

Title: FOR JUSTICE WITH LOVE, ROMANS 5:1-11  
(Chatham, NJ; 03/23/14, AM) [D – Topical]

Theme: God's justice is a neglected but necessary item in the plan of salvation and in God's motivation for sending Christ.

Purpose: To examine the justice of God and to demonstrate its role in the Cross.

Introduction:

1. God's love prompted God to send his Son, John 3:16.
2. But it was God's justice that demanded a sacrifice, Romans 3:26 – God is just and the justifier.
3. These two meet at the cross.
4. They are held in perfect balance in the character of God, Exodus 34:6-7.
5. We have to understand both if we are to comprehend the nature of the cross.

## I. Justice without Judgment

- A. Judgment is bad; justice is good
  1. Critics of Christianity often criticize the fact that there will be a judgment in which God consigns the wicked to an eternal place of torment.
  2. But if we posit that the notion of justice is a good thing, perhaps we gain a new perspective on it.
  3. See Keller, *The Reason for God*, 73
  4. I suspect our innate desire for justice drives some people to love seeing the bad guys in movies "get what's coming to them"
  5. Jesus' kingdom always had a strong foundation in justice, Isaiah 9:7 & 11:4
- B. Are people merely upset that God has drawn different lines of just behavior
  1. Ephesians 5:3-6, the wrath of God comes
  2. Revelation 21:8 – the lake of fire prepared
  3. Are we upset that to us the punishment doesn't seem to fit the crime?
  4. Do we think that "nice" people should be accepted by a loving God?
  5. Yet if you have any innate sense of justice, you must agree that his judgment derives from his idea of justice
  6. Sin must be accounted for!
  7. You can't have justice without the idea of holding people accountable.
  8. Quote by Milosz in Keller, 75

## II. Peace with God: Access (Romans 5:1-11)

- A. "All have sinned"
  1. Romans 1 – 3, esp. 3:23, all have sinned
  2. Colossians 1:21 – alienated, hostile in mind, doing evil deeds: these describe us
  3. No one is exempt from this
- B. "Therefore . . . peace with God" (5:1)
  1. We are justified by faith through Christ
  2. God's justice has been satisfied by Christ's sacrifice
  3. Through the cross God has made himself the justifier of the justice that he demanded (3:26)
- C. We now have access to grace, 5:2
  1. In Hebrews 9 we learn that the temple only represented the presence of God, but when Jesus came he entered into the very throne of God in heaven by his blood

2. Hebrews 10:19 – we thus have the confidence to enter into this most holy place because we have been washed by his blood

### III. Peace with God: the benefits

#### A. We are justified, 5:1, 9-10

1. Like a line of type: left, center, right, or both sides
2. Justification lines us up with God
3. Being justified is to be declared guiltless
4. This comes not only from the justice of God but because of his mercy
5. Christ died for us despite the fact that we are sinners, 6-8

#### B. Reconciled and saved

1. The barrier of sin has been removed
2. Though once rebels and alienated from God, we have been reconciled to him
3. This is all because of the Gospel: the death of his Son, 10

#### Conclusions:

1. Paul can speak of rejoicing (2 & 11).
2. He speaks also of enduring suffering and the positive results of it.
3. This is significant because it highlights the greatness of the justification that provides the foundation for the entire discussion here.
4. And so, let us rejoice at the thought that once we were enemies, but now we have been reconciled and justified.
5. Once we understand this, we can see that it is just as powerful to think about as the love of God.
6. You are loved; now, be justified and reconciled.