The function of dissonance within the structure of classical music can help us understand the role of evil in the unfolding of salvation history. Without dissonance, we miss the joy of resolution; without elements of friction, literary and symphonic stories do not take flight. While the musical paradigm does not decisively answer the problem of evil, it gives lie to the notion that an anodyne world is to be preferred.

The Tension of Evil: A Problem to Be Resolved

If your life is anything like mine—and I suspect that it is—it is far from perfect. Yet even in our imperfect lives, there are times of relative peace and harmony. There are times when our health is adequate, we have enough money to pay our bills, our relationships are strong, and our life's work is satisfying and meaningful. Yet there are also times when such relative peace is disturbed, when the harmony of our lives becomes discordant, when physical or emotional suffering introduces dissonance. Fortunately, there are also times when such problems are resolved, and we feel a great sense of relief. Strangely, that sense of relief may be enhanced *because* we have first suffered. Pain and suffering, when relieved, can make us appreciate what we so often take for granted.

Of course, many issues of pain and suffering do not resolve within this life. Loved ones die. Relationships are irrevocably broken. Those who commit atrocities are not always brought to justice. The process of aging robs us of much even before we reach the grave. Though we know such things are inevitable, we desire a different outcome. We long for a resolution to suffering that isn't found in this life. We hope for a better world to come, a better ending to our stories, one in which there is peace and harmony.

That pattern of pain and resolution gives us some insight into the problem of evil, the subject of this chapter. Evil might be defined as anything that keeps the world from being what it ought to be, anything that causes pain and suffering, whether physical or psychological. Evil is a problem for everyone, particularly for those who believe in an all-powerful, all-knowing, benevolent and loving God who created the universe and all that is within it. Often that problem is stated in the form of questions like these: If God has the power to do anything logically possible, if God knows that evil will occur and how to prevent evil before it happens (or how to stop it quickly after it occurs), and if God is good, why is there any evil in the world? Why is there so much evil in the world? Why is there such horrific and seemingly pointless evil in the world? Why did this evil happen to me?

While it may be impossible for finite human beings to answer those questions fully, many Christians have tried to explain why God would permit evil to occur. In the project of faith seeking understanding, Christians want to know why God would allow evil to occur and how they should respond to evil. Some might even question, given the reality of evil, if such a good and omnipotent God even exists. In fact, the problem of evil has been called "the rock of atheism."[1]

Most answers to the problem of evil claim that God has a good reason for allowing evil to occur: to bring about something valuable that wouldn't otherwise be possible. According to Greg Welty, "the pain and suffering in God's world play a necessary role in bringing about greater goods that could not be brought about except for the presence of that pain and suffering. The

[1] Henri Blocher attributes this phrase to the German playwright Georg Büchner (1813–1837). Blocher, *Evil and the Cross*, trans. David G. Preston (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 9.

world would be worse off without that pain and suffering, and so God is justified in pursuing the good by these means."[2] Such an explanation of evil is often called a greater good theodicy.[3]

In this essay, I present a new theodicy. I believe that features of some of the arts, particularly music, can give us tremendous insights into the problem of evil. I contend that one of the reasons why God allows evil to occur is to produce a satisfying resolution at the end of history as we know it, the end of this age. In great pieces of music, composers introduce tension and dissonance in order to achieve a satisfying resolution. The denouement is deeply satisfying precisely because it was preceded by that tension and dissonance. Similarly, God has ordained tension and dissonance in the form of evil in order to achieve an eschatological world that is greater than any world that never had evil in it. My proposal is not very different from what the apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:17: "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."[4] Or, in the words of Augustine, "In every case, the joy is greater, the worse the pain which has preceded it."[5]

A Word on Music

This chapter will focus primarily on an analogy from music. I realize that not all of us are musically literate, even if we enjoy listening to music. Since not all of us read music or have experience with musical theory, I will start with some basics. I ask the reader to persevere—reading about music theory might produce a light momentary affliction, but this information will prepare us for weightier matters. In this essay, I will introduce and develop various themes before tying them together into what I hope will be a satisfying conclusion.

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[2] Greg Welty, *Why Is There Evil in the World (and So Much of It)?* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2018), 14. I highly recommend Welty's book for its philosophical clarity and biblical fidelity.

[3] Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) coined the word "theodicy" by conjoining the Greek words for "God" and "justice." A theodicy justifies the ways of God with respect to evil.

[4] All Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

[5] Augustine, *Confessions* 8.3, trans. Henry Chadwick, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 138.

Music is best thought of as a language. The music that we are most familiar with is tonal music. This is the language of classical music (which I shall call art music), folk music, and pop music.[6] There are several elements of musical language: the melody or tune, harmony (the conjunction of various notes at one given time, as well as how such conjunctions, or chords, relate to each other), rhythm, dynamics (roughly, the volume level), and timbre (often related to which instrument or instruments are playing). We will mostly be concerned with harmony in these pages.

One of the important aspects of the language of music is the concept of a key. In Western music, there are usually two varieties of keys: major and minor. Each contains seven different notes that form a scale. For example, the key of C major contains the following seven notes: C, D, E, F, G, A, and B (the "white notes" on a piano keyboard). The key of A minor contains those same seven notes, beginning with A and ascending to G.[7]

Just as certain combinations of letters form words, certain combinations of notes "make sense," while others do not. Depending on which notes are played together, the result will be either consonance or dissonance. According to a standard music theory textbook, "The terms consonant and dissonant can be defined roughly as meaning pleasing to the ear and not pleasing to the ear, respectively, but these are very dependent on context."[8] It is true that what sounds consonant and dissonant is somewhat context-dependent. The same can be said of letters in language. The combination of letters "strz" makes no sense on its own, at least in English. But in the context of the name "Yastrzemski," those letters have meaning, at least for baseball fans.

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[6] What most people call "classical music" I will call "art music," simply because the Classical period of Western music is rather specific. "Art music" is the music of the concert hall and the academy.

[7] To complicate matters, the sixth and seventh degrees of a minor scale (in A, these would be F and G) are often raised, depending on context. So, an A minor scale might have F-sharp and G-sharp instead of F and G.

[8] Stefan Kostka, Dorothy Payne, and Byron Almén, *Tonal Harmony: With an Introduction to Post-Tonal Music*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2018), 21.

There is also a subjective element to music; some find the more complex chords of jazz to be beautiful, while others may hear those same chords as "noise." But consonance is not simply a matter of subjective taste. There is an objective undergirding to consonance and dissonance.

Certain pitches sound good together because there is a simple, mathematical relationship between them. For example, there is a 1:2 relationship between any two notes separated by an octave. There is a 2:3 ratio between the tonic and dominant notes, a fifth apart. A major chord has a 4:5:6 ratio, another simple ratio. By contrast, the frequencies of any two neighboring semitones form a 24:25 ratio. This is hardly a simple relationship. If you were to walk up to a piano keyboard and simultaneously depress a B and C, or an E and F (just to stick to those white keys), you would hear this dissonance. Neighboring pitches separated by semitones generally sound bad to our ears. They recall the music that Bernard Herrmann composed to accompany the famous shower scene in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*. Playing two notes that are separated by a whole tone, such as F and G (think of the beginning of "Chopsticks"), also produces a dissonance of kinds, though one not as jarring. The point is that what we understand to be consonant or dissonant is determined by the relationships between the frequencies we hear.[9]

The two most important notes in the scale are the first note, the tonic, and the fifth note, the dominant. A triad, or chord consisting of three notes, is usually built on each of these two notes. A tonic chord consists of the first, third, and fifth notes in the scale. The chord built on the fifth degree is known as the dominant. The harmony in most pieces of Western art music moves from the tonic (the C chord, for example) to other harmonies, and then back to the tonic, often by means of the dominant chord (the G chord). In these pieces, the music leaves its "home" and goes on a journey, but there is a sense that the music must return "home" in the end.

[9]For more information on the mathematics behind music, see Eli Maor, *Music by the Numbers: From Pythagoras to Schoenberg* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, Press, 2018).

Great Works of Art

Let's take a step back from music for a moment. Consider any great work of art. What makes that work of art great? Often, we might say that a work of art is great because it's beautiful, because it's pleasing to the eye or the ear. But what makes that work so pleasing? Often, it's a combination of various factors. The artist has technical skill. The composition (of a painting, a novel, a piece of music) is unified and possesses a structure that is symmetrical or orderly. And the composition is varied. A great novel often features several characters, several settings, several times, and several events. Great paintings often depict many objects, sometimes at varied distances (foreground and background), and in many different colors. Likewise, music has structure and variety.

A piece of music that consists of one note would literally be monotonous. Usually, a piece of music that contains several different notes in the melody and only one chord in the harmony is rather monotonous. Even as simple a hymn as "Amazing Grace" has seven different notes in the melody and four different chords in the harmony. Monotonous songs aren't worth listening to, and simple songs can become boring rather quickly. (Singing "Amazing Grace" twenty times in a row might feel like singing the full version of "99 Bottles of Beer.")

Great pieces of music have more variety than "Amazing Grace" does. Great pieces of music are like great pieces of literature. If music is a language, a piece of music can be thought of as a narrative. A great piece of music is like an aural journey, one in which there is a beginning, a middle, and an end. It gives you the sense of going somewhere and then coming back home. In short, it tells a story. And any great story features conflict.

In her recent book on reading literature, English professor Karen Swallow Prior claims, "All literature—stories most obviously—centers on some conflict, rupture, or lack. Literature is

birthed from our fallenness: without the fall, there would be no story."[10] If a group of people get along peacefully, without any conflict, without any type of evil to defeat, there is no story worth telling. No book worth reading would be written about a set of characters who never disagreed or were never threatened by outside forces, characters who lived in a world without fighting, loss, heartache, or death. Some people prefer to read non-fiction, but very few would want to read non-friction. Using more technical language, Tzvetan Todorov writes, "An ideal narrative begins with a stable situation that some force will perturb." He explains that the result is "a state of disequilibrium," from which a "second equilibrium," or a resolution, needs to be established.[11]

The same is true of large-scale pieces of music. Great pieces of music feature a similar pattern. The Christian theologian and musician Jeremy Begbie identifies this general structure as "equilibrium–tension–resolution."[12] This pattern provides the large-scale framework for many compositions. Within that larger framework, within the movements of a symphony or sonata, there are also many small-scale instances of that pattern. Tension is "the generation of a sense of incompleteness," which can be produced by dissonance but also by unresolved cadences (a dominant chord that doesn't go back "home" to the tonic), or modulations to different keys, which creates a kind of musical exile, a moving away from something stable, our ear's sense of "home."[13]

To produce a satisfying homecoming that gives the listener great relief, we first need tension. Tension may be created by moving away from the home key. Jarring dissonances can create greater levels of tension. Yet a piece of music with only dissonance, or with no sense of a

[10] Karen Swallow Prior, *On Reading Well: Finding the Good Life through Great Books* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2018), 26.

[11] Tzvetan Todorov, *Introduction to Poetics*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 51.

[12] Jeremy Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 45.

[13] Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time*, 38.

home key, would be one that would grate our ears and leave us without any sense of equilibrium, not to mention resolution. (Imagine listening to an interminable loop of those two dissonant notes in that *Psycho* theme or in "Chopsticks"!) So, though tension or dissonance creates drama, such "disequilibrium" must be set within the context of equilibrium. We desire equilibrium and resolution, but to have a satisfying resolution, there must be first musical tension.[14]

The Drama of Sonata Form

To get a fuller appreciation for how musical tension can lead to satisfying resolutions—and how that tension, when increased, can lead to even more glorious resolutions—let us consider one prominent type of musical composition.

Sonata form is a musical structure commonly found in art music of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The sonata form consists of three main parts: the exposition, the development, and the recapitulation. In his classic work on the sonata form, Charles Rosen describes these parts: "The *exposition* presents the principal thematic material, establishes the tonic key and modulates to the dominant or to some other closely related key." So, the exposition establishes the tonal "home" of the movement, along with its main themes (melodies). The first theme is presented in the tonic key and the second theme is usually stated in the dominant key.[15] That movement away from home gives the listener a sense of a journey, and leaving home creates a small amount of tension, perhaps in the form of a question: how will we get back home?

[14] It is true that some pieces of music that we enjoy, such as folk and pop songs, contain only small amounts of tension. These songs contain simple harmonies and they are almost never dissonant. These songs are arguably not great pieces of art, but they are satisfying. The reason why they are satisfying is because we desire the peace and simplicity of these songs. Our lives are not simple; they are dissonant. Popular songs provide the peace, harmony, and order that are sorely lacking in our lives. In other words, the tension of our lives finds resolution in these songs. Great works of narrative art, including musical compositions, are self-contained stories. They heighten the tension so that the delayed resolution seems sweeter and more gratifying.

[15] Charles Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, rev. ed. (New York: Norton, 1988), 1–2.

Though tension may be present in the exposition, it increases greatly in the development section. According to Rosen, "It is in this part of sonata form that the most distant and most rapid modulations are to be found, and the technique of development is the fragmentation of the themes of the exposition and the reworking of the fragments into new combinations and sequences."[16] This section of the sonata has greater dissonance. But, as stated above, dissonance is only one variety of tension. Tension is also created by rapid key changes. Not only do we have a sense of being "exiled" from our tonic "home," but the shifting harmonies can introduce a sense of confusion and instability. If there's not literal dissonance, perhaps some cognitive dissonance on the part of the listener has been created. There are times when the key is not clear, and this is often referred to as "tonal ambiguity." Tension is also created by the fact that we do not hear the main themes of the exposition in their original form. We want to hear the whole tune, but we only get snippets. Those themes do return in full, in the tonic, during the recapitulation. As Rosen explains, "The *recapitulation* starts with the return of the first theme in the tonic. The rest of this section 'recapitulates' the exposition as it was first played, except that the second group and closing theme appear in the tonic."[17] The recapitulation brings us home, and such homecoming, that resolution, is more satisfying because of the previous journey, with all its tensions and ambiguities.

A work by Franz Schubert (1797–1828) provides an example of how a piece written in sonata form features dissonance that leads to resolution. Schubert's Piano Sonata in B-flat major, D. 960, was composed during the last year of his life.[18] The first movement of the sonata begins

[16] Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 2.
[17] Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, 2.
[18] One can hear this piece while reading the sheet music at www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAZ8PA5_gVA (accessed August 2, 2021). Though the word of the Lord endures forever, websites and URLs do not. Should that link fail to work, one can search for "Schubert piano sonata 960 score" at www.youtube.com. Several similar videos exist. Similarly, PDF versions of the score can easily be found online, as can audio recordings through various music streaming services.

with the first theme in the tonic, B-flat major. The first theme is pleasing but not out of the ordinary. But something interesting occurs at the end of the first phrase, in measure 8: there is a low, trilled G-flat that resolves to F. Charles Fisk calls this trill "remarkable, even strange."[19] That low G-flat trill is strange because it is foreign to the B-flat major scale. (One would expect to hear a G-natural.) G-flat is indeed part of the parallel minor key, B-flat minor, but nothing in the music thus far suggests a move to the minor key. Fisk believes that this trill foreshadows the modulation to different keys, which will occur shortly in the piece. But when the audience first hears that G-flat, the note sounds ominous and threatening. That is so because the G-flat clashes with the F held in the right hand. (The two notes are a semitone apart; again, think of that *Psycho* theme.) The trill oscillates back and forth between a G-flat and an A-flat, another "foreign" note that clashes with the A-natural in the right hand, producing another semitone dissonance.

That brief use of dissonance foreshadows "exile" to foreign harmonic lands. The development section begins in C-sharp minor, shifts to D-flat major (the parallel major of C-sharp minor, enharmonically spelled), and then starts to move quickly through several keys before transitioning back to B-flat for the recapitulation.[20] Interestingly, in his analytical outline of the movement, Fisk labels the beginning of the development section "Memory and reflection and exile." At the beginning of the rapid modulations through various keys, Fisk writes, "WILDERNESS."[21] It is easy to see, as we soon will, how this structure maps on to the narrative presented in the Bible.

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[19] Charles Fisk, "What Schubert's Last Sonata Might Hold," in *Music and Meaning*, ed. Jenefer Robinson (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 179.

[20] Those keys are E major, C major, A-flat minor, B minor, and D minor.

[21] Fisk, "What Schubert's Last Sonata Might Hold," 180. Fisk's essay is not explicitly Christian, which is why his labels are interesting. Fisk's diagram also identifies that G-flat trill as a "protagonist" who seeks to assert his individuality, is then banished, and seeks to be reincluded, only to be exiled before returning home.

At the beginning of that "wilderness" wandering through various keys, which starts at measure 158, semitone dissonances are introduced in succession. These dissonances don't last long, and Schubert uses them to prepare modulations to different keys. Yet those dissonances sound like pain. The wandering through foreign keys is confusing. There is no sense of rest. The listener wants the music to return home, but that homecoming is delayed. Like all movements in sonata form, the resolution comes in the recapitulation section, which brings us back to the original key, B-flat major, and the main theme. The relevance of this use of dissonance and "exile" to foreign keys will become clear when we look at the narrative presented in the Bible.

The Biblical Story as Musical Narrative

Let us now turn to the biblical narrative and employ musical metaphors to see how God uses tension to achieve a glorious resolution. The first musical metaphor is God as composer. In eternity past, God has composed all that will occur in human history. Such a view of God assumes a particular view of providence, that God has meticulous control over all events that will ever occur. I believe that God exercises this kind of meticulous providence because of the testimony of Scripture.[22] Though Christians disagree about the extent to which God controls the affairs of creation, all should agree that God knows the end from the beginning due to his omniscience, and that, while knowing everything that will ever occur, he decided to create this world and not another.

In deciding to create a world, God must decide whether the world will possess any evil or not. God has sufficient moral reasons for allowing evil if that evil produces some good that cannot otherwise be obtained. One such good is God's maximal glory: God is more glorified

[22] For a detailed look at what Scripture says about evil, see Blocher, *Evil and the Cross*, 84–127. For a more accessible and still thorough account of what the Bible says about evil and God's providence, see Welty, *Why Is There Evil in the World (and So Much of It)?*

through the incarnation and atonement of Jesus, which would not occur without there first being sin for which to atone. One of the reasons, perhaps among many, why God ordains the occurrence of evil is to create conditions that necessitate the incarnation of the Son of God, his sacrificial death on the cross, and his resurrection. The tension of evil leads to a glorious resolution secured by Christ. This complex of events brings God more glory, reveals more clearly who God is and what he is like, and demonstrates his love for his people.

Just as Schubert had the option of writing a piano sonata without dissonance, God could have chosen to create a world with no sin. However, if Schubert wrote a sonata that consisted of only four chords, all of which are native to the key B-flat, there would be no suspense, no drama, no satisfying resolution. In a word, it would be boring. We wouldn't know Schubert's name if that were all he wrote in his brief life. If God did not allow evil to occur, there would be no need for the incarnation, no need for Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, no triumph over the grave, and no yearning on the part of his people for Jesus's glorious return.

If we accept the idea that God is like a composer, we can see how the story of the Bible resembles sonata form. The opening chapters of Genesis are like the exposition. The unspoiled creation is the home key, and many principal themes are introduced, including the kingdom of God, the glory of God, the image of God, the temple, and the covenant. Soon, an ominous note is introduced: God warns Adam that if he doesn't obey, he will die. Another ominous note, one foreign to the home key, is the voice of the serpent tempting Eve. The harmony of the garden of Eden is shattered by the dissonance of Adam and Eve's sin. This tragic event leads to tonal exile; the development section has begun. The music of Scripture moves to new, strange keys, in which snippets of the exposition's themes, echoes of Eden, resound. There are even times when resolution appears imminent. After the flood, Noah and his family seem to emerge like a new

creation from the waters of chaos. Solomon appears to be the promised Son of David. When he inaugurates his glorious temple, we wonder if he will reign forever and bring blessings to the world. But these men and so many others fail. These events lead to frustrated and deceptive cadences. The tension heightens.

Then, in a surprising turn of events, God himself becomes a human being, picks up an instrument, and starts playing. His playing is authoritative; his technique is masterful. He performs all the old themes, reintroducing them in new and beautiful ways. But instead of resolution, the greatest dissonance the world has ever known occurs when the God-man dies. Yet this was no accident, no failure on his part to play the score that was written in eternity past. From one perspective, the sound of Jesus's death is the ugliest event that has ever occurred. From another perspective, that dissonance is beautiful, because it leads to resolution.

With the resurrection, a new key is introduced. Hope for a resolution is restored. Yet we have not reached the recapitulation section. Occasional dissonance occurs, and while the theme of Jesus is played throughout the world, it is accompanied by discordant harmonies.

Our lives do not start in the exposition, but rather in the development section. We enter a world of ambiguous situations and uncertainty about where our lives are headed. When evil occurs, often without warning, the result is cacophony. From our perspective, the dissonance may last a long time. In the case of Schubert's sonata, the dissonance may last a couple of seconds before resolving, at least temporarily. Even Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, one of the longest operas and a preeminent example of beautiful resolution after tonal ambiguity and dissonance, resolves after four hours of music. But dissonance in our lives may last days, months, or years. Cancer may slowly consume a spouse. A debilitating disease eats away the body year after year until death. Great evils like murder and even genocide appear to be

meaningless noise. But we remember that God's timing is not ours. What appears to be endless dissonance now is almost nothing in the expanse of eternity. We are not able to interpret the dissonance of our lives because we do not understand how it fits into the larger composition God has written.

Yet God has promised us a good ending. So, we wait for the recapitulation. At that time, all the old themes will be played in the original key. However, this time they will be played by an orchestra of innumerable players in the amphitheater of a new garden, a new Jerusalem, and a new cosmos. The music will sound sweeter than anything we have ever heard because of the preceding dissonance, disorienting modulations, tonal ambiguities, and deceptive cadences. We will then realize that each instance of evil, now completely resolved, contributed to the grand symphony God composed. There is no meaningless noise, for every note has a purpose.

Objections

When people consider the evil that is apparent in the world, they may want to have an easy answer as to why, if God exists, there could ever be such evil. However, I don't think there are any easy answers to the problem of evil. One of the reasons why evil is so confounding is that it doesn't make sense. So, this theodicy might not be a quick and easy answer. It might not convince atheists of the reality of God's existence. But it hews closely to the biblical narrative, it presents the gospel clearly, and it shows at least one reason why God would allow evil to occur.

Still, some may object to this theodicy. Limited space permits me to address briefly only two objections. The first possible objection is that if what I argue is true, we should be resigned to our fate and should therefore not attempt to fight against evil. However, that would not be a correct conclusion to make. There is a difference between God's having composed all of history and our knowing what will happen. We can affirm *that* God has composed all that occurs without

knowing *what* the various notes of the score are. So, when evil occurs, if we can bring criminals to justice or cure a disease, we should do so. Though finite humans are not able to bring about the ultimate resolution of all evil, we can achieve small-scale resolutions. Large-scale pieces of music have moments of local resolution before achieving global resolution; the same is true in this life.

In fact, knowing that God has composed the whole of reality imbues life with a great sense of meaning and purpose. And when tragedy strikes, though we may not know why evil has occurred, we can trust that God has a purpose for it, and we can trust that he will, in the end, make all things well. Such knowledge gives us hope.

A second objection may be that any kind of aesthetic theodicy is not adequate to explain the horrors that have occurred throughout human history. I do not claim that aesthetic considerations alone can bear the weight of justifying why God permits evil. I agree with Philip Tallon that achieving beauty, in this case a beautiful story, is not enough to justify permitting evil.[23] I believe that my theodicy can and should be combined with various other theodicies and/or defenses. There are in fact many goods that can only be obtained by way of evil. Without evil and its accompanying suffering, there would be no compassion, sacrifice, bravery, victory, and many other desirable outcomes. There may be other reasons why God permits evil to occur, ones that we have yet to imagine or could not conceive given our limitations as finite creatures.

Yet the greatest good that emerges out of evil is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Sin necessitates the incarnation of the Son of God, his atoning death, and his triumphant resurrection. In these events, God most clearly reveals himself, God demonstrates his love for his people, and God is most glorified.

[23] "Theodicists rightly understand that beauty and intensity as values are probably not enough to justify any grave evil, but they wrongly think that this means that theodicy's project has no place for aesthetics." Philip Tallon, *The Poetics of Evil: Toward an Aesthetic Theodicy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 200.