

# THE LOVE AND JUSTICE OF GOD

Part 7 of Knowing God. Isaiah 65:1-7.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. March 17, 2024.

## A CHALLENGING CONCEPT

**It can feel difficult to reconcile God's love and justice.**

- We may feel God is loving but not just or vice versa.

**The reality is that God is always loving and just.**

- Love and justice are the essence or nature of God.

## ISAIAH 65:1-7

**The context and text of Isaiah 65.**

- God was disappointed with his people. They rebelled against him. They embraced pagan religion.
- **God Is Love:** I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that was not called by my name. 2 I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; 3 a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks; 4 who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat pig's flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels; 5 who say, "Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you."
- **God Is Justice:** These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day. 6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their lap 7 both your iniquities and your fathers' iniquities together, says the LORD; because they made offerings on the mountains and insulted me on the hills, I will measure into their lap payment for their former deeds."

## **GOD IS LOVE**

### **God's love is revealed in his invitation to the people who run from him.**

- See Isaiah 65:1-2.
- God invites rebels to repent of their sins and return to him.
- The Lord Jesus Christ was definite about this:

Luke 13:34 (ESV) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

- Who was not willing? Jesus or the people?

### **God's love is revealed in his patience with the people who replace him.**

- See Isaiah 65:2-5.
- The people invented new gods to serve and worship.
- They deserved fire and brimstone. But the Lord waited patiently.

2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

- God is waiting patiently for you to repent of sins and return to him.

## **GOD IS JUST**

### **The Bible explicitly describes God as just.**

- Moses praised the Lord and said:

Deuteronomy 32:4 (ESV) "The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.

- God always does what is right and fair. That's his justice.

## **God reveals his justice in three ways:**

- It is a rule of life for us to follow: Isaiah 1:16-17.
- It is the renewal of all things: 2 Peter 3:13.
- It is retribution: Acts 17:30-31.

## **Isaiah 65:5-7 offers insights into God's retributive justice.**

- God's retribution is personal - verse 5. Sin is like blowing smoke in his face.
- God's retribution is perpetual - verse 6. It's all day long.
- God's retribution is payment - verses 6-7. Jesus will judge the living and dead (John 5:25-29; 1 Peter 4:1-6).

Acts 17:30-31 (ESV) The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

## **WHERE LOVE AND JUSTICE MEET**

### **The crucifixion of Christ is where God's love and justice meet.**

- See 1 John 4:10; Isaiah 53:4-5; Romans 3:25-26.
- The Lord Jesus endured the justice of God against us as a display of the love of God for us.

## **GOD'S INVITATION TO ALL**

### **All day long, God is speaking, "Here I am, here I am."**

- His arms are open wide to embrace you. Turn from sin to Jesus.
- Receive his cleansing, forgiveness, and freedom.

# SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

## READING

- This week, read Chapters 8-9 of Ingram. Or Chapters 12 and 14 of Packer. Or pages 66-75 of Wilson.

## GET STARTED

- I love/hate daylight savings because...

## DIVE IN

- Review the study guide. What were Peter's main ideas, insights, or Bible passages related to the love and justice of God?
- What are the problems people have with the concept of God's justice? Do you have some explanations for these problems?
- What are some passages on God's justice? See these web articles:  
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-justice.html>  
<https://quarterly.gospelinlife.com/justice-in-the-bible/>
- Why is God just to repay our iniquities (Isaiah 65:6-7).
- How is the crucifixion the supreme revelation of God's love? Discuss some Bible passages that explain it (eg., John 3:16-17; Romans 5:1-11; 1 John 4:7-12).

## PRAY TOGETHER

- Pray for each other.
- Pray for the Cornerstone - people, leaders, health, and faithfulness.
- Pray for our families, communities, and nation.