**4. (a) Explain how Augustinian type theodicies offer a solution to the problem of evil. [20]**

The existence of evil and the existence of a God who is omnipotent (unlimited power) and omnibenevolent (all good/loving) results in a logical inconsistency. If God has both the power and the motivation to remove evil, then it seems a logical contradiction that evil exists. It implies either that God is not omnipotent or that he is not omnibenevolent. In either case he is not God of classical theism. The only alternative is to conclude that evil does not exist but most would regard that as a more difficult option to support since we all seem to experience or at least understand that pain and suffering exist. A theodicy is an attempt to justify the righteousness of God in the face of the existence of evil. Augustine proposed the framework of such an attempt that has become the traditional Christian response to the existence of evil. However, to say that Augustine’s theodicy is a single theodicy can be misleading. Augustine examined several problems about the existence of evil and each one in itself is a separate explanation for a particular problem. This means that although Augustine’s theodicy is a composite of these, an Augustinian type theodicy, often developed by other thinkers, does not necessarily focus on all the issues that Augustine did. The first problem for Augustine was that God was creator of everything and yet evil exists. The key to this solution for Augustine, is that God did not create evil but that evil was the result of human disobedience in what is called ‘The Fall’ of humanity; the origins of evil are explained through human action. This is often developed in what is called the free will defence, allowing humans to be free moral agents explains how, through sinfulness, evil enters the world. Augustine was also interested in the idea of evil ‘existing’. He was not happy with this and so argued that evil itself is not a substance but rather an absence of good. For example, impaired vision simply means the eye is not functioning as it should rather than it being filled by evil; likewise, sin means not doing as one should. Another problem was that even though Adam ‘fell’ into sinful acts, why does that mean that all human beings are sinful? The Augustinian type theodicy argues that all human beings were seminally present in Adam’s actions and this rebellion against God has caused a rift between us and God, so we are separate from him. 2 However, Augustine argued that God has done something about the problem of suffering. God, in Jesus, died on the Cross to reverse the consequences of evil caused by human rebellion and our souls are made new by Jesus’ death making it possible for us to be reunited with God. Evil is therefore removed. As a result, the Augustinian theodicy is often referred to as a soul-deciding theodicy. This theodicy retains God’s omnipotence and omnibenevolence and accepts that evil exists. It does appear to solve the problem for many Christians.

**4. (a) Explain how Augustinian type theodicies offer a solution to the problem of evil. [20]**

There are two types of evil in our world today and these are moral and natural evil. Moral evil is a consequence of humans acting in morally examples of moral evil can be the holocaust in which 6 million Jews were killed. Natural evil is the result of natural malfunctioning and example of natural evil could be the earthquake in Japan in 2011, which created a tsunami. Suffering is therefore the consequences of such evil. The presence of evil and suffering in our world is a major argument against God’s existence for non-believers also it also provides believers with a problem. It is a problem for believers of the God of classical theism as they believe in only one God who is omniscient and omnibenevolent. How can a God who is both omniscient and omnibenevolent allow evil and suffering to exist in the world? Augustine therefore proposed a theodicy, which is an attempt to justify God in the face of evil. He based his theodicy on Genesis 3. He believed that God created the world perfect and sin only entered the world through Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were therefore punished. God does not have to intervene to deal with the evil and suffering around us. However, God did not want this to happen and so sent his only son Jesus to die on the cross at Calvary, to save us from our sins. Augustine also proposed the idea that God gave us free will so that we can make our own choice. Adam and Eve took advantage of this free will and used it to disobey God and to sin. Therefore Augustine attempts to addresses the problem of evil by saying that moral evil is directly caused by the actions of Adam and Eve as described in Genesis 3. Augustine has no answer to the problem of natural evil. Augustine’s theodicy is referred to as a souldeciding theodicy. However, the theodicy has many weaknesses. For example, surely it is not fair for God to punish people for others' mistakes? Another weakness is that it suggests that God was not able to create us so that we never chose to.

**Example 1 4(b) ‘Irenaean type theodicies have never been successful in responding to the problem of evil.’ Evaluate this view. [30]**

The Irenaean theodicy refers to the ideas of the philosopher Irenaeus. He based his theodicy on the idea that humans were created in the image of God but they need to mature into the likeness of God. Humans are an epistemic distance away from God, so that they can grow and mature into his likeness. Evil and suffering exist to help humans to become 'one with God'. Humans can choose to love God or not to love God. However evil and suffering exist as a result of free will, they exist to allow humans to learn from their mistakes and grow in maturity. Some agree with the statement and say that yes it does deal with the problem of evil for religious believers because they can see that evil and suffering exist purely to allow humans to grow and freely chose to become one with God rather than being compelled to obey all of God's commands. Humans all face evil and suffering in their lives, but it has a purpose, the final cause of free will is mature growth towards being more God-like. Irenaeus believed that going to Heaven, which is achieved through growing into God's likeness, will allow the suffering on earth to be long forgotten. John Hick also states that 'goodness' developed by free choice is infinitely better than the 'goodness' enforced upon non-autonomous beings. Others disagree, as this theodicy fails to deal with the issue that some people in their lives are faced with far more evil and suffering than others. How can it be fair that some people face more than others? Also how can it be acceptable to allow innocent children to suffer – they don't have the maturity to grow towards being more God-like. This form of suffering appears to be totally immoral and makes no sense. Another reason why some people may disagree with the statement is that surely making people suffer to help them is a contradiction? For example atrocities such as the Holocaust can never be justifiable on such grounds. D.Z. Phillips argued that is never justifiable to hurt someone in order to help them. If God is all-loving why would he want evil and suffering to exist? Overall, I believe that whether you think the Irenaean theodicy solves the problem of evil depends very much on how a believer views the nature of God in light of the evil and suffering in the world. If you are able to accept that an all-loving God allows people to suffer in order for them to become more God-like and to ensure they get to heaven then the theodicy appears to work. If however you cannot reconcile the evil and suffering in the world – particularly that of innocent children with God's all loving nature then the theodicy appears to fail. 4

**Example 2 4(b) ‘Irenaean type theodicies have never been successful in responding to the problem of evil.’ Evaluate this view. [30]**

In this essay I'm going to analyse the statement of ‘The Irenaean Theodicy solves the problem of evil’. I will view both for and against statement and I will try to do the unbiased. This theodicy is more widely accepted by religious believers than that of Augustine, as Irenaeus does say that we will eventually go to heaven, meaning because we suffer evil we are able to enter heaven. The Irenaean theodicy even allows for the possibility of the evolution theory. As he says there is a possibility that God created us but not the universe. This means that God doesn't have any say in the creation of evil, other than God suffers when we suffer. The free will defence theory also helps Irenaeus solve the problem of evil as it agrees with the idea that freewill kind of causes certain types of evil not God. However David Hume put forward that Irenaeus is wrong as Hume questioned that if God is omnibenevolent and omnipotent, then evil should not exist. As evil does exist, either God is not omnibenevolent or omnipotent, which means he is not the God of classical theism. David Hume suggests that if evil exists then God cannot be all powerful as God does not appear to have the power to stop it. This also means God did not create evil. However this theory is technically not a theory as it is a justification of God in a world of evil. This process eliminates part of God’s essence, reducing him from the God of classical theism. In conclusion Irenaeus is a greater solver of the problem of evil compared to Augustine, but Irenaeus still has many disadvantages and cons in solving the problem of evil