

What IS the difference amongst all these words? Why is it important to know?

Many people today apply the word “evil” to all the ills of the world they see happening. While there certainly is “evil” present, it is not the worst level of distancing oneself from the will of our Universal Father.

What is ERROR?

Let’s start with the first in this list: ‘Error’ Simply put, error suggests lack of intellectual keenness — for example, if you miscalculate a mathematical problem, that is an error. It is the difference between truth and mistaken thought, word or action. Even Adam and Eve in their default had their transgression adjudged as an error of judgment and not the sin of conscious and deliberate rebellion. Know that errors do not constitute a threat to eternal survival.

If the love of truth and the willingness to go wherever it leads is desirable, then must we grow up in a world where error is present and falsehood always possible...that means: to be able to choose. The only evolutionary world without error (the possibility of unwise judgment) would be a world without free intelligence. Is this what we want? To be unthinking, automated robots?

If it is not a survival issue, are there consequences to “error”?

While the good effort of each man benefits all men, the error or evil of each man augments the tribulation of all men, hence, do we have bad things happening to innocent persons. Yes, every decision we make has ripples throughout our world and universe.

Think about that.

What can you think, say and do today which will benefit one and all?

Understand how it seems that we are always and gradually “backing into the truth”, beginning and progressing in error, and finally attaining the threshold of truth ‘Do we not do our best to learn from our mistakes `errors’? This is what the presence of truth and untruth, fact and falsehood create — the potential of confusing error...OR! the supreme joy of wisdom experience of finding God’s will and doing it!

Tribulation: a cause of great trouble or suffering.

As we look deeper into our religious life, institutional or personal (as taught by Jesus and desired by our Heavenly Father), our interpretative beliefs may be right or wrong, or a mixture of truth and error. This is where the Spirit of Truth helps us to discern between the two — kind of like a “truth-meter” — that is, does a concept “ping” in your heart as feeling correct? Does it make you feel closer to God? Are you more spirit-led as a result of accepting this new concept of truth? That is the test, isn’t it? In exhibiting the fruits of the spirit?

Here we need to contrast “evil” with “error”:

Looking at “evil” more closely, here is another way to help you: seeing it as human limitations, partial knowledge which constitutes potential evil, mistaken judgment, as Jesus said in response to Thomas — the unintended transgression of misstep. Always must we remember that none of these negative qualities are inherent in the Father! They are ours for the choosing when he enabled us to do with his gift of free will. Let us make every effort not to torment his indwelling presence by subjecting him to live through the consequences of our “evil” choices.

How can God, if he is infinitely good, permit us to suffer the sorrows of evil?

Jesus says: “God is love; therefore he must be good, and his goodness is so great and real that it cannot contain the small and unreal things of evil. God is so positively good that there is absolutely no place in him for negative evil. Evil is the immature choosing and the unthinking misstep of those who are resistant to goodness, rejecting of beauty, and disloyal to truth. Evil is only the misadaptation of immaturity or the disruptive and distorting influence of ignorance. Evil is the inevitable darkness which follows upon the heels of the unwise rejection of light. Evil is that which is dark and untrue, and which, when consciously embraced and willfully enclosed, becomes sin.” (130:1‘5)

Can you see...

from Jesus’ description of evil how far away we can easily move from our Father and his goodness? Can you see how our actions, or the actions of others, greatly impact on our own being, or possibly on the lives of others? Look at violence in the world, in the lives of others or your own life: what do they have in common? Somehow the path to righteousness has gone astray- maybe, someone else has brought pain onto another, for example: the decision by country leaders to go to war and the effect on its citizens, physical abuse by an adult in the home, and on and on. These are all the lasting effects of the Lucifer rebellion.

Shall we take a closer look at “sin”?

‘Sin’ is a closer step to totally separating us from the love of the Father and his purposes for us individually and as a whole. It is the willful advance from the mistaken judgment on to when the human will consciously endorses and knowingly embraces a deliberate immoral judgment. “Consciously” means that we are fully aware of our proceeding decision. This is where pausing, stopping to take that thoughtful moment before saying and doing becomes crucially important to our future actions and life in the spirit. However, the repeated decisions to embrace sin becomes increasingly closer to annihilation/permanent disappearance of the soul — our future self!

Therefore, is the ultimate destruction to our survival – Iniquity!

Hoping to simplify this for us: iniquity is indicative of vanishing personality control. It consists in an open and persistent defiance of the loving nature and will of our Paradise Father and becomes automatically soul suicidal.

Looking at the details of evil, sin and iniquity and their affect us on this world of Rebellion:

In answer to Thomas' question: "Master, what is evil?" Jesus responded:

"Do not make the mistake of confusing error with the evil! one, more correctly the iniquitous one (Lucifer). He whom you call the evil one is the son of self-love, the high administrator who knowingly went into deliberate rebellion against the rule of my Father and his loyal Sons. But I have already vanquished these sinful rebels. Make clear in your mind these different attitudes toward the Father and his universe. Never forget these laws of relation to the Father's will:

"**Evil** is the unconscious or unintended transgression of the divine law, the Father's will. Evil is likewise the measure of the imperfectness of obedience to the Father's will.

"**Sin** is the conscious, knowing, and deliberate transgression of the divine law, the Father's will. Sin is the measure of unwillingness to be divinely led and spiritually directed.

"**Iniquity** is the willful, determined, and persistent transgression of the divine law, the Father's will. Iniquity is the measure of the continued rejection of the Father's loving plan of personality survival and the Sons' merciful ministry of salvation. (148:2-5)

Studying the above explanation from Jesus himself, we can understand the different levels of deliberately NOT obeying the Father's will, of persistently NOT consecrating our will to the doing of his will, that there are indeed, eternal consequences to both the transgressor and, just as grievously at times, to those around the transgressor. This is what is causing us mortals here on Urantia to have such difficulty in understanding God, owing to the far-reaching consequences of the Lucifer rebellion and the Caligastia betrayal.

Reminder:

Lucifer — the brilliant System Sovereign at the time of the rebellion 200,000 years ago; Caligastia — the Planetary Prince of our world at that time, who sided with the iniquitous Lucifer.

However, rest in the following assurance:

"Human nature may tend toward evil, but it is not inherently sinful. Be not downcast by your failure wholly to forget some of your regrettable experiences. The mistakes which you fail to forget in time will be forgotten in eternity." (156:5.8)

If we could only truly believe that our Heavenly Father loves us, not like a Father, but AS a Father, we would better appreciate his efforts to assist us with the many unseen helpers he has given us, in order to right us on our path. As Jesus told us: "If you would but believe that my Father loves you with an infinite love, then you are in the kingdom of God."

His Spirit actually indwells our mind, and his love for us is both infinite and supreme.

Like the good parents of today, he suffers with us when trouble comes.

To the continued acceptance of the Father's loving plan of personality survival and the Sons' merciful ministry of salvation. ~ **Monica**

Questions to discuss:

- Knowing the difference amongst all these words, how to best avoid sinful behavior?
- What do you need to do to make sure, in doing your very best, how to produce ripples of goodness in your thoughts, words and actions in the "world" around you?

Now is a good time to say The Lord's Prayer together. Consider writing down a prayer request and give it to your leader.

Next week we will study Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People? Week #43