

God's Justice

The church of the dark ages believed that God's "justice" and God's "wrath" were the same thing. The "fear of death" Hebrews 2:14-15 held millions of people in bondage to a religious system that exercised complete control. Their view of God was that of a tyrant whom they could never please. Before his revelation of "the just shall live by faith," Martin Luther lived a life of mental torment and many self-inflicted sufferings, seeking to please God, which he never succeeded to do. To him, the "gospel of Christ" revealed "the justice of God," and God's "justice" was about "penance" and "punishment."

Much has changed in the church during the five hundred years since the reformation, but very little has changed about the view of God. In the eyes of most, He is still a God that cannot be pleased. If that is not the case, why must Jesus "cover us" so God can't see us? Or, why say Jesus "took our penalty" if God was not intent on punishing us? "Penal substitution" is based upon the idea that God requires a punishment that we could never endure, so Jesus "endured" it for us. That is a beautiful story, but what if it is wrong? What if "the justice of God" were demanding our "salvation" instead of "punishment," or "life" instead of "death?"

On many occasions I have heard well-meaning preachers say, "You do not want justice from God; you want mercy. If we received justice, we would all be in hell." The truth of that matter, however, is that God's justice brought salvation unto us. This is opposite of what most believe to be true, so let us see what the scripture says concerning God's justice.

In the first three chapters of Romans, Paul writes as though he was recording a court trial. We see an "indictment" in the first chapter, and a "prosecution" in the second chapter. In the third chapter we see the "charge to the jury," the "findings of the court," and the "guilty verdict," given in these words: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God**" Romans 3:19. What were the "findings of the court" that brought a "guilty verdict" against the entire world?

The findings of the court are harsh: "**There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none**

that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes" Romans 3:10-18.

With such a verdict being brought against the entire world, surely "justice" would require the absolute destruction and damnation of every person. It is "an open and shut case," and certainly death is what justice requires. God's "justice" is somewhat different, however. Paul wrote in verses 21-23, "But now the righteousness (justice) of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness (justice) of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

In God's "judgment of the world" John 12:31, which took place at Calvary, there is an "extenuating circumstance" which our God took into consideration during his "deliberations: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" Romans 5:12. Consider this: All have sinned because all are sinners, but all are sinners because Adam disobeyed God. It is therefore not just if every person should be damned because of one person's sin. If everyone was made to be a sinner because of the first man's disobedience, **there must be a second man** who would make many righteous. This is the "sentence" which was handed down by our righteous God and judge of all.

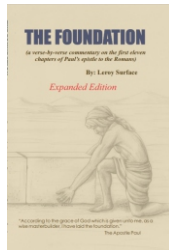
Due to the fact that every person is born in sin, there was no one who could fill the position of the "second man," to redeem us from sin. For that reason, Christ, the creator, became a man, the "second man," to undo what the first man did. The apostle Paul wrote of this: "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" 1 Corinthians 15:57. Thus, our "creator" became our "savior." Though He "died as a victim," He arose from the dead, the "victor" over death, having destroyed sin and Satan for all who will trust in Him.

Paul's words, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" Romans 5:19, declare for all time, to every person, the justice of our God.

FREE BOOK OFFER!

The Foundation

Verse by verse Commentary
 on Paul's epistle to the
 Romans



In this commentary you will be taken with the apostle Paul as he shows us how the whole world was put on trial and found guilty before God. Then you will hear the decree of the divine court declaring that God's justice demands, not damnation, but redemption. Order your free copy today!

To order visit cochurch.org, or write to:

Behold the Lamb Publications
 PO Box 750 Porter TX 77365