

How God Gives

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. **I do not give to you as the world gives.** Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

What does it mean that Jesus does not give to us as the world gives?

The picture of what the world gives in the Bible is not pretty. Romans 3:23 reminds us that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” It’s no wonder that we tend to be wary of the world—and of each other. The more time we spend here, the more we are conditioned to expect disappointment from the world by its very nature.

That’s because the world—and people—by their very nature cannot satisfy us.

We are not merely broken; we are inadequate. Even at our best, we are no substitute for the true and living God. We are judgmental, accusatory, condemning. We are inconsistent; we have terrible follow-through. We are inept. And all of these things result in a lack of purpose in the pain we needlessly, consistently, often even accidentally inflict upon others.

But that’s not how God gives.

We explain away our own faults and those of others with “we’re only human”—and that’s true. We are fallible. But Jesus doesn’t have that out, and He doesn’t need it. God does not give the way humans give.

Humans are accusatory? God vindicates. We can freely ask, “Who then will bring charges against me? Let us face each other. **Who is my accuser? Let him confront me.**” And why? **“It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me.** Who is he that will condemn me?” Isa. 50:8-9

Humans are inconsistent? God is constant; He reminds us, “Do not tremble, do not be afraid [...] Is there any God besides Me? **No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.**” Isa. 44:8

Humans are inept? God is mighty to save: **“Do I lack the strength to rescue you?”** Isa. 50:2

Humans inflict pain without purpose? God loves us comprehensively and without fail: **“Those who hope in Me will not be disappointed.”** Isa. 49:23

We ought not to put up the same boundaries with Jesus that we put up with people. Jesus is not a mere mortal—a relationship with Him is not something that needs to be regulated, incremented, or managed in the hopes of perpetuating our pretended invulnerability. Our choices need not be between fear and heartbreak, between walls and ruins, between surface-level-living and getting lost in the darkness. His act of death and resurrection on the cross is the heart of the way He gives; it is the ultimate proof not only of His love but also of His trustworthiness. Jesus Christ is real, and He calls us to be real with Him—and with each other. And when we’re real with our Creator, we become whom we were really created to be.

-Kristen Kruger ‘14