

The Goodness and Severity of God

Men either reject or fail to understand many verses of scripture, because their faith resides in a human doctrine rather than in divine truth. For instance, Paul wrote: *"Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."* The doctrine of salvation by faith alone and the fifth fatal flaw in the Calvinistic system, once saved always saved, leads the adherents of Mr. Calvin's calamity to reject or misinterpret Paul, because they embrace the falsehood that John 3:16-18 are unconditional. Since that is true, they reject the conditional provision of what Paul wrote. If God is love, which He is (1 John 4:8), how could Paul write what he did to the Romans? As with everything in the Calvinistic system, the Calvinist's understanding of God's love is skewed by his gross misunderstanding of God's sovereignty.

By His nature, God is the epitome of every concept or idea, and His actions are entirely consistent with all those features. For instance, if a man drove downtown and found his wife in a restaurant, having a candlelight dinner with some other man, the natural and reactive feature of love would be jealousy. God informed Israel: *"...for I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God"* (Exod. 20:5). Consequently, Israel was not to have any other gods before Him, neither make any graven image, nor bow themselves down before them. Love demands God to be jealous when His children go after false god's. The same love demands jealousy if they go after a body of doctrine other than God's own. That is why the inspired John wrote that if any go beyond the doctrine of Christ he has neither the Father nor the Son, and is not to be fellowshipped (2 John 9-11).

Love also naturally results in a person putting way from himself things which damage the love. Some things, such as unfaithfulness can destroy the love, resulting in putting away the object of one's affection. Isaiah wrote, *"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"* (Isa. 59:2). Israel (the northern kingdom) committed spiritual adultery against God, and He put her away, giving her a bill of divorce (Jer. 3:8). There have been occasions when a spouse committed one act of indiscretion, repented of it and over time the love and relationship was rebuilt and the marriage saved. However, if the spouse continues to be unfaithful, it will lead to divorce. Israel persisted in her adultery, therefore God put her away. With that in mind, any should be able to understand why Paul not only wrote what he did in Romans 11, but also in Romans 2.

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who will render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God (Rom. 2:5-11).

If one is a child of God (one doesn't become one by faith only, but by obedience in faith, confession of Christ, repentance of sin, and baptism (John 8:24; Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26,27)), an act of sin will not keep him out of heaven if he repents of it and does not continue

to practice it. But if one willfully persists in sin, does not repent and petition God's forgiveness. It would be completely contradictory to the nature of love for God, in the day of judgment, to throw wide the gates of heaven to such an individual and invite him to "come on in."

Love, especially the love of God, is a very precious thing. Yet, God, who is a jealous God, cannot because of His nature, and the fact that He is love, do that which is inconsistent with love, such as inviting the adulterer to the marriage feast of the Lamb.

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