

Do Justice

Micah 6:8

Ben Deaver @ Tallgrass Church Central Gathering on November 11, 2018

Big Idea—The just person will disadvantage themselves for the advantage of the community!

Mingle Question—When has someone helped you out?

Orphan Sunday 2018!

- Tallgrass family
- Have the kids in here. Ron's talk.
- Coloring sheets.
- Kids, want a quarter? Come on down front! **Give a quarter!!!**

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 (steadfast love), and to walk humbly with your God?

What is justice?

- **Give another quarter!!!**

Justice League

- What does the Justice League do in the world? They right wrongs.

Lady Justice

- The origin of Lady Justice was Justitia, the goddess of Justice within Roman mythology.
- Why the blindfold?
- Since the 16th century, Lady Justice has often been depicted wearing a blindfold. The blindfold represents impartiality, the ideal that justice should be applied without regard to wealth, power, or other status.

Three definitions of justice:

From *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* By Brian Sandel, Harvard professor
Justice is...

1. Respect of Individual Freedom—My Rights
 - a. "He stole from me!"
2. Maximizing Welfare—Common Good
 - a. "That's not fair."
3. Promoting Virtue—Do the Right Thing
 - a. "That's the right thing to do!"

Retributive vs. Restorative Justice

See Micah 6:8. In context, Micah exposed how wealthy, land-owning leaders of Israelite cities were running the economy. They were guilty of buying land from low income landowners through bullying (Micah 2:2), changing land boundary lines (2:4- 5,9), bribing local judges and prophets (chapter 3), and rigging weights and measures to their favor (6:10-11).

Examples:

- How much candy should everyone get after trick or treating?
- Abortion rights vs. Rights of the unborn
- Price gouging example from Sandel book
- Recent flooding in Manhattan, KS, shipping folks out of hotels during game weekends

Mishpat

- 421 occurrences in the Old Testament and very few are about protecting individual freedoms.

The Quartet of the Vulnerable

- Who knows what a quartet is? A solo is one. A duo or duet is two. A trio is three. So a quartet is....four! Guess what a quintet is? Five!
- The widow, the orphan, the immigrant, and the poor!
- Stability = connected to a family that owns land
- Why are these populations vulnerable?
- **Deuteronomy 24:17-18** ¹⁷ “You shall not pervert (twist) the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge...
- ¹⁸ but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there..
- ...therefore I command you to do this.”
 - A sojourner is someone who is not originally from here.
 - Gospel, Gospel Truth, Gospel Behavior
 - God giving justice to the Israelites in Egypt as foundational to our understanding of justice.
 - Our understanding of God’s justice is deeply rooted in the Exodus story.
 - When were you delivered by God from darkness? Remember that? Now go and do justice!
 - One of the key gauges to tell if you were receiving the love of God was how well you loved the vulnerable.
 - This sounds a lot like our Mission Statement. Because God first loved us, we exist to love God and love our neighbor.
- Gleaning Laws
 - **Deuteronomy 24:19** “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.
 - **Deuteronomy 24:20** When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.
 - **Deuteronomy 24:21-22** ²¹ When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. ²² You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.
 - What do you do when the pinata breaks? What do you do when the candy is thrown at the parade?
- **Proverbs 31:8** Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.
 - Not just charity, or give to the poor if you feel like it, the RIGHTS of the destitute, the quartet of the vulnerable!!!

Who are our vulnerable?

- Who are those who can't speak for themselves in your society today? What populations are vulnerable in our society? Who are our vulnerable?
- Who are the most vulnerable in your neighborhood? Your classroom? Your workplace? Your family?
- Who do you invite to your birthday parties? Into your home? Who do you play with at the playground during recess?
- The unborn, the elderly, the mentally ill, and the immigrant!
- **Luke 14:12-14** ¹² He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴ and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just."
- **Give another quarter!!!**

The just person will disadvantage themselves to the advantage of their community.

The wicked person will disadvantage the community to advantage themselves.

—paraphrase of Bruce Waltke

Remember what a wise man once said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive!" Another way to put that, "It is more happy to give than to receive!" Who wants to be happy? How do you be happy?

Love Kindness

- Hesed = God's covenantal love; 247 occurrences
 - Kindness; Mercy; Lovingkindness; Steadfast Love; Faithfulness
 - HESED
- Never Stopping, Never Giving up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love
- **Exodus 34:6-7** ⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

Application: Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly

Compassion International—Have Maris, Kate, and Maddox come up!

4 Mason jars

1. Orphan Helpers
2. Dwell Mobile
3. Life Choice Ministries
4. Tallgrass Church Adoption Fund

How can WE do justice?

- What ideas do you have?
- Vehicle Fund—Chris Swanson
- Tallgrass Church Community Resources Google Doc
- **Give another quarter!!!**
- Every kid gets four quarters! How will YOU do justice with what's been given to you?
- You'll have a chance to report back next week.
- Parents, jump in with your kids. Maybe you'll want to contribute too.

Resources:

- *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just* by Timothy Keller
- *Justice* video by The Bible Project on their website or YouTube
- 3 Part Justice series on The Bible Project podcast

Walk Humbly

- **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 (steadfast love), and to walk humbly with your God?
- You can't DO JUSTICE very well on your own. You need the humility to know that you need major help. God has given us this help.
- We are getting ready to celebrate just exactly how God showed His Never Stopping, Never Giving up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love.
- What are we getting ready to celebrate? CHRISTMAS! When God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to fulfill His requirement for us perfectly!
- Jesus was the one who perfectly did justice, loved kindness, and walked humbly with God!
- You can read this in Jeremiah 22:3. See also Isaiah 11:1-5. The Messianic hope of the prophets was for a king who would perfectly bring tsedeqah and mishpat.
- In Jesus, God's love and justice are perfectly fulfilled. God is just in his judgements on corrupt Israel and humanity by the court sentence of guilty. God's judgement is an act of love as he puts himself in the place of the guilty.

Our King & Kingdom

Questions?

PRAY!

Psalms 146:5a, 7-9

^{5a} Blesses is he whose help is the God of Jacob...

⁷ ...who executes justice for the oppressed,
who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹The LORD watches over the sojourners;
he upholds the widow and the fatherless,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

Chopping Block:

The Bible Project *Justice* video:

Jon: The earliest followers of Jesus experienced this righteousness from God not just as a new status, but as a power that changed their lives and compelled them to act in surprising new ways.

Tim: Yeah, if God declared someone righteous when they didn't deserve it, the only reasonable response is to go and seek righteousness and justice for others.

Jon: This is a radical way of life: making other people's problems my problems, advocating for the vulnerable, making sure that we all rise together.

Tim: This is what Jesus meant by loving your neighbor as yourself, and it's not easy, and it's not quick. It's about a lifetime commitment fueled by the words of the ancient prophet Micah. "God has told you humans what is good and what the Lord requires of you: is to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

Mishpat

- <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas/mishpat.html>
- <https://relevantmagazine.com/god/practical-faith/what-biblical-justice>

Passages:

Old Testament

- **Deuteronomy 10:17-19** ¹⁷For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. ¹⁹Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.
- **Deuteronomy 27:17, 19** ¹⁷“Cursed be anyone who moves his neighbor's landmark.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’ ¹⁹“Cursed be anyone who perverts the justice due to the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.” And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’
- **Jeremiah 22:3** Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.
- **Zechariah 7:8-11** ⁸And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying, ⁹“Thus says the LORD of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another, ¹⁰do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor, and let none of you devise evil against another in your heart.”
- **Leviticus 19:9-10** ⁹“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. ¹⁰And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.
- **Leviticus 23:22** “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.”
- **Deuteronomy 15:1-2** “At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release. ²And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor. He shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed.
- **Deuteronomy 15:7-8** ⁷“If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, ⁸but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be.

- No poor among you—**Deuteronomy 15:4-5** ⁴ But there will be no poor among you; for the LORD will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance to possess— ⁵ if only you will strictly obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all this commandment that I command you today.
 - How does this relate to us today? The New Testament puts a strong burden on the church to do good within the family of God first and then to engage those around them.
- **Deuteronomy 24:14-15** ¹⁴ “You shall not oppress a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether he is one of your brothers or one of the sojourners who are in your land within your towns. ¹⁵ You shall give him his wages on the same day, before the sun sets (for he is poor and counts on it), lest he cry against you to the LORD, and you be guilty of sin.
- **Genesis 18:19** For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.
- **Deuteronomy 4:5-8**
- **Psalms 33:4-5** ⁴ For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. ⁵ He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.
- **Jeremiah 9:23-24** ²³ Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, ²⁴ but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”
- **Ezekiel 18:5-9** ⁵ “If a man is righteous and does what is just and right— ⁶ if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman in her time of menstrual impurity, ⁷ does not oppress anyone, but restores to the debtor his pledge, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry and covers the naked with a garment, ⁸ does not lend at interest or take any profit, withholds his hand from injustice, executes true justice between man and man, ⁹ walks in my statutes, and keeps my rules by acting faithfully—he is righteous; he shall surely live, declares the Lord GOD.
- **Isaiah 58:6-7**

New Testament

- Matthew 11:4-5
- Luke 4:17-18

Job, the Just

- **Job 29:11-17** ¹¹ When the ear heard, it called me blessed,
and when the eye saw, it approved,
¹² because I delivered the poor who cried for help,
and the fatherless who had none to help him.
¹³ The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind
and feet to the lame.
¹⁶ I was a father to the needy,
and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know.
¹⁷ I broke the fangs of the unrighteous
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.
- **Job 31:13-28**