

In Romans 3:23 we read how man is imperfect. In Matthew 5:48 we read that God is perfect, and that we should follow him. We read in 1 John 1:5 that there is "no darkness (e.g., sin) at all" in God. Because God is the truth (John 14:6) he requires perfect justice. Because He is love (1 John 4:8) he feels complete mercy for us. How then can these two qualities exist together in God? Perhaps the best question is: How will God judge man, with justice or mercy? We see that perfect justice requires God to condemn all men. Perfect mercy, on the other hand will cause him to save all men.

The problem of justice and mercy reminds us of an old paradox. What happens when an irresistible force which meets an immovable object? What kind of universe shattering catastrophe would occur? Well, justice and mercy met one day in recorded history. We read that the sun grew dark, the earth shook, people who had been dead for years came out of their graves, and an entirely innocent being, God in the form of a man, died on a cross. This was the only way to reconcile man to God. In 1 John 1:9 we read that Christ through his sacrifice cleanses us even now from our sin. Christ took our sins away and bore them on the cross. The only way to be acceptable to God is to be sinless. The only way to be sinless is to be in Christ. The only way to be in Christ is through faith and baptism into an ever-growing working spiritual life.

God says it best in James 2:13b, "Mercy triumphs over judgment." So mercy wins the battle of the ultimate powers here. And it is good for us that it is so. God also makes the point that we should also show mercy rather than judgment. Let us all thank God for his inexpressible gift and be motivated to act like him in our own lives.