

God's Justice in Jesus

Scripture Reading — Romans 3:21-26

There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace. — Romans 3:22-24

So there is no difference. You, me, people all around the world, family members, coworkers, and all our neighbors—we “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” None of us is in this alone.

Paul's intent, though, is not to clarify that sin has a lot of company. He is setting the stage for what Jesus came to do. God's goal from the beginning, when sin first entered the picture, was not just to judge us; nor was it just to rescue us from eternal punishment. God's goal has always been to get us back *with* him. But for that to happen, there needs to be a sacrifice, which we can't pay. And there is no difference: whoever we are and wherever we live, we all need Jesus to be that sacrifice of atonement for us.

Sometimes we lose sight of why God had things go this way. A philosopher once suggested that it's really not a big deal; God ultimately has to forgive us because that's his job as God. But God wants us to understand that Jesus' sacrifice is not just some neat and dramatic “love gesture.” It is a big deal because as God, his job is also to be just. The difference is that God gives us Jesus—because his goal is not his job. God's goal is us.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, your justice is real, because you have given your Son, Jesus, to die in my place, paying the price for my sin. Thank you that through the sacrifice of Christ I may know your love as my Father in heaven. Amen.

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