

JESUS REVEALS THE FATHER

He who has seen Me has seen the Father.

John 14:9 Hebrews 1:3

He taught them as one having authority, not as the scribes. Matthew 7:29

The scribes had authority based on their position. Jesus relied on speaking truth. Jesus' authority was not enforced by a worldly position. His authority was just recognized. In God's kingdom, authority is not enforced. It is known when truth is seen. This type of authority was reinforced by Jesus' relationship to power. Jesus rejected earthly power, declined violent defense, and refused allegiance through any spectacular interventions. My kingdom is not of this world. John 18:36

Worldly kingdoms maintain control through coercion. Christ's kingdom operates by truth, trust, and voluntary cooperative alignment.

Worldly kingdoms approach broken people as criminals to be punished and controlled by force. Jesus treated broken people as the wounded needing healing. Jesus touched the wounded, ate with them, listened to them, gave them freedom to walk away, did not use coercion or fear tactics, healed, forgave sin in the broken hearted, and treated them with dignity without condemnation. I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. John 12:47. Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more. John 8:11

Jesus declared that moral failure was not the greatest threat to humanity. A distorted view of God is the greatest threat to humanity. In a distorted view of God, unholy fear of God replaces trust and God is seen as unsafe and untrustworthy. Instead of trusting God, people often run from God and those who teach this distorted and threatening view of God.

The judgment of God is often distorted. Sin condemns people. God's judgment is not condemnation imposed by God. God's judgment is simply truth revealed. God's light exposes reality and truth. When people see the truth His light reveals, and when they embrace truth, they are experiencing a judgment that sets them free. Those who reject the light of truth experience loss and damage. This damage is not God's punishment, but rather the consequences of sin.

God's grace is always poured out and available. Human response is crucial. God demonstrated His love while we were still sinners. Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

The cross was not designed to change God's attitude toward us. God never changes. The cross does not alter God. The cross reveals the God who loves, freely forgives, and does not retaliate. The resurrection validates what the cross revealed.

False theologies declare God uses violence in order to forgive, that God rules by coercion and fear, and that God enforces obedience by threats. Any penal substitutionary work of Christ should be rejected because the life and death of Christ refutes it. Christ did a non-penal substitutionary work at His death and resurrection. In Christ, sin was defeated for humanity and sin was condemned to its demise.

Romans 8:3

God must be understood as Jesus reveals Him. When Jesus is allowed to define God, the believer can have a relationship with Him grounded in truth, trust, and love. Trust can not flourish in fear. Love cannot flourish without trust. The light of truth and reality according to God's design produces judgment that is liberating. The light of truth abolishes evil from its presence. Jesus, the light of truth, made apparent at the cross, defeated sin and Satan. Satan has been cast down to earth and no longer has access to the courts of Heaven because the light of truth has judged him and condemned him.

The cross has proved that our unholy fear of God is unwarranted and that our trust in Him is warranted. God was in Christ on the cross, not counting our sins against us. God freely forgives and holds no one back from coming to Him for restoration.

The judgment of God is not defined as to God deciding how much pain to inflict or to where the pain is subjected. The judgment of God is the moment the light of truth confronts the reality of God's design for life. This is judgment, that the light has come into the world. John 3:19. Judgment is not an action that God takes against people. Judgment is what happens when truth is revealed and either welcomed or rejected by a person. In the Bible, judgment is always linked with unveiling truth rather than pronouncing punishment. Turning people over to their persistence in sin is not God punishing, but revelation of reality of sin's consequences. Romans 1:24,26,28 God is light, truth, and love. The wicked perish at the presence of the Lord. Psalm 68:2

This perishing is not God attacking or punishing, or retaliating. Evil simply cannot exist in harmony with truth and cannot survive the unveiling of truth. Salvation is the invitation to be healed by the truth. People are free to respond to the truth. Judgment is the consequence of how a person receives or rejects the truth. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. At the cross, judgment occurs but it is not God inflicting punishment on Jesus in our place. Rather, truth is fully revealed. Human violence and sin is revealed at its worst moment. Religious hypocrisy is revealed. The fear driven power of man is revealed. God's response is not retaliation, but forgiveness. Father, forgive them. Luke 23:34.

Judgment does not require punishment to satisfy justice. Judgment at the cross reveals the deepest contrast between human fear and Divine Love.

When believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ, those whose life was shaped by truth experience liberation in God's love. Those who stand at the great white throne judgment because they persistently rejected truth experience loss. Their outcome is not imposed by the anger of God, but rather the second death is the natural consequence of what that person chose.

When judgment is defined as a threat from God, fear becomes an obstacle to trust and faith. Fear does not yield trust and a transformed life. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. John 4:18

Jesus reveals a God who trusts truth to do its work. Judgment is not God acting against humanity. Judgment is reality being seen in all of its truth. God's design for life is that we give Him control of our life. If we don't give God control, then we are living in sin, and the consequences of sin are transgressions and death.

John Calvin was a lawyer. He assumed that God governs the way human governments govern through enforced law with threats and punishment instead of where God's laws are descriptive of God's design for life. He describes judgment as a threat toward man rather than truth revealed. He describes Salvation as escape from God's supposed penalty rather than God's offer of restoration to life, and he describes forgiveness as what must be paid for rather than what is freely given. Fear is central in John Calvin's theology and where there is fear, safely trusting God recedes. God is seen as an enforcer to be feared rather than a healer and restorer, through the transforming power of Jesus. Jesus reveals a God who governs through truth and not coercion. Jesus reveals a God who restores broken people and does not need to punish in order to be just. Jesus reveals a God who invites us to trust through love and does not coerce obedience through fear.

Salvation is restoration and transformation, and not a legal transaction.

Judgment is a revealing of truth and not condemnation from God.

The sinless death of Christ reveals God's character and does not change God's character or attitude.

Hell fire is the end result of rejecting life by God's design and not a work of punishment on God's part.

God's laws describe how life works. God's laws are not describing how to enforce life through obedience. Life must be lived in Christ and Christ in me. The Spirit of Christ must produce good fruit.

Without Me you can do nothing. John 15:5

A believable misunderstanding of God, penal substitutionary atonement, needs to be unraveled so that God is known for His trustworthiness. A distorted view of God is prevalent throughout the world. Jesus declared, "Will I find true faith when I return?" Luke 18:8

Summary:

Satanic deception presents a false view of the character of God. Satan pictures God as untrustworthy, distant, offended to the point of needing retaliation, quick to punish, and as one more concerned with compliance to his law than restoration of the human soul.

But Jesus revealed God who touches the unclean, eats with sinners, heals before correcting, forgives freely, does not retaliate, does not force compliance, gives freedom of personal choice, and is more concerned with restoration than producing fear of punishment.

Which authority figure promotes healthy rescue from sin? Is it the one who relies on unholy fear and unpredictable punishment, where enforcement of rules is of utmost importance, or is it where authority is respected in an atmosphere of safety, questions are welcomed, and correction aims at restoration rather than humiliation?

People were drawn to Jesus because they felt safe. Today, people need to be drawn to God because He is trustworthy and safe. PSA, penal substitutionary atonement theory, does not represent the safe, trustworthy, and true character of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

PSA presents a God who needs to be appeased, who requires a payment in order to forgive others, who punishes the innocent in place of the guilty, and satisfies justice by killing Jesus.

But forgiveness is not a legal declaration designed to cancel the penalty of sin. God's forgiveness is the absence of His personal condemnation of sin so that healing and restoration can proceed. God has declared that He does not hold our sin against us. God holds no one back from restoration in Christ.

Sin condemns, not God. God was in Christ on the cross condemning sin. Sin was defeated for humanity in Christ. The sinless death of Jesus defeated and condemned sin to removal from creation. The Last Adam, Jesus Christ, is victorious for humanity. Jesus arose with all power and authority to remove sin.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 Romans 8:1-3 Romans 5 Matthew 28:18 Revelation 21,22