



WISDOM

WISDOM: The World, Justice & Jesus

July 11, 2021 | Speaker: Armando Lopez, Associate Pastor

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE:

Today, we are exploring the subject of justice, of righteousness. We are looking at what it means to live a just life, a life of doing justice, of righting wrongs. This is one of the most important subjects in the book of Proverbs.

The book of Proverbs, which is one of the books of Wisdom in the Bible, shows us that a wise person does what is right, just, and fair or equitable. The righteous, those who are truly wise, are to be agents of healing. ***This is what godly wisdom leads people to do, to live justly, to do justice. The wise care for justice.***

Her ways are pleasant ways,
and all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her;
those who hold her fast will be blessed.
By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations,
by understanding He set the heavens in place;
by His knowledge the watery depths were divided,
and the clouds let drop the dew.
~Proverbs 3:17-20 (NIV)

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
when it is in your power to act.
Do not say to your neighbor,
"Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you"—
when you already have it with you.
Do not plot harm against your neighbor,
who lives trustfully near you.
Do not accuse anyone for no reason—
when they have done you no harm.

Do not envy the violent
or choose any of their ways.

For the Lord detests the perverse
but takes the upright into His confidence.
~Proverbs 3:27-32 (NIV)

When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices;
when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy.

Through the blessing of the upright a city is exalted,
but by the mouth of the wicked it is destroyed.
~Proverbs 11:10-11 (NIV)

The righteous care about justice for the poor,
but the wicked have no such concern.
~Proverbs 29:7 (NIV)

As you can see, from this brief glimpse, the book of Proverbs is interested in helping us think through what it means to live a life of doing justice. But it doesn't just want us to think, it wants us to move to do justice.

To do what is right and just
is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.
~Proverbs 21:3 (NIV)

In other words, doing justice, a life lived out ethically for the good of others, is more important than religious practices. It's not that religious practices don't matter; it's more like what you do reflects whether or not you have true religion, whether or not you have true faith. If your heart is rightly related to God, you will do justice, you will care for those who are most vulnerable.

Christianity is not an abstract idea to be thought through or a philosophy to be engaged with. To be a Christian is to be devoted to Jesus as our Lord and Savior, to lay down our earthly way of thinking and to live according to what he's called us to do. It is to embrace the way of the cross, the way of self-sacrifice, of putting other's needs before our own.

A life of justice is a life of reflecting who God is.

God cares for the orphans, the widows, the fatherless, the immigrant (Zech.7:9-10). He cares for what is good and just and true. And he desires that our hearts burn for what he yearns for: the restoration of what is broken to wholeness, so that all can experience the goodness of God and glory in his majesty and love.

How do we do justice?

We do so by seeking the good of those who God has placed in front of us.

The reason a righteous person gets involved is because "With them, as with the LORD, it is a matter of justice and mercy, not of a person's economic status" (Waltke, II: 435).

Who has God placed in front of you that you can help?

