

Divine Justice Part Three  
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A Matter of Perception  
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Our relationship with God is established by how God relates to us, including the justice element in that relationship. We can do nothing to establish a relationship with God, nor can we destroy the relationship eternally established by God which is rooted in the quality of His Being and His own knowledge of Himself and His knowledge and perception of us in Him. God knows us as we are in Him ("WHOM He foreknew, He predestined.." Rom. 8:29). He is aware of who we are NOT; that "who" that parades around as us, but is an impostor. It is the being that we have in Him that He knows, that is, He communes with intimately.

The darkened heart of man perceives a relationship with God that proceeds from a knowledge that is removed from its original context. Take something out of context and you distort its meaning. In the Garden of Eden, God arranged for man to temporarily receive a knowledge that is out of context. They took to themselves a knowledge that became the all-pervasive influence for how they viewed God, themselves, all other creatures and the universe.

They partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and from that point on their minds were "nourished" by that perspective.

They now knew good and evil, WITHOUT KNOWING GOD!!

We were never intended, permanently that is, to know anything apart from knowing God intimately. When you walk in communion with God and as part of that communion are made to understand the place of good and evil in the purpose of God, that is entirely different. Then one knows things in their place, in their proper context. One knows the place of good and evil in the outworking of the purpose of perfect love.

A sense of morality and ethics apart from intimate communion with God leads to horrible ambiguity and confusion. It leads one to a sense of a cold, unfeeling, arbitrary, judgmental omnipresence, that

has no Presence. It leads to one or the other of the two poles of this world, either the despair that comes from trying to apply an essentially impersonal standard to life, or to the pathetic pretense that one has accomplished such a thing. Restated: either a hopeless sinner or a self-satisfied Pharisee.

When one views God and God's justice from the perspective of The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, their mentality, alienated from the life of God, comes to understand justice as the implementation of law by one who is essentially a judge rather than the implementation of love by One who is essentially a Father.

But, having been created with the capacity to receive unconditional love and thus the need for such (since capacity determines need), we cannot silence our heart's cry. Our cry is, "Don't just boss me; love me; be my Dad." So we formulate a theology that mixes the two. We create a god who loves us but whose love can only operate within the guidelines the of the standard of an essentially legal relationship.

A vicious cycle begins. We resent this existence forced upon us, but we cannot escape it, so we learn to live in it, patterning our lives and relationships according to our view of God, for we are created to be like God, and temporarily, we will be like god as we perceive him to be.

Our perception of God dictates our life style and relationship style. Then, the more we practice such a life and the more our relationships are made to fit this syndrome, the more this delusion becomes pseudo-reality to us. Every time we look back at God it is clearer and clearer to us that He is what He isn't.

But, thanks be to our wonderful Father God who is unmoved in His grace-posture toward us by all this, but moved by compassion. He's still in relationship to us according to His Father-heart and acting righteously, justly to unfold to us, and for us, the glory of being a son of such a Father. Even our season of horribly misunderstanding Him and His justice will finally serve His loving purpose and in this, we rest.

According to the scenario of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, we cry out for anything except justice, but according to the Tree

of Life by which we are nourished in the true knowledge of God, we do cry out for justice, for we know that we will be heard by Him who always does right by us, who always acts faithfully and in the integrity of His perfect love.

We have come to think, theologically, that we need to be saved from the terrible justice of God, not realizing that apart from His justice, there is no salvation. Salvation is the result of, and composed, of the righteousness or justice of God. It is just and right that our Father should be gracious to us, not reckoning our sins against us, for that is consistent with His nature.

Finishing on the note with which we began: the primal meaning of justice must be understood as the righteous outworking, in relationship, of the law which God is, the law of love. Law can be defined as that which must be. Since God is Love, that is what must be, and must be decisive in all His relationships. All else is delusion.

Stay tuned for future serious, seminal sampling.

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