

Is it Fair?

My sister is two years younger than I am. When we were little there were obvious comparisons in my mind over the way we were treated by our parents. For example, I considered it outrageously unfair that I had begged for roller skates, and was not allowed them until I was eight, but my sister got some when she was seven. I forget exactly what my father's response was to my precocious complaint, but it was to the effect that I had no right to moan about the way I was being brought up.

Years later I worried about the apparent unfairness of God in respect of people who die without having heard the gospel message. A simple search on the internet suggests that this is a question that many people ask about God and Christianity. The question is of genuine concern, but we must consider it in relation to Bible teaching on the matter.

God has Told us What we Need to Know

The Bible does not give us answers to all the questions we might like to ask, however important we may consider them. Even for Jesus, the son of God, in his ministry there were some things hidden from him, such as the time of his return to earth (see Matthew 24:36).

The Bible states that there are some 'secret things' which are not revealed to us (Deuteronomy 29:29).

We must learn to concentrate on what God has told us rather than wasting time and effort on things we cannot know.

There are some things in the Bible that are difficult to understand. The prophets searched long and hard to comprehend the true meaning of some of their prophetic utterances given by God (see 1 Peter 1:10-11).

However, in contrast, there are many, many things that are difficult to misunderstand. Our need of salvation and the way in which it is offered is utterly unambiguous.

Clear Bible Teaching

The following important teachings are crystal clear, and they are stated repeatedly in the Bible:

There is only one God – the God of the Bible

The LORD Himself is God; there is none other besides Him... The LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other (Deuteronomy 4:35, 39).

I am the LORD, and there is no other; there is no God besides Me... I am the LORD, and there is no other (Isaiah 45:5, 18).

We all deserve to die because we sin (disobey God)

The soul who sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:20).

Thus death spread to all men, because all sinned (Romans 5:12).

The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

The only way for us to be saved is to believe on Jesus Christ, and to follow him

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life... He who believes in him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16, 18).

There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

We Cannot Argue with God

Whether or not I had a logical argument as a child, I was in no position to remonstrate with my father. One thing I did learn was that there was never any point arguing with him, whether or not he seemed to be right.

God is always right, so we have absolutely no grounds to argue with Him. It is up to us to try to understand His ways, not for Him to justify them to us. We may wonder how His ways are 'fair', but that simply means that we do not understand Him.

In fact, by 'fair' we usually mean treating everyone equally or getting what we deserve. In fact, if God gave us what we deserved we would all be treated the same and we would all perish. Any honest person will acknowledge that they have done wrong things in their life, and this means that they automatically deserve death. God owes us absolutely nothing at all, whereas we owe Him everything.

It is God who defines what is just, and Paul argues strongly that we have no right to argue with God about how

He treats us, alluding to a similar message in the Old Testament.

But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honour and another for dishonour? (Romans 9:20-21).



The Jews complained that the ways of God were unfair (Ezekiel 18:25). God's response was that it was their ways, not His, that were unfair. It can take a lifetime of prayerfully reading God's word and submitting to His will to come anywhere near understanding God's character, but that is what He asks of us.

The fact that we do know about the Gospel means that we are completely without excuse for not responding to it. Our genuine concern for other people is no reason not to respond ourselves. Please do not use this issue as a reason for not accepting God's offer of eternal life.

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