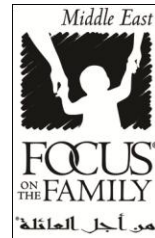


The Passion of Jesus Christ

A Bible study from Focus on the Family

Lesson One: Just Judge — Loving Father



Read aloud:

Pretend that I am a judge. In order to be a judge I have to promise that I will always enforce the law. What if the law tells me to do something I don't want to do? For example, let's say the law requires me to sentence people to jail if they sell illegal drugs. What would you say if I sentenced a man to jail for selling drugs to third graders? Would you say I did the right thing? What if the person selling drugs was a teenager? Or another third grader? Does my promise require me to send all these people to jail? Whose decision is it? Now what if the person selling drugs turns out to be my own child or brother or dad?

What would you say if I was sending everyone else to jail for the offense, but when it was a family member I set him free? Wouldn't I be a corrupt judge?

That's exactly the position God was in when man rebelled in the Garden of Eden (read the Genesis story). He loved Adam and Eve a great deal. He wanted them to be His companions and hoped they would decide on their own to obey Him.

However, they didn't. Instead, they chose to eat of the fruit of good and evil so they could become like God. That betrayal probably hurt God deeply. However, He knew that he would have to uphold the law in order to be a just judge and stay true to His nature. God had told Adam and Eve that disobedience would result in their death and separation from Him, and they disobeyed anyway. Now God faced a dilemma. Could He be a loving creator and a just judge at the same time?

That's where Jesus came in. God loved mankind; the death of the human race wouldn't do. So he sent Jesus, His very own son, to die in man's place. That incredible act of love satisfied both God's justice and His love for us. Jesus paid for our sins so now we can fulfill our destiny as God's companions. But we must willfully choose to do so. The best part is that Jesus came back to life and is in heaven preparing a place for each of us who chooses to love Him.

Read in Scripture:

Together, let's open up the Bible and read Romans 1:16.

Let's also read 1 John 1:7.

Talk about it:

1. What does God think about sin?
2. Jesus shed His blood for whose sins?

Define these words:

Devil — also called Satan, Lucifer, the Evil One

Gospel — the good news about Jesus Christ

Salvation — God's gift to those who trust Jesus Christ. It includes receiving the forgiveness of our sins, joining God's family and enjoying eternal life.

Sin — choosing our will over against God's will

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