

Is The Fault With God?

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[0 : 00] In Romans chapter 9, we read at verse 19. Thou wouldst say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

We might also look at verse 14, which not dissimilarly states, What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. Now, to an extent, you could say that verse 14 also answers the rhetorical question at verse 19.

And in one sense, it would be very quick and easy for us to say, What shall we say then? Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Is there fault with God? And we just say, well, we know the answer is meant to be no.

So that's it. If he goes to the Bible and goes home, that's the answer to the question. Just like sometimes in the past when people would give Sunday school illustrations and always ask the children now, Who is able to do this? And who does that? And who forgives sins?

And the answer is always Jesus. And the answer here is bound to be no. Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

[1 : 05] So is there fault with God? And we know the answer is meant to be no. The only problem slightly here is that, without wishing ever to criticise that which the Holy Ghost has caused and inspired to be written down, Paul's answer at this stage in the succeeding verses doesn't really satisfy, does it?

Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing form, say to him that vormit? Why hast thou made me nuts? Hath not the power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour?

And so on. So the answer to the question, you know, why does God still find fault with sinners, if they can't resist his will, if they're having to do his will, is pretty much, well, shut up and sit down, who are you to answer back against God?

It's like when the parent says to the child, he says, why should I do this? Why should I do that? And say, because I'm telling you to. Now, there is a place for simply submitting to, whether it is parental or indeed divine authority, simply because God says it.

And therefore, yes, we submit to it. And ultimately, of course, we do and must submit to the Lord's will, regardless of what it may require of us. But as an answer, it's not entirely satisfactory, because the question, we might say, is at least philosophically legitimate.

[2 : 34] That one's saying, I'm going to be in. Paul clearly anticipates the question, why did he yet find fault for who hath resisted his will? In other words, if God has foreordained some individuals and angels and men to a lost eternity, and has chosen, elected, freely to save others, then, you know, the elect are going to be saved and the lost are going to be lost.

So, you know, whose fault is that? If it's God's will from the start, then how can man possibly resist God's will? Why can he yet find fault? Well, let's perhaps unpack the question, what is meant by finding fault?

First of all, if we think in eternal terms, when it comes to the last judgment, nobody who is going to be saved is going to be saved by how good they are.

They are only going to be saved because of the sacrifice of Christ for them, in which they have been enabled to trust. Likewise, if we can flip the coin over, nobody is going to be condemned by saying, aha, you didn't have Christ, you weren't on the elect, so you're going to be lost, but rather, for what will they be sent to a lost eternity?

They'll be sent to a lost eternity for their sin. Their sin, which they will be justly condemned for because they are guilty of it, and part, I have not the slightest done, of the last judgment will be

demonstrated, the evidential proof to the lost that yes, their judgment is just, yes, their condemnation is just, because set before them will be their life, and all the choices they have made, and all the decisions they have made, and all the things that they have done, and said, and thought, which, even for the most hardened sinner, is going to be embarrassing, and self-condemning, in that sense, because nobody has lived perfectly, in terms, even of their own standards, of right and wrong.

[4 : 35] There are always things that we know ourselves guilty of. They'll be condemned for their sin, not because they weren't, they weren't, ah, well, I didn't choose you, that means tough, you're lost, so you deserve to be lost.

We deserve to be condemned for our sin, regardless of whether we are lost, or whether we are saved. God, of his mercy, chooses to save some, but man's default position, since the fall, is rebellion against God, and man receives from God, believe it or not, exactly what he chooses. And we might think, ah, yeah, but nobody chooses to go to hell. Well, in one sense, you could say nobody chooses all the suffering and torment of hell, but given that the alternative is the Lord, there are millions upon millions who would rather face the prospect of a lost eternity than put themselves into the hands of the Lord and submit themselves.

To the Lord. Now what say then unto me, why did he yet find fault? Who hath resisted his will? God doesn't find fault, the fault is already there, the sin is already there.

Rather, he shows man his fault, his sin, and the justness of the judgment pronounced upon him. That's in an eternal context.

[5 : 58] That's in the terms of the mass judgment. But if what Paul is writing about here is, why did he yet find fault? Means, why does God send prophets to say to people, you're a stiff-necked people, you need to repent and turn to the Lord, you're sinning by doing this, this, and this, look, you're breaking this law, that law, transgressing against that commandment of God.

You know, why are we going to find fault with people? If it's nobody's fault except the fact that they're not elect, what else could they do? Why does God point out what is wrong and where we are sinning and transgressing?

Why does he do this? Out of love for sinners. God, out of love for sinners, points them the way to salvation, points them the way from which they must turn, the sin in which they are steeped, the lostness in which they exist by their default position, and like a crew member, if the ferry was going down, pointing you to where the life belts are, pointing you to the life boats or the muster stations or whatever, they're doing that to save your life.

It's no use then saying, I don't want to go to our muster station, I'd rather just stay here in the cafeteria and drink my coffee and eat my food. I don't want to go to our life boat, thanks very much, as the boat begins to tilt and you might not like the fact the boat is going down, you might be very inconvenienced by the fact of having to put on a life jacket and go and climb on a life boat and so on, but if you don't do it, you're going to perish.

You don't blame the crew member for saying, put that coffee down please now, get to the muster station, get a life jacket, get in the life boat, it's vital you do this, you don't have a choice, you've got to do it now.

[7 : 42] And you may argue with them and you may not like what they're telling you and you may be very inconvenienced by the fact that they're telling you, but if you don't do it, you will die.

It's as simple as that. Are they being unpleasant to you? Are they being unkind to you? No, they're trying to save your life. They're trying to do their job and save your life. And likewise, the prophets that are sent by the Lord say, look, thus saith the Lord, turn and repent, look at the laws you're breaking, look at the sins you're committing, look at the judgment that is bound to fall if you keep on this way.

It is very inconvenient. It is not soft and pleasing on the ear, but it is out of love that the Lord does this. He finds fault because he is a loving God and he sees that such fault as there is, is going to be the death of sinners.

And you might say, oh yeah, well that's all very well, but if they're not definitely saved anyway, then why bother with it? None of us knows who is going to be amongst the saved and who is going to be amongst the lost.

We've already been looking in previous days about how it is perfectly possible to fall at the very last hurdle, to fall in the last day or two days of one's life after following Jesus faithfully.

[9 : 02] It is equally possible to be redeemed with one's dying few hours worth of breath. There is no saying by the judgments of men as to who will be saved and who will be lost.

And the good news of salvation, the free offer of the gospel, is freely offered to all. Just as the sower scattles the seed across all the different kinds of soil on the pathway and on the shallow rocky soil and in the thorns and thistles and on the good soil as well.

And who knows how it will come up and who may respond and who may be saved. It is out of love that the Lord finds fault. In an eternal context, when it comes to the last judgment, he doesn't need to find it.

He just needs to reveal it to us. It's already there. And if our consciences are honest, then even in worldly terms, even during our earthly life, we know the faults are there.

We know the sins are there. What we're hoping is that nobody will notice when it comes to eternity. That if there is a God and if there is an afterlife, well, they'll just turn a blind eye.

[10 : 10] No, they won't. God being the God of all the earth, the judge of all the earth, is not going to turn a blind eye to all the injustices that have been perpetrated against the poor, to all the sins that have been committed against the sorrowing and the suffering, to all the injustice of theft or lies or taking his name in vain or desecrating his day or any of the other commandments that he has given.

The Lord is not going to turn a blind eye to these things. And if you were to take just one single commandment and to think in terms of how often, whether in the street or whether in other conversation you can't help overhearing or on TV or whatever it may be, how many times do you hear the name of the Lord taken in vain?

That third commandment being breached again and again and again with utter indifference and contempt and consider that for every single instance God will require it at the hand and the mouth of the guilty.

Every single one. And that thought alone is terrifying and most people, certainly most unbelievers, would regard that as such a minor misdemeanor that it doesn't even qualify.

They would say maybe if you made some racist comment or you made some politically incorrect comment that would be a terrible thing to do but to take the Lord's name in vain doesn't even register on their radar and God will require this.

[11 : 45] leave aside merely that one and think of all the other sins of which men are guilty. We think then of why God finds fault.

He doesn't find fault, he shows us fault. But where he finds fault in this world and whilst yet we are alive, it is out of love. Just like the steward or a crew member on the ferry if it's sinking.

We know that God is love because the Bible tells us verse John 4 16 we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in heaven.

Now notice what it says he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. If you really love, if your love is pure then you love the Lord as well as other people including your enemies.

You see that unpacking of that is probably needed to unpack what's mentioned when the same truth is mentioned at verse 8 he that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love and people think oh as long as you love somebody you know who you fall in love with or the things that you're really fond of or the things you like doing if you love something or you love somebody well that's you loving and love wins and you know God is love so you must be okay yes but God doesn't just approve each and every kind of love there may be if I fall madly hopelessly in love with my neighbour's wife and decide to follow up on that and act on that God does not approve of such adulterous relationships he will not approve my desiring another man's wife if various other activities we were to engage one was to engage in are simply desired or loved by the person concerned that doesn't make them right in the eyes of God because if we love truly as opposed to just desire he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God

[13 : 45] God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God how can you dwell in God and do that which he forbids how can you say oh yes God is love and I love this person or that person or whatever because I love them really with all my heart God must approve it because God is love God's love is pure it is not sinful if we are in the Lord then our love for the Lord is pure our desire is primarily for him and everything else follows on from that here in his love not that we love God but that he loved us and gave himself for us we have known and believed the love that God hath to us God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him why does he yet find hope

he finds hope because we do not love as we ought to love we love what and how we love in a way that puts self first and we all do that to an extent hopefully we perhaps do not seek to make an idol out of the self but that can happen too you know we define good and evil and right and wrong in terms of how it affects us we make our let's say for example our political choices we may support one political party and we test another because of how the policies or things they decide affect us or what we think or what we believe why is it okay for me to overtake somebody on the Arab village street but they really be grinding my teeth if they overtake me because I define everything by me and what suits me why is it okay if you see an opening at the checkout and you push you're trolling in there before somebody else who was heading there you think ah I got in before that why is that a good fit because we define ourselves by me number one and if it works for me then that's good and if they have to wait well that's okay because I'm the most important person in my life we might also think in terms of well I do what's right to say for my kids and if I have to do something a little bit shady or I have to maybe bend a room or break a law here

I'm doing it for my kids so that's okay and that's right because they're my kids and I love them so I think we're defining everything through ourselves we make ourselves the measure and the standard of what is right and anything that doesn't fit with that or anything that questions that we say is wrong but remember that God is never wrong is there fault with God how can there be fault with God he is the definition of righteousness of truth it is as though I were to phone up the speaking clock I don't know if anybody still does that nowadays but I always used to find it very helpful and you phone it up and you hear it beep beep beep and at the third stroke it would be whatever and you say oh James she's a wee bit faster I'll put a phone up and tell them look your clock's faulty here because my watch says this you know and your phone says that no your watch is wrong she's not wrong on the speaking clock she's right she's the definition of time keeping you work your watch by what it says in the speaking clock you don't do it the other way around they're not going to adjust the timing of their phone because your watch happens to be wrong they are correct a green which mean time date line can't say she's a wee bit to the left or a wee bit to the right no if the calculation's out it's you that's out it's not the line that is locked out if we are not quite in line with what the Lord has revealed in his word there's no question that he's wrong

God's word has not changed God has not changed I am the Lord I change not therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed but so often we define right and wrong by what suits ourselves thou would say unto me why does he yet find fault for who have resisted his will how can I help it if God has already made his choice from all he did what can I do what we can do is we can respond to God's revealing of right and wrong his revealing of his will and if we love the Lord then we will submit our will to his will and as we do so we will find in that the true and perfect freedom and you might think well how can it be freedom if you're having to submit if you're having to bow down low and change well let's imagine a situation where you're sitting on top of a tree not many of us will have done that I realise but if you're sitting on top of a tree and it's hurtling along the line and you're quite comfortable up there feeling the wind in your head and so on and then you see a low tunnel coming what are you going to do you're going to say well I'm just going to sit here because that tunnel shouldn't be there

I'm going to sit here and I'm just going to enjoy it and you're going to bang that's your head gone or you can say right well there's something dangerous up ahead I'm going to go down low I'm going to lie flat I'm going to preserve my life and I do that I get through the tunnel and oh I come out the other side and I can sit up but I'm still alive miraculously my life has been saved because I'm prepared to bow down a little bit if I'm prepared to submit my will to the Lord's will then I will find in that not only the preserving of my life but also the saving of my soul and the freedom and the liberty that I did not know existed until I found true freedom ultimately in him you see this is partly what when Judas not Iscariot asks this question of Jesus he says in chapter 14 of John at verse 22 Judas said unto him not Iscariot Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world why did you show yourself to the world why is it just lost disciples believers why didn't you show yourself to the world and then they would believe and then they would surely they would accept you if you show yourself to the world

Jesus answered and said of them if a man loves me he will keep my words you think is this him not answering the questions yes it is what is the world it doesn't just mean all the planet and the environment and all creation it means people why don't you reveal yourself to the people of the world and Jesus said look if a man loves you if somebody does love me he'll keep my words he'll

follow my teaching and my father will love him and we will come to him and make our abode with him in other words anybody who wants to come to me anybody who wants to love me and put his trust in me I will reveal myself to him so the question that Judas not is scanning is asking why did you show yourself to the world I'll show myself to as many people in the world as want to have me if they want to put their trust in me if they want to believe in me if a man loved me he will keep my words and my father will love him and we will come to him and make our abode with him he that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings and the words which he hears not mine but the father which sent me you see

[20 : 47] Jesus is willing to come willing to receive willing to reveal himself to anybody who will have him but so often man chooses not to because the idol of self is in the way the idol of self and even to the point of the structure I will not bow my head to that bridge that's coming up I'm just going to sit here and I'm going to take whatever comes and I'll know that I did it my way tremendous while your head rolls along the rail we track afterwards because you wouldn't bow down and you wouldn't lie flat and you wouldn't save your own life even our Lord himself sets the example of what we must do Jesus before we look at this thing Jesus himself is now and was from the moment of his resurrection he was the and is the most exalted personage in heaven itself he's at the right hand of the father no apostle no saint no angel is higher than Christ you know the Lord has given him a name above every name that in the name of

Jesus every knee shall bow but in order to have that exalted position what did he first have to do he first had to submit his own will to the father's will of course Jesus will was always in line with the father's will yes as God it always was but remember that Jesus was fully human he was every bit as human as we are and that human part of him recoiled naturally from the prospect of crucifixion he would have seen plenty of crucifixions before he knew exactly what was involved nobody would relish it and so we read in Luke 22 verse 41 he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast and kneeled down and prayed saying father if thou be willing remove this cup from me nevertheless not my will but thine be done and there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him and being in an agony he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground but what did he do he submitted his will to the father not my will but thine be done and what is the result of submitting his will to the father's will now he is exalted more highly than any other person in heaven or in earth he is the ultimate exalted one before whom all else must bow because he is willing to submit his will to the father's will now we might be inclined perhaps to think yeah okay but you know it doesn't justify God finding fault with us because you know what can we do other than what he is what he wants us to do even if you say you know bring your will into line with his will but you know if we're not enabled by his grace to do that then how could he possibly find fault

I mean we look at Deuteronomy chapter 1 and verse 39 and this is a verse that always used to trouble me in terms of original sin and things like that for example it says moreover your little ones which he said should be a prey and your children which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil they shall go and thither and unto them will I give it and they shall possess talking about the land the land of Canaan they had no knowledge of good and evil I thought what look there's no knowledge of good and evil how could there be sin there but the context in which that is uttered is talking about the spies going to spy out the land the children the children of those spies and of that generation were innocent of their father's sin they didn't have knowledge of the land they didn't have knowledge whether it was a good land or a bad land whether there were giants in the land or whether they had reason to be afraid they had no knowledge in that day that's what it says your children which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil they shall go and thither and unto them will I give it and they shall possess it you see our default position being sin whilst being born and conceived in original sin informs and we could say infects everything else that we do as far as the choice of the land is concerned yes they weren't guilty in that regard but you know there's plenty else they would have grown up to be guilty of plenty else they would even have been guilty of as children as well the fact of the matter is we get from the Lord what we choose in Psalm 81 we read at verse 11 but my people would not hearken to my voice and Israel would none of me so I gave them up unto their own hearts lust and they walked in their own councils oh that my people had hearkened unto me and Israel had walked in my ways

I should soon have subdued their enemies and turned my hand against their adversaries but my people would not hearken to me so I gave them up to their own hearts lust what they wanted they

got what happened in the context there of the spies going and spying up the land and saying oh no we better not go in there there's giants in the land and cities walled up to heaven oh we don't want to go in there and the Lord's response to that was okay that's fine you won't go in there you won't get to go in there off you go back to the desert for another 40 years oh no wait a minute we don't want to do that no but we didn't want to go into the land when we had the chance the Lord gives them exactly what they choose Psalm 78 likewise verse 29 so they'd eat and were filled for he gave them their own desire they were not estranged from their lust but while their meat was yet in their mouths the wrath of God came upon them and slew the fattest of them and smoked down the chosen men of Israel for all this they sinned still and believed not for his wondrous works therefore their dates did he consume in vanity and their years in trouble when he slew them then they sought him and they returned and inquired after God and they remembered that God was their rock and the high God their redeemer in other words when he sent them adversity then they turned back and repented and they turned back to the Lord why?

because he found fault with that he found fault with them going their own way committing their own sins following their own lust thou wilt say unto me why did he yet find fault for who hath resisted his will?

[27 : 37] he finds fault in order to turn them back he points the way that they should have been going he finds fault so they can see the difference between the fault and the way of righteousness and truth between their own way and the way of the Lord thou wilt say unto me why did he yet find fault who hath resisted his will?

and yes there is a time and a place as we said earlier like for a child to say look you don't do it because mummy says you're not doing it no you don't do it because dad says you're not doing it that's it later on when we get older we discover there was a reason why mum forbade us from doing that or they wouldn't let us run out and play in the traffic or whatever the case may be that we so wanted to do but they wouldn't let us how bad they were to us for not letting us do that but there was a reason and the reason was almost always for our good and our safety our protection our life it was because they loved us that they kept us sometimes with chastisement from things that would be harmful to us now of course when it comes to the Lord everything that God does is ultimately for his own glory but God's glory brings with it as the body follows the head it brings with it the blessing and the good and the life of his children that which is for the glory of God is simultaneously also for the blessing of his children it is for their benefit for their good because we are so spiritually dull and so spiritually obtuse in our present sinful and conditioned here in this fallen world we have to have things explained sometimes in terms of how does this help me how is it relevant to me and yes perhaps

Paul will be right to say look who are you arguing against God God has said it and that's enough you're the clay here's the potter just lump it just get on with it and that's true that's right yes mum says no dad says no you just do it you just obey or the soldier giving the order by his officer he doesn't get to say excuse me captain soldier could you just tell me why do you want us to take that bridge over there why do you want us to go by that route if you explain it all to me then I'll say okay right yes then we'll go and obey the order no you don't argue you obey the orders you do it and if you don't obey the orders if you're not trained to obey your lives can be lost people can be destroyed because of their failure to obey it is so for the Israelites it is so for the Christians it is so in the world and what the Lord is doing by finding fault is pointing us the way of grace and salvation it is to our benefit it is to our blessing that he finds fault with the way that we are so that he can point us to the way that we can be and the way that we ought to be as once was put so succinctly in a poster you know the world says do and you think it's going to say

God says don't do better the Lord points us the way of that which is better that which is for our salvation and we think oh well God's going to find fault the whole time no he's not Hebrews chapter 6 verse 10 God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have showed toward his name and ye have minister to the saints and do minister if you love God is love and if we dwell in love we dwell in God we want to serve him we want to serve his saints we want to further his kingdom that's pure love that's love that is for the Lord which will automatically then become love for the Lord's people and even love for our enemies too because as we were saying the other day even the enemies of God glorify him in a back to front way because how can you be at enmity with one who does not exist therefore their very enmity points up the existence and reality of God to go to what Jeremiah writes in the

Lamentations when we are chastised when the Lord finds fault with us it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not conceited because his compassions fail not they are new every morning great is thy faithfulness the Lord is my portion saith my soul therefore will I hope in him the Lord is good unto them that wait for him to the soul that seeketh him the best thing the kindest most loving and merciful and fatherly thing the Lord can sometimes do for us is to find fault with us and to point us in a different direction thou wouldst say unto me why would he yet find fault for who is the assistant as well because it's not my fault it must be God's fault because I can't help the way that I'm in I can't help what he can say I can't help this the worst thing that he can do is give you over to your own desires in your fallen condition what kind of parent would say to the yes off you go on the play in the traffic that's what you want to do my love you go and do that that's not love that's not caring for your child that's not protecting them that's not thinking in terms of what is best for them the Lord finds fault and yes the Lord judges righteously because in the midst of all that he does he is directed by his own character his own glory his own justice his own righteousness but the fact that in the midst of all these things

[33 : 40] God is love and his desire is that men and women likewise discover that love and that life which is found only in bringing their will into line with this yes you can sit on top of the train and you can have your head taken off by the bridge and you can have the satisfaction going hey yes I did it my way but you will be dead and you can go to the end of your life saying I did it my way I don't have to submit to the Lord nobody tells me what to believe and what not to believe and yes you'll have the satisfaction of having been given up to your own will but you'll be dead and you'll be dead for all eternity and an ongoing state of death that never ends but hey you did it your way so it must be okay but that's all the Lord does he gives us up to our own will behold the goodness and severity of

God or in his mercy and love and righteousness he find good fault wherever it is and he directs us to the way of righteousness thou would say unto me why did he get fault but who resisted his will he finds fault because the fault is there but God is love and desires that we be cured of that fault because in us the fault is there but there is no fault with God with his prayer said