

# The Ultimate Standard

## God, the Righteous

### Definitions: the Biblical Words

- Hebrew noun – *tsedeq*
- Greek noun – *dikaioσune*
- Righteousness or justice
- Fundamental idea – conformity to a standard.

### Definitions: Various Theologians

- Feinberg: “[God] has established a moral order for the universe, and he treats all creatures fairly.”
- Frame – “God acts according to a perfect internal standard of right and wrong.”
- Grudem – “God always acts in accordance with what is right and is himself the final standard of what is right.”

### Aspects: Absolute

- God's own inherent moral excellence
- Internal
- His being
- God is what is right
- Deut. 32:4 - "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.
- Jer. 12:1 - Righteous are You, O LORD.
- John 17:25 – "O righteous Father"

### Aspects: Relative

- The rectitude of God's conduct
- External
- His actions
- God does what is right
- Ps. 89:14 - Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You.
- Ps. 97:2 - Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.
- Ps. 145:17 - The LORD is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His deeds.

### Aspects: Relative

- **Legislative**
- **God established and communicated just laws**
- Ps. 119:7, 62, 75, 137, 144, 160
- Is. 45:19
- **Distributive**
  - Remunerative
  - Retributive

## Distributive

- God judges and distributes to each what is deserved.
- Gen. 18:25 - "Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are *treated* alike. Far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?"
- Deut. 10:17 - "For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe.
- Ps. 9:7-8 - the LORD abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment, 8 And He will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.
- Ps. 96:10-13
- Is. 3:10-11 - Say to the righteous that *it will go well with them*, For they will eat the fruit of their actions. 11 Woe to the wicked! *It will go badly with him*, For what he deserves will be done to him.
- Rom. 2:5-8
- 1 Pet. 1:17 - If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*;

## Distributive

- Remunerative
- Reward
- Ps. 58:11 - "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely there is a God who judges on earth!"
- Matt. 25:21 - "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'
- 2 Tim. 4:8 - in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
- Retributive
- Punishment
- Ps. 7:11 - God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.
- Rom. 2:5-6
- Rom 3:5-6
- Rom. 12:19 - Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.
- 2 Th. 1:5-8

## Implications

- The presence of and necessity of an ultimate standard is one argument for the existence of God.
- God expects human government to reflect his righteousness (Rom. 13:1ff).
- Judgment is coming (Heb. 9:27).
- God's righteousness demands wrath and punishment for his enemies (Deut. 32:39-41).

## Implications

- Because of God's righteousness, we must not question his ways, even those that don't seem right or fair to us.
- God's righteousness was both vindicated and satisfied in the death of Christ (Rom. 3:25-26).
- In the miracle of justification, God's righteousness is credited to the believing sinner as a gift of God's grace (Rom. 3:21-24).

## Implications

- True believers will reflect God's righteousness in their behavior (1 John 2:29; 3:7).
- Be patient—justice will ultimately prevail (Ps. 73:17; 96:13; 98:9).
- The day is coming when God will create a new heaven and a new earth in which perfect righteousness reigns (2 Pet. 3:13).