

## LOVE AND JUSTICE

Proverbs 15:10 ... "Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way; and he who hates correction will die."

One of the hardest ideas for man to accept about God, is that he is a loving God who also delivers justice and punishment. I cannot count the number of times I have heard people say that because he is a God of love, he cannot condemn people to hell, punish wrong doers, or inflict his enemies with violence. Many liberal churches reject the parts of the Bible that tell of God's violence over evil men, such as the great flood, the annihilation of Israel's enemies, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the coming judgment...simply because they cannot imagine a God who can both love and do such things.

So, people who cannot imagine a God who is both loving and just, fabricate their own version of God. They start by ignoring much of the Bible, calling the many accounts of God's justice, fables. They ignore many of the behaviors that God calls sin, because the God they are inventing would never punish people. They ignore Christ's own words in which he says that he is the only way to God, because their reinvented God must accept people into heaven from any religion. Their imaginary God would never destroy the earth in a flood or whole cities in supernatural battles, allow the people of Israel to be kidnapped into slavery, or send people to suffer in hell.

More people reject salvation because of their discomfort with the Bible and God's sovereignty, than any other reason. Society suffers when people reject a just and sovereign God, because those same people will reject God's instruction to discipline their children. Plus, children observe their parent's rejection of God and conclude that they should, too. This produces an increase in disrespect for parents and the church, juvenile crime, drug use, and immorality among the young. Sadly, too many people today fail to understand the character of God, and that raising Godly children produces good character in both us and our children, and good character avoids God's justice.

The earth is not a blank canvass that we can create or destroy as we please, behave as we please, and not suffer consequences for our bad behavior. The earth is God's property; he created it and his rules must be followed to avoid harsh discipline. You are God's property; he created you and his instructions must be followed to avoid harsh discipline. When you respect and honor God with your life, you will enjoy an abundance of his love, protection, provision, and blessings. When you reject the One true God and create your own god, you are on your own and will eventually suffer from your disobedience. God is both loving and just; pick for yourself the attribute you prefer to enjoy.

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