

The Brothers Karamazov: Rebellion

- 1) What reasons does Ivan give for focusing on children rather than adults?
- 2) If humanity is to possess the moral freedom to choose between good and evil, then God must allow evil to exist. What is Ivan's complaint about this account of evil?
- 3) Why do you think Aloysha says "*I want to suffer, too*"?
- 4) Why do you think Ivan says "*there are none guilty*"? How does this agree or disagree with the earlier explanation of why God permits evil in the world?
- 5) Why does the redemption of suffering by a future harmony (ie. heaven or paradise) not satisfy Ivan?
- 6) Why does Ivan say that neither retribution nor forgiveness will atone for the suffering of the innocent?
- 7) Ivan says that he doesn't reject God but does reject God's world. Is this a sensible position?
- 8) Is there a difference between the kind of religious question that Ivan is asking--why is there evil at all?--and the moral question, "Is it ever justified to use evil means for the sake of good ends"?
- 9) Why does Ivan think that he should "give back his ticket"? Does this conclusion make any sense?
- 10) Do any of these arguments (attributed to Ivan) make logical sense?
 - 1) *God permits undeserved cruelty. Life is essentially unjust. Therefore life is intolerable.*
 - 2) *God does not exist. Everything happens according to the laws of nature and freedom is an illusion. Therefore life is intolerable.*
 - 3) *Choosing to go on living in an unjust world is the equivalent to endorsing or being an accomplice to that world.*