

The Strictness of God By Trey Sullins

Have you ever made a mistake or sinned? Of course, we all have (Romans 3:23). In fact, that is why God designed the New Testament system so that people can repent and come back to Him. Often people will ask the question, “How strict is God?” The word strict means that one demands that rules be obeyed. Some claim that because God loves His creation, He would never be strict in punishment. As with all things, what does the Bible say about the strictness of God?

The Old Testament reveals how strict God is. All the way back in the beginning of the Bible we find Adam and Eve. They were given simple instructions as to what they were supposed to do. One of these was that they were allowed to eat of every tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17). They broke this command and were punished heavily (Genesis 3:16-24). Their punishment was that they would have difficulty in procreation and in growing crops, they would die, and they would be removed from the garden of Eden. In Leviticus 10:1-2 we find the sons of Aaron Nadab and Abihu breaking the commands of God by offering profane fire before the Lord. The result is that fire went out “from the Lord” and it consumed them. King David committed a great sin with Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 12. The results were that the sword would never leave his house, adversity would come from his own house, and the child from his sin would die. In this instance David even showed great penitence before God so he would not die (2 Samuel 12:13), but the rest of the consequences would still take place. Have you noticed a theme here? When humans broke God’s law throughout the Old Testament, God punished them. Though sometimes God would show mercy, people should not have expected it from God and certainly not used mercy as a justification to deliberately sin.

The New Testament reveals how strict God is. Acts 5:1-5 shows us the event in which Ananias and Sapphira gave the proceeds of a sold possessions to the church. When they did this, they lied and kept back some of the money for themselves while claiming they were giving it all. Peter calls out their sin and they both died on the spot for what they had done. Again, in Acts 12 Herod went on a campaign of attacking the Lord’s church. In verses 20-25 he lifted himself up proudly to give a speech. While the people shouted, “the voice of a god and not of a man” Herod was struck immediately by an angel of the Lord “because he did not give glory to God.” He was eaten by worms and died on the spot. Lastly, consider the seven churches of Asia. All but two of the congregations were told to “repent” or else they would be punished. Once more the New Testament makes it clear that when God gives instruction he expects and demands, and His creation obey and when they do not, He is strict in His punishment.

The God whom we serve is the same God and therefore is strict today as well. All throughout time God did not simply overlook or justify the people’s sins. In most cases He held people accountable for the things which they had done. In fact, this mindset which believes the grace of God allows us to sin is not anything new. Romans 6:1 makes this very case that continuing to sin after baptism not only makes no sense, but also goes against the commitment you made with God. Being under the grace of God does not give us the authority to sin, but rather gives us the ability to obey, because without grace we would be condemned by our sins already (Romans 6:15). Though our God is strict, we can still know that we have eternal life. This is one of the very reasons John gave as to why the book of first John was written, “These things I have written to you who believe in

the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:13).

The world around us teaches the idea that God so loved the world that He saved all the world regardless of any variables. However, the Bible reveals the real God who is strict and demands subservience. God does love the world, but His love does not mean that He ignores sins. Like parents with their children, God’s love is one of the reasons why punishment is delivered. In consideration of all that God has done for us, certainly He deserves for us to be faithful and obedient Christians.