



# Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

## “Character of God” Series Lesson 17 – December 11, 2016

### Communicable Attribute of Righteousness and Justice

#### I. Lesson Starters:

Last lesson we looked at the Communicable attribute of Holiness. *God’s holiness means that he is separated from sin and devoted to seeking his own honor, which includes 1) Moral quality, separation from sin or evil and 2) Devotion to God’s own honor and glory.*

Today we will continue our review of Communicable Attribute of Righteousness and Justice.

#### II. Attribute of Righteousness

*In English terms, the words righteousness and Justice are two different words, but in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament there is only one word group for these two English words. God’s righteousness means that God always acts in accordance with what is right and is himself the final standard of what is right.*

##### Deuteronomy 32:1-4

***1 Listen, you heavens, and I will speak; hear, you earth, the words of my mouth. <sup>2</sup>Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants. <sup>3</sup>I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! <sup>4</sup>He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.***

- A God of faithfulness and without iniquity
- “Just and Right” is he

##### Genesis 18:25

***25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” 26 The Lord said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”***

- Abraham successfully appeals to God’s own character of righteousness to save some of Sodom
- How can any action of our God be wrong, unjust or unrighteous

##### Psalms 19:7-9

***7 The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.***

- God only speaks and commands what is right
- God only speaks the truth (Isa 45:19) “I the Lord speak the truth, I declare what is right”
- As a result of God’s Righteousness, it is necessary that He treat people according to what they deserve
- Thus it is necessary that God punish sin as improper and wrong (We cannot only look at one attribute of God and build out theology or idea of God on the ones we desire; Next week we will study Jealousy and Wrath)

#### III. Results of No Punishing Sin

- If God did not punish sin, then His actions would then not be righteous
- Paul mentions this when he said “God sent Christ as a sacrifice in his divine righteousness for sin”
- “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he

had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished, 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:25-26)

#### **IV. Definition of Righteousness Conforms to God’s Character**

##### **Romans 9:19-21**

**19 One of you will say to me: “Then why does God still blame us? For who is able to resist his will?” 20 But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’**

##### **Job 40:2-9**

**2 As The Lord said to Job: “Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!” 3 Then Job answered the Lord: 4 “I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. 5 I spoke once, but I have no answer—twice, but I will say no more.” 6 Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm: 7 “Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. 8 “Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself? 9 Do you have an arm like God’s, and can your voice thunder like his?”**

- Whatever conforms to God’s moral character is right; whether we like or understand it
- If God is the final standard of righteousness, then there can be no other standard outside of God by which we can measure righteousness or justice
- Scripture confronts the question of whether God is the ultimate judge of righteousness and each time the ultimate answer is that we as God’s creatures have no right to say that God is unrighteous or unjust.
- **God answered Job in a way that does not explain allow him to understand why God’s actions are right, but in ways that proclaim His majesty and power!**
- **God does not need to explain his decisions or action to justify them to man**

##### **Deuteronomy 32:4**

**4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.**

We will finish where we started! All that God does and says is Righteous and Just. Perfect in every way.

- It is a cause for thanksgiving and gratitude when we realize that righteousness and omnipotence are both possessed by God.
- If our God was perfect righteousness, but did not have the power to carry out that righteousness, He would not be worthy of our worship and we would have no guarantee that justice would ultimately prevail; The flip side is also unworkable with a God that is all powerful, but without righteousness; Unrighteousness would be at the center of the world with no power to change
- We should continually worship and praise God for who he is

#### **V. Group Questions:**

1. Imagine what it would be like if we had “no standard of truth”? Discuss the implications of result of this in our world and eternal life?
2. In Psalms 19:7-9 it states that God is “pure, firm, enduring and righteousness”. I want you to break down, list and discuss the implications to us a) refreshing the soul, b) wise, c) joy to the heart and d) light to the eyes. Why do these attributes of God result in this for us?
3. Discuss how if God did not punish sin as he describes, not man; then there would be no righteousness in Him or our world?
4. Discuss the folly of Job trying to figure out “why what God did was right”?
5. What can we learn as practical application from Job 40:2-9 in our own lives?

Study material is primarily taken from Systematic Theology by Wayne Gruden, Chapter 10,-13; The Broadman Bible Commentary by the Southern Baptist Convention and Unger’s Bible Dictionary.