



The cross in four words: justice

Discuss:

- If at the end of your life God asked you: “*why should you go to heaven?*”
- What case could you make for yourself?
- How confident would you be in that moment?

Romans 1-4

1. The whole world is unrighteous

1v18 this is God’s revealed verdict
1v21 you see it in how people treat God
1v29-32 you see it in how people treat each other

2. So justice for the world means punishment

2v5 God's response: a day of wrath
2v6/11 because God is just
2v16 Jesus will act as judge
3v19-20 no exceptions



WRATH

The unrighteous

(the whole world)

BLESSING

The righteous

Discuss:

- Do you believe God would be right to condemn all on judgment day?
- What sort of people do we find it hard to believe won't be let off?
- Why is God's commitment to justice important to this conversation?

3. But Jesus will give his righteousness to anyone

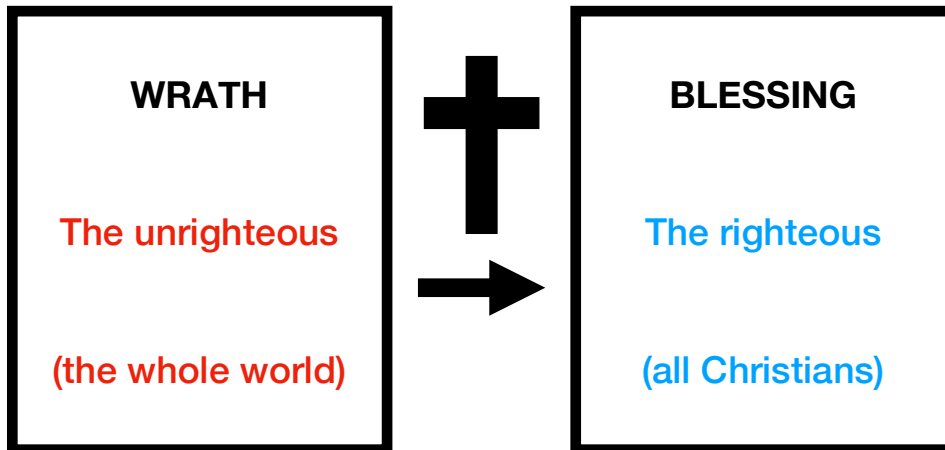
3v21-22 we get God's righteousness

3v24-25 because Jesus takes God's wrath

4. So justice for the Christian means blessing

3v26
4v6-8

God is right to call us righteous
with sin covered, God must bless



Discuss:

- What do you like about the idea that Jesus' death can make us righteous?
- What sort of things might make us worry we aren't righteous?
- How would you use a) Jesus' death on the cross and b) God's commitment to justice to reassure another Christian in this area?
- How does understanding the cross in terms of God's justice help us believe the gospel is good news for the world?

Closing prayers

The ten commandments

I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods but me.
You shall not make for yourself any idol.
You shall not dishonour the name of the Lord your God.
Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.
Honour your father and your mother.
You shall not commit murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
You shall not covet anything which belongs to your neighbour.

Confession

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have wandered and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things that we ought to have done; and we have done those things that we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us sinners. Spare those who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent, according to your promises declared to mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may live a disciplined, righteous and godly life, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **All: Amen.**

Song

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts no pow'r no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Collects

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

O GOD, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed: Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

LIGHTEN our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore, Amen