

Why Can't God Just Forgive Our Sin?

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • July 14, In the year of our Lord, 2013
Scripture Reader and Reading: Phil Joseph – First Peter 2.21-24

Prelude:

I. An atheist has asked,

“If God wanted to forgive our sins, why not just forgive them, without having himself tortured and executed in payment?”

II. To know the answer:

- A. What is sin?
- B. Why does God oppose sin?
- C. How can God forgive sin in justice?

Persuasion:

I. What Is Sin?

- A. God created man:
 - 1. Making him dependent upon God
 - 2. Wanting a relationship with man
- B. Sin seeks to sever that relationship

23 ...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God... (Rom 3.23).

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate (Gen 3.4-6).

II. Why Does God Oppose Sin?

- A. He is the one true and living God

B. He created all things

C. He is holy

1. Sin opposes all that He is
2. Sin destroys all that He has made
3. Sin denies His authority
 - a) If He did not oppose it,
 - b) He would not be God

D. God's wrath and God's forgiveness

1. These are the two ways He deals with sin
2. He wants to forgive, but He will show wrath,

- 4 Fury is not in Me.
Who would set briers and thorns
Against Me in battle?
I would go through them,
I would burn them together.
- 5 Or let him take hold of My strength,
That he may make peace with Me;
And he shall make peace with Me.”
(Isa 27.4, 5)

E. Sin is not trivial

1. We are under God's condemnation
 - a) We cannot initiate reconciliation
 - b) He had to start it
2. Hence, His love and grace
 - a) He showed that by participating in it Himself
 - b) That is not something to revile, but something to cherish
3. By His actions and His plan we see how serious sin is

III. How Can God Forgive Sin in Justice?

A. This happens in Christ

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted (Heb 2.14-18).

B. He is our Mediator,

⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus (1Ti 2.5).

1. E. g., Alexander Haig,
2. USA friend to both England and Argentina

C. He became the curse for us,

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") (Gal 3.13).

1. Atonement
2. Propitiation
3. Expiation

D. The resurrection of Jesus

1. God did not just wave away sin
2. The cross dealt with our sin:
 - a) Pouring out wrath on Jesus

- b) Showing us mercy
 - (1) However Jesus arose from the dead
 - (2) Without His resurrection, what is forgiveness?
- 3. The resurrection proves a coming Judgment,

30 “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30, 31).

“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36).