

How Firm is Your Foundation?



October 11, 2022
Lesson Six

The Justice of God

Romans 1:18: (ESV) “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.”

See how Moses proclaimed God’s justice.

Deuteronomy 32:3 – 4: (ESV) For I will proclaim the name of the Lord; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.

Revelation 15:3b-4 is the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb:

“Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations. Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” (ESV)

God’s justice should cause us to praise him and to have reverential fear and to glorify him.

Psalms 89:14: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Psalms 97:2: Clouds and thick darkness surround him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

Justice and righteousness are indistinguishable from each other in the Old Testament.

Have you praised and thanked God lately for his justice?

The Nature of God’s Justice

Our notion of justice cannot be applied to God’s justice. God invented the idea of justice.

Unlike an earthly judge, God does not look at a case and say, “What does the law say? I must uphold the law.” His will is the law.

Daniel 4:35: (ESV) All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, “What have you done?”

God is righteous and all his ways are righteous, not because God conforms to some external standard of excellence, but solely because he “works all things after the counsel of his own will.”

There are many times when in our human thinking we may question God’s justice. Why do good people suffer and evil people don’t?



Psalms 73 is the cry of Asaph's heart as he questions these things:

For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. ⁵They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. ⁶Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. ⁷From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. ⁸They scoff, and speak with malice; with arrogance they threaten oppression. ⁹Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth. ¹⁰Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance. ¹¹They say, "How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?" ¹²This is what the wicked are like— always free of care, they go on amassing wealth. ¹³Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. (Psalm 73:3-13)

Asaph is asking the question we sometimes ask: Why do bad people flourish and good people often suffer? How can this be just?

However, Asaph continues:

When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply ¹⁷till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. ¹⁸Surely you place them on slippery ground: you cast them down to ruin. ¹⁹How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! ²⁰They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. ²¹When my heart was grieved, and my spirit embittered, ²²I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. ²³Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. ²⁴You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. ²⁵Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. ²⁶My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. ²⁸But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds. (Psalm 73:16 – 28)

Asaph no longer asked these questions after he "entered the sanctuary of God." After he went into God's presence and gained an eternal perspective

Notice how Jesus addressed the question of God's justice:

Matthew 11:25 – 26: At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do."

Luke 11:42: "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone."

The justice of God is a part of his sovereignty. Whatever God decrees and whatever he does is just, simply and solely because it is his will.

Question: How can God spare the wicked if he is a just God?

The Unity of God

Because God is unified, his mercy and his justice are not at war with each other. God is all mercy and at the same time all justice.

"God is never at cross-purposes with himself. No attribute of God is in conflict with another." (Tozer p. 100)

The Doctrine of Redemption

Psalm 32:1 – 5: Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ²Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit. ³When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. ⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

God does not suspend his justice when he declares that we as sinners are now spared the justice we deserve.

While punishing the wicked is just, because they get what they deserve, pardoning and justifying the wicked is also just because it is consistent with God’s nature.

1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God is just to forgive us.

God’s Justice in Redemption

How can God be just and allow his sinless Son to die on a cross, become sin for us, and take the punishment he did not deserve?

Romans 3:21 – 24: But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²²This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:13: Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.”

God does not offer an apology for appointing Christ unto death. Instead he declares that the sacrifice of Jesus for our sin demonstrates the righteousness and justice of God in this greatest transaction of all time.

Jesus freely gave his life.

John 10:17 – 18: The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Until Christ died, this act of offering an innocent victim in the place of the guilty was part of the daily rituals for God’s people.

Leviticus 17:11: For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.

Hebrews 9:22: In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

These sacrifices were inadequate for displaying the righteousness and justice of God, so they were super-ceded once and for all by the all-sufficient Sacrifice.

Hebrews 7:27: Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

Hebrews 9:12: He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

As we see the work of redemption, we get the clearest, most solemn and grandest display of God's righteousness and justice. We see how much he hates sin, how he abhors sin, and we see the severity of his sentence upon sin. He satisfied his own justice in redemption—at a great price—and his justice is satisfied so that we don't have to endure the justice we deserve.

Jesus endured the ultimate injustice for you and me.

Acts 8:32b – 33: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.

God's justice is being stored up for those who are not redeemed.

Romans 2:5: But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

How does thinking on God's justice affect you? How should it affect our prayer life?

Hebrews 12:28-29: Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."

Since God is just, what does he require of us? How do we address the injustices of the world—the injustices all around us?

Micah 6:8: He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

- First, make sure you are just in your actions and attitudes toward others.
- Make sure you are not indifferent to the injustice around you

Psalms 146:7: He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free.

Zechariah 7:9-10: "This is what the LORD Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor. Do not plot evil against each other.'

Psalms 82:3: Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed.

- Don't underestimate the impact you can have by being involved in reaching out to those who have suffered injustices.
 - Get involved with a ministry that is involved in addressing injustice.
 - Pray for ministries that are involved in injustice.
 - Find ways to help - food pantries; Samaritan's Purse, etc.