

Day 3 - The Justice of God

As human beings, we are uniquely concerned with issues of justice even from our youth. If you spend any time at all around groups of small children, you will no doubt, within a short amount of time, hear one of them proclaim, "That's not fair!" We were created with a desire for justice because we were made in the image of a God who is just.

- What does it mean to you that God is just?

Read Numbers 14:18.

"The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and fourth generation."

If you break the passage into two parts, how does the first part of the passage make you feel?

"The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression..."

How does the second part of the passage make you feel?

"...but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and fourth generation."

- What do you think it means that God will by no means clear the guilty? (Other translations say that he won't allow the guilty to go unpunished; the idea is that all sin will be punished because God is just.)

- How can both of these things be true? How can God be a forgiving God, but a God who won't clear the guilty?

Read Romans 3:21-26.

- How does this passage answer the question of how God can be just, but also be forgiving? (God has punished our sin, he just didn't punish us; instead, he punished his perfect Son for our sin.)

It is only the cross of Jesus Christ that allows God to be perfectly just and perfectly merciful.

Close your time of family worship in a time of prayer using the following prayer from *The Valley of Vision*:

God and Myself

Thy understanding is unsearchable and infinite, thy arm cannot be stayed, Thy agency extends through limitless space, All works hang on thy care, With thee time is a present now. Holy is thy wisdom, power, mercy, ways, works. How can I stand before thee with my numberless and aggravated offences? I have often loved darkness, observed lying vanities, forsaken thy given mercies, trampled underfoot thy beloved Son, mocked thy providences, flattened thee with my lips, broken thy covenant. It is of thy compassion that I am not consumed. Lead me to repentance, and save me from despair; Let me come to thee renouncing, condemning, loathing myself, but hoping in the grace that flows even to the chief of sinners. At the cross may I contemplate the evil of sin, and abhor it. Look on him whom I pierced, as one slain for me, and by me. May I never despise his death by fearing its efficacy for my salvation. And whatever cross I am required to bear, let me see him carrying a heavier. Teach me in health to think of sickness, in the brightest hours to be ready for darkness; in life to prepare me for death. Thus may my soul rest in thee, O immortal and transcendent one, revealed as thou art in the Person and work of thy Son, the Friend of Sinners.