

101. God Is Just.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces. *Dan. 9, 7.*

God is absolutely just. He judges impartially, without respect of persons. , He hates and punishes all wickedness, and He loves and rewards the deeds done in accordance with His holy Law. How can it be otherwise? Because God is holy, yea, Holiness itself, He cannot bear sin and must hate and punish all unholiness and wickedness; everything, however, which is good and holy, the same as He Himself, He must love and reward. If this were not so, He would be unholy and unjust, which is impossible, for it would destroy His very nature and divine being.

For this reason, God threatens to punish all that transgress His commandments. He says: "Cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them!" "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." When, therefore, the human race fell into sin and all men were made sinners by the disobedience of our first parents, we became an abomination in the sight of God, and He had to pronounce upon us the curse for our sins. God's wrath against the sinners is as unchangeable as His holiness and justice is unchangeable. Luther says: "The suffering of Christ reveals the burning wrath of God against the sinners, whereas He would not even let them go unpunished for His Son's sake if the Son were not willing to redeem them by His death." It was for our sins that the sinless Son of God died on the cross. He died for us, that is, in our stead, for our good. We now are free from God's wrath and punishment. Though we are and will remain sinners as long as we live, our transgressions have all been blotted out, and God is pleased with us for His dear Son's sake.

"The Lord is righteous in all His ways and bountiful in all His works."

Prayer.

O Thou just and righteous God, Thy justice could not but pronounce the curse of damnation upon the sinner. By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men because all have sinned. But Thou art not only a just and righteous, but also a merciful and gracious God; Thy grace has provided a Savior. Thou so lovedst the world that Thou gavest Thine only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed from endless woe. Grant us Thy Holy Spirit that we gratefully accept this Thy unmerited grace in Christ Jesus. Amen.

As true as God's own Word is true,
Not earth nor hell with all their crew
Against us shall prevail.
A jest and byword are they grown;
God is with us, we are His own;
Our victory cannot fail.

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