

## **Study Guide 10 Answers**

**1. Write down the definition of "right" from the lecture *God is Just*.**

Right is what ought to happen and what ought to be.

**2. Why is punishment necessary?**

Righteousness requires that people be treated as they deserve.

**3. What is Romans 3:25 explaining about God's righteousness (*God Is Just, Part 2*)?**

It is pointing out that in sending Jesus to die and take man's punishment God was displaying His righteousness, because it showed that He does not let sin go unpunished.

**4. For what two reasons can we be confident that absolute justice will prevail?**

- because God is absolutely just
- because He has all power to do what is right and to make things right

**5. Describe God's wrath (*God Is Just, Part 3*).**

God's wrath is His intense hatred for sin. Only such intensity befits One Who is absolutely good and righteous and Who rules His universe accordingly.

**6. How should we respond to God's wrath?**

- with gratitude and worship, confessing that His purposes and ways are perfect and right
- with fear and obedience
- with pleas for His mercy

**7a. How does James 2:13 help explain Sproul's fourth summary statement (*The Justice of God*)?**

Mercy never interferes with justice or diminishes it. It is not mixed up within justice like some modifying effect or amending clause within the judicial code that is softening justice or making justice less than it should be. Instead mercy is its own separate strength and expression of God's goodness, satisfying all the demands of His justice exactly and completely, giving justice its complete and necessary expression, but then motivating all the healing grace God delights to bring to the offender through conviction, repentance, recovery, and restoration.

**7b. In what ways do we recognize what James writes in this verse as a reality?**

Because judgment is exact, mercy cannot be justly extended or shown to one who denies mercy to others, because to do so is an abuse of mercy and a wrong that requires the dealings of justice. But this does not mean that mercy is weaker than justice or that it loses out to it. In fact, it is because God's mercy operates in perfect conformity with His justice and because it is as pure as justice that His mercy resists those who refuse to surrender to its intent and to extend it toward others.

For all its strength to restore and to bring healing after the dealings of justice, those who refuse to obey mercy forfeit its benefits and its strength.

**8a. Look at Romans 9:22-23. What is being said about God's justice in verse 22?**

God's justice was not in the background when He decided to be patient and to restrain it. He was willing to exact justice and to demonstrate its power unmistakably.

**8b. Why did God handle His justice the way He did (v. 23)?** He restrained and delayed acting in His just wrath against sinners to demonstrate the riches of His glory toward those who receive His mercy.

**8c. How does Paul's report about God in 9:23 serve as an example of James' teaching in James 2:13?** In considering God's justice in world history we find that the expression of mercy takes priority and the full expression of His justice waits, undiminished.

**9a. In the second last paragraph Sproul writes, "Mercy and grace are forms of non-justice." What do you think he means?** He means that we must not think of mercy and grace as part of justice or even as similar to it. Justice cannot include mercy and grace within itself or make adjustments for mercy's sake and still be justice. It must maintain its own interest without compromise or pity. Mercy and grace are different than justice and even opposite in their interest and effect. In His mercy and grace God makes decisions and acts in ways that men do not deserve or merit.

**9b. Is this a good way to express the relationship between mercy and justice? Why or why not?** "Non-justice" may give the impression that mercy and grace are injustice or that they are against justice, but they are not. They operate in keeping with all that God's justice demands.

**10a. Look at Genesis 18:25. What particular action is Abraham saying would not be just?** He is objecting to the prospect that in judging the wickedness in Sodom and Gomorrah by destroying the entire cities, God would be exacting judgment not only on the wicked, but also on the righteous (on those who were not involved in these crimes).

**10b. What is Abraham actually asking the Lord to do? Is he pleading for justice or for more than justice? Explain.** He is pleading for more than justice. He is not asking that the Lord would spare the righteous, but that he would spare the entire evil city for the sake of the righteous.

**11a. Read Exodus 34:6-7. How do the Lord's words reveal that He is just?** "The Lord . . . will by no means leave the guilty unpunished."

**11b. What was necessary for God to be faithful to His people?** He had to punish those who sinned and visit the iniquity on the children, dealing in the peoples' lives with evidence that brought repentance and obedience.

**12a. Read Romans 9:10-16. Does justice depend on a man's choosing or acting? Explain.** Yes, it does. We can see this in Paul's emphasis that God's decision about Jacob and Esau was *not* an issue of justice *because* the twins were not born and had not done anything good or bad. God's justice is always responding to what a person decides and does. Because there was nothing to judge yet, His decision was not a judicial one.

**12b. Does mercy depend on a man's choosing or acting? Explain.** No, it does not. God's asserts (v. 15) that His mercy is a matter of what He would like to do and that He retains the right to choose to do what He determines with His mercy and compassion. Paul spells out the necessary conclusion (v. 16): "So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs."

**13. Is God always free to do what He pleases with mercy? Explain your answer.** Yes, He is. No one can deserve mercy. We can plead for it, but we have no claim or right to it.

**14. Is God free to make adjustments to justice? Explain your answer.** No, He is not. His holiness and absolute perfection demand the full response required against sin and evil.

**15. Why was it just for God to make a covenant with Abraham and the people of Israel?** The covenant God made with Abraham looked away from Abraham and made the promise to Abraham's seed: to the One on Whom all the nations' and Abraham's own blessing would depend (Gal 3:16, 19, 22). God was just in making this covenant because the Seed would satisfy the issue of justice, bearing the punishment for the world's sin that divine righteousness and justice required and in this way releasing God's right to bless all those who put their hope in the promised Seed.

Abraham's response of trust and obedience to God's words agreed with God. This was a reversal from Adam's response, and God counted it as righteousness. Such faith in Him and His promise was the way He enabled men to receive His provision of mercy.

**16. Why is it just for Him to allow men of every nation not only to experience His daily provision but to experience success as well as many other benefits and pleasures?** because Jesus bore the legal punishment for all the sin of the world, satisfying and ending every legal objection against the world and its inhabitants receiving God's blessings

**17a. In what ways is it right for us to express righteous wrath?**

- hating sin in our lives and putting it to death by His Spirit
- praying for the Spirit's conviction and repentance in those whose sin
- speaking His words of warning against evil in the lives of those around us, especially those for whom He has made us responsible
- praying for God's judgments against evil in this present age
- responding to God's strategies to fight and work against oppression and evil
- looking forward to the return of Christ as Judge

**17b. In what ways is it wrong for us to do so?**

- seeking revenge personally
- holding anger and resentment

**18a. Please read Nehemiah 9:32-33. For what are the Levites asking in verse 32?**  
for God to be merciful to them

**18b. What is the strongest reason they present?**

because He keeps covenant and lovingkindness

**18c. What three things do they acknowledge in the words that follow (v. 33)?**

- God has been and is just in all His dealings with them.
- God has dealt faithfully.
- They have acted wickedly.

**18d. To what has God been faithful?**

- to His Own character, both in dealing justly and in being merciful
- to His covenant to Israel to be merciful, but also to punish wickedness

**19a. Please write out the words of Psalm 145:17.**

The Lord is righteous in all His ways,  
And kind in all His deeds.

**19b. What does the first line tell us about God's kindness?** It never is unjust.

**20a. Do you deserve God's grace?** No.

**20b. What explains why you have received His mercy and grace?**

No other reason can be given except that He decided to be merciful to me.