

All,

God is, by nature, completely and perfectly holy, pure, righteous, faithful, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present, and just. He CANNOT NOT be these things.

But he is also merciful. And mercy is a choice. He may be inclined by his love, compassion, and kindness to be merciful. But it is still a choice. He makes the choice about who to show mercy to and to what extent.

If he showed mercy to everyone, all the time, for every sin, we would come to expect mercy. We would think we were entitled to mercy. And we would lose the whole point that mercy is God's choice, an option. In mercy God fails to give us the negative consequences of sin, at least right away, that we deserve. For example, we deserve death at the moment we commit our first sin. And yet, in his mercy, God waits to end our lives. God gives us time to learn of our sin, repent of it, and seek a solution to it.

When I consider the continuing depths of my own sin, it is utterly amazing that He has shown me mercy. In fact he knew before I was born how sinful I would be and yet "Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

I remind you of our "Foundations" sermon series of several years ago. I presented foundational teachings of Christianity upon which everything else we believe is built. One of those foundational teachings is that we are all sinners deserving of death and hell. Yet, we are still alive. We have not received the consequences of our sins. This is a gift of God's mercy. So we are experiencing God's mercy today. Despite the ill effects of the virus threat we are living through, the very fact that we are alive at all is a gift of God's mercy.

Let us remember that this week and thank him for his mercy.