

Reading Questions for October 26

These questions covers a chapter called “Rebellion” from a book by Fyodor Dostoevsky called *The Brothers Karamazov*. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

This week we’re discussing whether evil is compatible with God’s existence. For today, we’re going to look at some reasons to think the answer is no. For Wednesday, we’ll look at some reasons to think the answer is yes. And on Friday, we’ll talk through what you all think about this issue. Today’s reading is from a novel; it covers a conversation between two brothers, Alyosha and Ivan. In the conversation, Ivan describes some bad things that have happened to children and draws some conclusions from them. Just as a warning, some of the bad things he describes are rather disturbing.

*Questions:*

1. On page 237-8, Ivan explains that he is going to be offering some cases involving children. What is his purpose in doing so? Then on pages 241-43, he offers some cases. What are some of his key cases? How do they make you feel? Do you think the cases help him achieve his purpose? Why?
2. On pages 243-6, Ivan further develops his views about evil and suffering. What are his key points? What do you think – do you agree with him? Why?