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Understanding Justice In An Unjust World

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I. What is Justice?

Dictionary.com defines it as:

- The quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness.
- Rightfulness or lawfulness.

Scriptural words for justice:

- Tsaddiq; Mishpat; Dikaios—Translated most often as righteousness, justify, judgement.
- An action or decree that establishes the right.
- Doing what God says is the right thing to do.

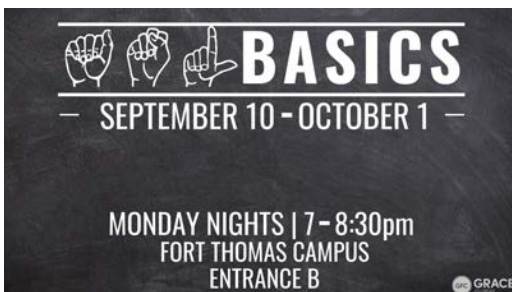
II. Three distinguishing features of biblical justice

1. Justice brings forth the Kingdom of God.

- a. One day God will restore ultimate justice to our broken world.
- b. We see God's long-term plan for justice throughout all of Scripture.

2. God desires that His people seek justice.

Proverbs 1:1-3 "...to know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity;"



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Proverbs 28:5 “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it completely.”

Micah 6:8 “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

Matthew 6:25-33

3. Biblical justice produces practical results.

Proverbs 24:24-25 “Whoever says to the wicked, “You are in the right,” will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations, but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them.”

Proverbs 29:7 “The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, the wicked does not understand such concern.” **NASB**

Jeremiah 22:1-5

Luke 4:16-19 “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

III. How can we grow in our understanding of justice?

1. Learn more about God’s character.

- a. Proverbs 9:10
- b. Isaiah 61:8
- c. Luke 18:1-8
- d. Psalm 139

2. Intentionally grow in humility.

- a. Recognize we are finite.
- b. Fight the thoughts that make us think God is unjust.
- c. Pray for your enemies.

3. Love Christ more, love like Christ more.

- a. The more personally we know Christ, the more inclined we will be to trust Him when injustice closes in on us.
- b. Ultimately, we are to be known for how we love.

John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1 Corinthians 13:3 “If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.”

James 2:8-13 “...So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgement is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

“The Gospel unleashes, in the world, a commitment not to live for justice but to live for more than justice. Justice is minimalist. A life devoted to treating people as they deserve is not a Christian life. God, in the Gospel, treated us better than we deserve. We don’t get justice in the Gospel, God got justice in the Gospel. We don’t get justice in the Gospel we get grace. And He unleashes on the world, a people, in churches and then spilling over out of churches who treat each other WAY beyond justice. You shouldn’t walk through the day, or through your life, thinking “How can I be just?” You should walk through [life] thinking “How can I be gracious? How can I be loving? How can I be kind? How can I love my enemy? How can I go the extra mile? How can I, when I am sued to go one mile, go two miles? When I am sued to give my coat, give them my cloak as well?” The gospel unleashes WAY beyond justice. So Christians shouldn’t be known mainly as justice people, that’s minimalist. You start there, and then you go beyond...So Christ will be known in the culture when we treat people better than they deserve, not as they deserve.” ~ John Piper