

- “*Let God be true....*” – ‘Let God be esteemed true and faithful, though every man and every other opinion should be found to be false.’ Paul takes it further by arguing that even if every person in the world were unfaithful (did not believe) and accused God of being unfaithful to His promises, it would only mean that they all are liars and God is true. The fact that there are some of Abraham’s descendants who did not believe is not an indictment against God. To the contrary, it is man who is indicted.
- God’s faithfulness to His Word is a necessary attribute of His being. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2; Ps 36:5). If there seems to be a discrepancy between His promises and what we perceive, the fault always lies with us, not with God.
  - It should be a fixed principle, a matter not to be questioned or debated about, that God is true to His word (Job 13:15).
  - God’s promises are not dependent upon man’s faithfulness, but on His faithfulness, and thus God’s promises are not thwarted by our unfaithfulness (2 Tim 2:13). If some disbelieve the promises & reject the Messiah, God remains faithful and will accomplish all His gracious purpose (Isa 55:11).
- Paul backs up his assertion that God can never be unfaithful by citing Psalm 51:4 where David made his confession of guilt and acknowledged that God is proved right in what He says and just in His judgment against him. For God to be unfaithful is unthinkable! To think that God could be unfaithful or unfair assumes that it is possible for God to be unfaithful or unjust. It is a flawed assumption! We must begin with what is true of God rather than a faulty speculation: “*Let God be true, but every man a liar.*” Start with the principle: God is always true; man is consistently not.

(iii) *Objection 3, 3:5-6*

- 3<sup>rd</sup> objection: “Is not God unrighteous or unfair in punishing man if His righteousness shines through when He judges us? If the fact of our sin demonstrates the righteousness of God, wouldn’t God be wrong to judge us because we would actually be instruments for His glory?” Lest his readers conclude that he is expressing his own thinking, Paul adds the parenthetical explanation that he is speaking in human terms, that is, according to the human logic of the natural mind.
- Paul gives the strong negative, “God forbid!” If God were not entirely fair or righteous, how would He be qualified to judge the world? Paul is implying that their line of reasoning would prohibit God’s judgment on anyone. The Jews believed that God would judge the Gentiles for their many gross sins. If the sins of the Jews bring God glory and thus should be exempt from His judgment, then the sins of the Gentiles would also merit exemption. It is impossible that God should be unjust if He is to judge the world. God’s justice demands that He judge unrighteousness. For if this twisted logic is accepted, it virtually makes God a partner in sin & He could not then judge the world.

- It is because God is righteous that He is bound to punish evildoers even though the actions which evoke His wrath may also unwittingly redound to His glory. The issue is not, what good God may bring out of it, but what does the crime itself deserve? What is the character of the offender? The just punishment of the offender is to be determined by the Law, and by his punishment. It is true that the wrath (wicked fury) of man shall praise God (Ps 76:10), and that God will use man’s wickedness to glorify Himself as a just judge; but this will be no ground of acquittal for the sinner. It is twisting Scripture to make what is inherently evil appear to be ultimately good.

(iv) *Objection 4, 3:7-8*

- 4<sup>th</sup> objection: “If my lie promotes the glory that God receives by showing that He is truthful, why am I still judged as a sinner?” This question is closely related to the last one. But there is a difference. The last question had its focus upon the character of God. This question has its focus upon the judgment of man.
- Such fallacious reasoning says we should go on sinning so God can go on proving how true and faithful He is. The fault in the reasoning of the objector is that he takes for granted that the direct tendency of his conduct is to promote God’s glory, whereas it is just the reverse; and it is by God’s reversing that tendency, or overruling it, that He obtains His glory. Sin is against God, not for Him. God does good because of who He is, not because of our evil. It is true that human sin does provide God the opportunity to show the truth about His character, specifically His great mercy and lovingkindness. It is true that God can use sin & the wickedness of man to bring glory to His Name. Even a wicked, hard-hearted Pharaoh can bring glory to God (Rom 9:17,18,21,22,23). Man’s sin can bring glory to God, but this certainly does not exempt man from judgment.
- There were those who charged Paul with preaching this philosophy - that we should sin more so that God will be more glorified. “*Let us do evil that good may come*” is the wicked and unbiblical philosophy that the end justifies the means. This is inverted logic that says, if our sin brings glory to God, then why do we not just sin more? Paul utterly condemns this philosophy: “whose damnation (judgment) is just (right, deserved).” Sin is evil and is never justified. It is never right to do wrong to do right. Our attitude should be this: Do right and trust God for the outcome!
- There are many things in God’s Word that are difficult to understand. Even though we may not understand God or His ways, we have no right to contend against Him or accuse Him of wrong (Job 40:4; 42:6). It is important to approach difficult spiritual questions with a submissive attitude.

Read “Formal Religion” by JC Ryle

[https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/formal\\_religion.htm](https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/formal_religion.htm)