

The Attributes of God **God is Just...also seen in God's Wrath**

The justice of God flows out of who He is. God is not just because He adheres to a moral code that exists outside of Himself. God is just because it is in His nature to be just.

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He. Deuteronomy 32:4

In the Old Testament, Abraham pleads for Sodom in Genesis 18. Abraham is asking that God treat two groups of people differently – the righteous and the wicked. He pleads...

“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Gen 18:25

When Abraham makes His appeal directly to God, he is not implying that God is the ultimate law-keeper as much as He is implying that God is the ultimate law-giver. God abides by the moral laws than emanate from within Him.

What Abraham understands is the righteous do what is right, from their heart, in God's eyes. The wicked, from their heart, don't want anything to do with God.

To take those two groups of people and treat them the same would be wrong. According to Abraham, since God is just, He will judge justly. God will do the right thing.

Don't miss this: In appealing to God's sense of justice, Abraham assumes that God's justice will be displayed, in part, through His wrath. Don't destroy the righteous with the wicked. In the justice of God, not only can He evaluate; not only can He separate; He can treat differently AND He can send His wrath.

The wrath of God is a display of His justice.

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on Him. John 3:36

Justice on the cross is where the love of God and the wrath of God meet. Jesus was sent there out of God's love to save us from God's wrath.

The word propitiation carries the basic idea of appeasement or satisfaction, specifically toward God.

J. I. Packer in Knowing God designates a distinct difference between pagan and Christian propitiation: "In paganism, man propitiates his gods, and religion becomes a form of commercialism and, indeed, of bribery. In Christianity, however, God propitiates his wrath by his own action. He set forth Jesus Christ, says Paul, to be the propitiation of our sins."

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a **propitiation** by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. Romans 3:23-25*

Home Group Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever found yourself thinking or saying, that's not fair?
What were those circumstances?
2. Why do you think we have this innate sense of fairness?
(and yes, sometimes the cry for fairness is nothing more than wanting our own way.)
3. Have you ever been in a position where you intervened for someone else? Paid their penalty, so to speak?
4. What's the hardest part of contemplating the wrath of God?
5. How is it that the justice of God and the love of God are connected together?

Extra time?

Look up expiation and propitiation in a dictionary or a good online resource such as GotQuestions.org. How do these two terms relate to the justice of God and the wrath of God?

If you have access to a concordance or word search, find the New Testament passages that use the word, propitiation.