

# For Children ■ God's Love And Justice Are Both Seen At The Cross

by Zac Poonen

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**Scripture:** Matthew 11:25, John 17:3, 2 Corinthians 10:12, Isaiah 49:15

**Topics:** "Knowing Jesus", "God's Forgiveness"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So I'd like to continue from what we have been hearing since we are concentrating on children this month. I want to say something to you children about what Jesus said. There are many things in the Bible which you hear and you read, you find it very difficult to follow.

In fact, most of the Bible, if you read it, particularly the Old Testament prophets and even the New Testament epistles of Paul, it's very difficult for a child to understand strong big words like justification and righteousness and sanctification and many words like this. But I want to read a verse to you what Jesus said when he was on earth. It's in Matthew 11, 25.

It says, he prayed, he was thanking the Father in heaven and saying, I thank you, Father, for one thing. I thank you that all these wonderful truths you have hidden from clever, intelligent people. You small children, you don't think yourself as clever and intelligent.

God has hidden these things from clever, intelligent people and revealed them. These are the Jesus' own words in Matthew 11, 25, to little children, small children. What does that mean? That means you don't have to be clever to know Jesus.

I mean, to be a teacher of the Bible, you need to have some intelligence and cleverness, but to know Jesus, that is more important than being a teacher or preaching or anything. Jesus said eternal life is not living forever. Eternal life means to know Jesus.

There's a verse in the Bible, John 17, 3, which says the definition of eternal life, you heard of eternal life in the church, and many people think eternal life means I live forever. No. Eternal life, because people who go to hell also live forever.

You know that. They burn in hell forever and ever and ever because they lived in sin. That's not eternal.

That is living forever, but that's not eternal life. Eternal life is the life of God, which never began and never ends. It's a different quality of life.

And Jesus said that life can be ours by knowing him. So all of you children can know Jesus at a very young age. I've heard of children with three years old who came to know Jesus.

So it says here in this verse that God the Father has hidden these truths from all clever, big people and revealed them to infants. So don't any of you children think that you cannot know Jesus personally, that you cannot talk to him, that if you pray, he will not listen to you? I'll tell you, he listens more to you than to many older people, because there's a lot less sin in your life than in the lives of older people. So you're not likely to be a hypocrite like a lot of older people.

A lot of older people are hypocrites. I know a lot of them. They all pretend to be very holy, but you all are just yourself.

Little children, the smaller you are, the more you are yourself. So that's the first thing I want you to know. So the second thing I want to say is, you heard about how one sin is enough to separate a person from God.

You may not understand that. You may think that, I mean, if a person commits many sins, he's much worse than who commits one sin. Adam and Eve committed one sin, not two or three, one sin.

And God said, get out of my presence. You cannot live here with one sin. Now you may think that's very strict.

Let me use an example. Supposing you take a vessel. If there's one hole in it and you pour water in it, the water will all drain out.

You understand that? One hole in a vessel, in a glass or a cup or a vessel, one hole, it makes no difference whether there are 10 holes or 50 holes or one hole. You understand that? Sin is like that. One sin, a million sins, all the same.

It cannot hold the life of God. Just like that vessel cannot hold the water. It's like, you know, if somebody were to give you a glass of water to drink, I'll use another example.

And there's just a little bit of mud in it, not a pile of mud, just a little bit of mud somebody put into that water, which made it dirty. Will you drink it? Another glass is full of mud. Is there a difference between the two? You will not drink that one full of mud.

And this one's got a little bit of dirt with one dead fly there. You say, no, I don't want it. There's a dead fly there.

The other one has got 100 dead flies. Does it make a difference? No. Older people understand it and you understand it as a child.

That is how one sin is. One sin is enough to separate you from God. And so that's why it's foolish to compare yourself with other children who you think are, oh, they are so bad.

And I'm not so bad, but it doesn't make a difference. One hole or a hundred holes. Maybe that child has got a hundred holes in his life and you've got only one, but you are no better than him.

He's got a lot of dirt in his glass and you've got just one little bit of dirt. Makes no difference. It's dirty.

Nobody can drink that. There's a verse in the Bible in 2 Corinthians 10 and verse 12, 2 Corinthians 10, 12, which says, those who compare themselves with each other are foolish without understanding. If you want to be foolish, there are many ways to be foolish.

One way to be foolish is to compare yourself with other children and say, I'm better. Very easy to be foolish. And a lot of people, children are foolish.

Now, if you don't want to be foolish, you must be the opposite of that. You must say, well, if I'm doing some good things, it's God who's helped me to do it. It's not my ability.

Then you're giving God the glory. That's okay. Yeah, we should be better than others, but we must give the glory to God and not think, I am better than that person.

Jesus once told a story of a person who prayed and said, oh God, I thank you. I'm better than that person. And that man went to hell.

And the other person who said, oh God, I'm not good at all. He was accepted. So when you come to the Lord, don't compare yourself with others.

And the other question that you can have is, if God is so good, why can't he just forgive everybody? I mean, when you do something wrong and you go to your mommy or daddy and say, oh mom, dad, I'm sorry for what I did. They say, okay, son, even if you broke something very valuable, your mom and dad will say, okay, my child, don't worry. It's okay.

You say, why can't God be as good as my mom or dad? Well, it doesn't exactly work like that because there is a principle. God loves you more than your mom or dad, by the way. But there's a principle called the principle of justice to be what is righteous and to explain it to your children.

For example, you're studying like some of you older children who go to school and supposing you're going to do a mathematics or arithmetic test in your school, maybe in third grade or something like that. And you study hard and you get most of the sums right, except maybe one sum was one of the problems was wrong, but all the others you got right. Another friend of yours, he didn't study at all.

He just played the fool the whole day and didn't prepare for the exam. And he came to the examination room and got almost everything wrong. You got only one problem wrong out of 10.

You got nine of them correct. He got all 10 wrong. You're better than him, right? But supposing the teacher says, well, I'm going to be very good now to all of you.

And I'm going to go full marks to you and full marks to that person. How would you feel? You got only one wrong and he gives you full marks. Okay, good.

But that person got 10 wrong and he also got full marks. He put you on the same level that is called unrighteous. It's not proper.

It's not right. Any teacher who does like that will be dismissed from the school. You can't put a child who doesn't bother to study and did everything wrong with another child who worked hard and tried his best.

So that's why God can't just overlook. He's just, if you got something wrong, you have to say it's wrong. He can't give you a hundred when you got only nine out of 10 right.

And he can't put you in the same category and another person who got everything wrong is not in the same category. So God can't forgive. He can't forgive you.

He can't forgive him because something is wrong. Then, you know, I want to tell you another truth about what we heard about substitution. That means somebody taking your place.

That's what we read. Jesus took our place on the cross. We were supposed to be killed by, punished by God, but Jesus took that punishment for us.

So let me use an example. Supposing one day you've done something very bad in your home, one of your children, and your whole family is going for a picnic along with others in the church, in the park. And because you did something so terribly wrong, your parents say you have to be punished.

You got to stay at home because you've done something terribly bad. You can't go for the picnic. All the others will go.

And supposing one of your brothers or sisters tells your dad and mom, dad, mom, let him go. I'll stay at home for in his place. Wow.

Would any of you do that? Such an exciting picnic. And will you miss it? Just because you love your brother or sister so much, you don't want him to suffer at home. You're willing to stay at home and let him go and enjoy the picnic.

You've got to really love your brother or sister to do that. Don't you think you really love a brother or sister if you're willing to do that for your brother or sister? That is what Jesus did for us. These are little examples that show Jesus' love for us.

Jesus always used stories. And we understand truth much better when we hear a story. That's why I'm using these stories, so your children can understand.

Let me use one more example. There's a story of two brothers who were twins. You know what a twin is? They look exactly, now some twins don't look exactly alike, but this set of twins, they look exactly alike.

Nobody could distinguish between even the parents were sometimes confused. And they grew up to be young, 25-year-old men, and they still looked exactly alike in their face. Parents had died and these two boys lived in a house.

One of them was very good and the other was very bad, but they looked alike. One day, one of those bad, the bad boy went out and had a fight with someone and took a knife and killed him. And there was blood splattered all over his shirt.

And somebody called the police and this boy came running. Before the police came, he ran away from there to his home. And since everybody knew who it was, they knew that, he knew that finally the police will come to his house.

So he ran to his home and he told his twin brother, you know what I did? I killed somebody. See my shirt is all full of blood. What shall I do? The police are definitely going to come here another five minutes.

You know what that older brother did? He loved him so much. He said, listen, my brother, I love you and I'll prove it to you today. Give me your shirt and you put mine.

Nobody will be able to see whether I am you or you are me. And he took his shirt and put it on and the police came and there were some other witnesses and they pointed to this older brother who had the, who had exchanged the shirt. And he said, yeah, he's the one, he's the one, even though he's not the one, just because he looked like the other one, he told the other one to hide somewhere and they caught the older brother.

And as he was going out, he told the police, just give me one minute. Let me go inside and come back. He went inside, closed the door and told his younger brother, I gave you a clean shirt.

Don't dirty it a second time. This time I take your punishment. And the police took that older brother and took him to jail.

This is what Jesus did for you and me. We did something wrong. And Jesus came before the father, not the father and said, no, no, no, let me take, I'll take that punishment.

I'll put on a shirt. And he was taken and judged. But he tells us, I've now given you my clean shirt.

Don't dirty it again. Keep your life clean. That is how God loves us, you know.

To understand, the Bible sometimes speaks about God's love for us like a mother's love for a child. There's a verse in Isaiah 49, verse 15, it says, even a mother forgets his child, I will not forget you. The love of God is a father, but he's also like a mother.

And you know, a mother loves a child so much. Sometimes if a little child is sick, very badly sick, groaning in pain, the terrible inward sickness, a good mother will say, oh God, can you please give me that sickness and take it away from my child? There are many mothers who I'm sure have prayed such a prayer. Give me that sickness and don't let my child suffer.

That is the love of a mother. I'm sure all of you children, your mothers loved you like that. If you were seriously sick, your mother would always pray, oh God, can you give me that sickness? Because God can't do that.

Because that sickness is in that child. But Jesus did that for you and me on the cross. He told the father, give me that punishment.

Give me that punishment. I'll take it. And he took it.

And it's like by some miracle, the sickness of the child goes to the mother and the mother dies and the child is healthy. Can you imagine how happy that, how thankful that child will be to his mother all his life? Say, I'm alive because my mother loved me so much, died for me. And I want to say all of you older people and children, never forget that there's anything good in your life.

It's because Jesus loved you and took your place. Now he's given you his shirt. Don't dirty it by telling lies, by fighting, by disobeying your parents, by doing anything that hurt him.

Those are the reasons why he died. Be thankful always. God bless you.

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