

Romans 3:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Analysis

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Paul restates for emphasis: *pros tēn endeixin tēs dikaiosynēs autou en tō nyn kairō* (πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, "for the demonstration of his righteousness in the present time"). The cross vindicates God's righteousness now, in the eschatological age inaugurated by Christ.

Result: *eis to einai auton dikaiion kai dikaiounta ton ek pisteōs Iēsou* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ, "that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"). This is the gospel's glory: God maintains His justice (punishing sin fully in Christ) while simultaneously justifying the ungodly (crediting Christ's righteousness to believers). These are not competing attributes reconciled by compromise, but twin demonstrations of the same holy love. At the cross, justice and mercy kiss (Psalm 85:10).

Historical Context

This addresses the central problem of OT theodicy: How can a holy God dwell with sinful people? The sacrificial system provided temporary covering but never fully resolved the tension. Only Christ's once-for-all sacrifice demonstrates God can be both just (not overlooking sin) and justifier (saving sinners).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the cross demonstrate that God's justice and mercy are not contradictory but complementary?
2. Why is it essential that God be "just" and not merely merciful in justifying sinners?
3. What does it mean that God is "the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"—not faith in general, but Jesus-directed faith?

Interlinear Text

πρὸς	ἐνδειξιν	τῆς	δικαιοσύνης	αὐτὸν	ἐν	τῷ	νῦν
To	declare	G3588	righteousness	his	I say at	G3588	this
G4314	G1732		G1343	G846	G1722		G3568
καὶ ρῷ	εἰς	τὸ	εῖναι	αὐτὸν	δίκαιον	καὶ	δικαιοῦντα
time	that	G3588	he might be	his	just	and	the justifier
G2540	G1519		G1511	G846	G1342	G2532	G1344
τὸν	ἐκ	πίστεως	Ἰησοῦ				
G3588	in	which believeth	Jesus				
G1537		G4102	G2424				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:4 (Righteousness): He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Romans 4:5 (Faith): But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Isaiah 42:21 (Righteousness): The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.

Romans 3:30 (Faith): Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

Zephaniah 3:5 (Righteousness): The just LORD is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity: every morning doth he bring his judgment to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame.

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