

The Big Question

Is God Corrupt?

The really big question for a person starting out on an investigation as to how to find acceptance with God is:

Is God corrupt? We might think, what an outrageous question! If I step outside with a thought like that floating around in my head, I am likely to get struck down by a bolt of lightning, or perhaps by a meteorite, or even a piece of redirected space junk. However, the idea that God is corrupt is exactly what is required by the many religions and ideas of this world which put forward a pathway for man's salvation.

The religions of this world (as opposed to biblical Christianity) offer religious ritual and devotion as methods to satisfy God and enter Heaven, but they cannot offer certainty. With this method, the person doesn't have to be perfect. Less than perfect people enter Heaven. With this approach, God Himself is not perfect because his Heaven and the people in it are not perfect. He has to accept a less than ideal plan.

The above idea is an attack upon God's righteousness, power and sovereignty. It suggests that God is weak because He cannot achieve a perfect situation. That is, He has to accept a Heaven which receives less than perfect people. There are further problems. If Heaven is not perfect with regard to the people it receives, we need to wonder about other aspects of Heaven. If God is corrupt with regard to the people he allows into Heaven, then surely, the way is open for Him to be corrupt in the way he deals with people in Heaven. In other words, corruption in one area opens the floodgate to corruption in other areas.

The good news of God's righteousness and standard

The Bible doesn't give people a high percentage which they must meet, say, 98%, God's standard is 100%. Jesus told a group of Jews, "... unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20). This statement would have alarmed many in his audience because the Pharisees and teachers of the law were seen as professional law keepers, while others were only amateurs. The statement is equivalent to telling a Roman Catholic that his righteousness must exceed that of the Pope. It is like telling a Protestant that his righteousness must surpass that of the Archbishop of Canterbury or that of the famous evangelist, Billy Graham, or of some other famous evangelist that one might care to name.

The Bible does not show God to be weak, quite the contrary. It says, "... he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand ..." (Dan. 4:35).

God is sovereign with regard to the salvation of sinners. If God had decided to choose just five people and save them, and furthermore, to send ten billion people to a judgment they deserve, no person could rightly complain. They could not complain on a legal ground because they are receiving a just sentence. His righteousness will only permit a perfect/just sentence; He can not tolerate anything less.

The low standard of the Jews

The apostle Paul has some critical remarks against his fellow Jews because they follow a poor weak standard. He says of them, "I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. For being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking

to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness." (Rom. 10:2-3, RSV). As can be seen from the above, the apostle Paul's fellow Jews are ignorant of something which is very important, and that is, the righteousness which comes from God.

The Old Testament Scriptures have something to say about the righteousness which comes from God. The prophet Jeremiah who lived several hundred years before Christ reports, "... This is the name by which he will be called, '**The Lord our righteousness**'" (Jeremiah 23:6). 'The Lord' refers to Jesus Christ. He stands before the Heavenly Father as being righteous on behalf of all those who trust in him.

The matter of our sins

God is so holy (righteous) that he cannot let someone into Heaven who has even one small dark spot against him. Sins have to be dealt with (Jeremiah 17:9). God taught the Jews before the time of Christ to sacrifice a lamb to cover their sins. The sinner would place his hand upon the head of the sacrificial lamb to symbolise his sins being transferred to the lamb. The innocent lamb would then die (be sacrificed) in place of the sinner. This action pointed to what would happen in the future. When John the Baptist saw Jesus walking toward him, he said, "Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (John 1:29).

When a person states that he or she has placed their trust in Jesus Christ, it means they trust that Jesus has fully dealt with their sins. He has paid the death penalty in place of the repentant sinner. Now let's imagine a situation where a man stands before God on judgement day. God says to the man, "I have examined your life and found that it is marred with wrong-doing. You have not met my perfect standard. I cannot let you into my perfect Heaven." The man then cries, "but wait, I have a substitute, Jesus Christ, who stands in my place. Examine him". God replies, "I have examined your substitute and found him to be righteous. Your substitute has also paid your penalty through his suffering and death on the cross. As a consequence, you will receive his reward. You are welcomed into my perfect Heaven."

Becoming a Christian

Becoming a Christian is not primarily what the enquirer does. Salvation comes from what God does. He convicts the person of his or her sins and leads the person to trust in Jesus Christ. The salvation of sinners is a miraculous work of God.

If God is convicting you of a need to be put right with him, you might like to pray this prayer. "Lord, my life has not been right in your sight. I have sinned before you and I am sorry. I place my complete trust in Jesus Christ who died on the cross in my place. Please help me to live in a way that is right before you. I ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen."

More information

More information on Christianity can be found at defenceofthefait.org

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