in a sovereign god, while Ecualegacy does not. Got it."

Ecualegacy: "Oh God is definitely sovereign. Just because he's letting things run amok because of our rebellion, don't think for a second there won't be an accounting. Judgment Day is coming."

"...letting things run amok..." does not indicate good and able management. On the contrary, it indicates dismally poor management, assuming there is any management present to begin with. But this is what Ecualegacy takes as an indication of "divine sovereignty." He tries to shore it up with warnings of impending doom. The sky is going to fall, we're told, so we better take cover (that is, we better prostrate ourselves before Ecualegacy's god). Mystics have been foretelling doom since the beginning of history, and yet here we are, chugging along as swimmingly as ever. Is Ecualegacy's god simply waiting for the right moment? Or, is this all just a myth that we're supposed to fear even though there's no legitimate basis to it?

Ecualegacy: "But what about II Peter 3:9, you'll say? 'God is not willing that any should perish but that all should have eternal life'."

Statements like this are intentionally noncommittal, and by keeping other characteristics attributed to the Christian god out of view, their meaning can fluctuate just enough to be made to correspond to whatever outcome happens to result without implicating the position being defended. But straight answers are what is needed: is this god willing, or not willing, that any should perish? Yes or no? Now after answering this question, we need to ask: does anything in reality happen that Ecualegacy's god doesn't want to happen? Yes or no? Then we can ask: What is Ecualegacy worried about? If he's confident that there is a god and he's in line with its will, then what's all his

fussing about? If Ecualegacy is worried and trying to do something about it (such as trying to reach out to non-believers "before it's too late"), where's his god? Why isn't his god doing the same thing? Ecualegacy will likely say his god is doing the same thing, but subjectively, "speaking to our hearts." This is reminiscent of Abraham hearing a little voice in his head saying "Go prepare your son as a burnt offering."

Ecualegacy: "No, God isn't failing at His goals."

Well, if its goal is "letting things run amok," that's pretty easily achieved: just sit back and do nothing in the case of circumstances which need active regulation in order to maintain orderliness. Of course, what's the difference between a god whose goal is "letting things run amok" and no god at all? Either way, it still falls on man's shoulders to bring order to things, and he does this through reason-guided effort.

Regardless, no one who wants to believe his imaginary deity is real, is likely to admit that it fails at achieving its goals. This is why faith is so important to the believer: it's a chosen commitment to an emotional investment that he wants to protect regardless of its stark departure from reality. But meanwhile, the believer fails to see how the attribution of goal-orientedness to a being allegedly possessing the characteristics which Christians attribute to their god commits the fallacy of the stolen concept. The Christian god is eternal, immortal, indestructible, perfect, lacking nothing. Nothing can harm it, nothing can improve it, nothing can threaten it, nothing can complete it. It is wholly static for all eternity, facing no fundamental alternatives whatsoever, and nothing can change this. At best, if it were conscious at all, it would be completely indifferent to anything else that exists. The upshot is that it has no basis for goal-setting whatsoever. Consequently, any "goal" it might pursue could only be arbitrary. And it would not matter whether or not it made progress in achieving said goal. A failure to achieve the goal wouldn't affect it any more than success in achieving it would.

Regards,
Dawson

[May 18, 2007 4:54 AM](#)