

## Announcements

We're going back to East Cobb Middle School! Our first Sunday back at ECMS will be June 27, with one service at 10am. The address is 825 Terrell Mill Rd, Marietta, GA 30067. We hope to see you there!

As we transition to East Cobb Middle School we need your help in Image Kids and First Impressions. You can sign up to serve at [imageatl.com/serve](http://imageatl.com/serve).

## Prayer Suggestions

### Prayer considerations

1. Over the weekend we saw several violent events across the country, which included mass shootings in Savannah, Austin, Cleveland, and Chicago, as well as a man intentionally driving a car into people gathered at a protest in Minneapolis. Pray for an end to violence in our nation. Pray for the victims' families. Pray for those who are injured as a result of these acts. Pray for those who committed these violent acts, that they would repent of what they have done. Pray for peace for our nation, especially as rates of violent crimes tend to rise with summer heat in major cities.
2. Also over the weekend the Israeli government officially changed hands. Benjamin Netanyahu has been the prime minister for 12 years, but a coalition formed of several Israeli parties elected Naftali Bennett. Pray for the Prime Minister Bennett as he leads the nation of Israel. Pray for peace among the nations of the Middle East in the midst of this governmental transition, and that it will not cause instability or unrest.

Joshua Project Unreached Peoples: <https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday>

## Family Time

**Family Time** is an intentional space where we live out the model we see in Acts 2:42. We want to be devoted to the Word together, break bread, fellowship, and pray. It's also a place where we practice hospitality. We want this time to foster both spiritual and relational growth moving the group from acquaintances and friends to family. Family Time begins with conversations around a meal, followed by a discussion about Sunday's sermon.

### Sermon Discussion (30-40 min)

**Title:** Religious Hypocrisy

**Series:** Inverted Kingdom

**Scripture:** Luke 11:37-54

## Other Scripture/Cross-References

Mentioned in the sermon:

Deuteronomy 10:18

Psalm 68:5

Proverbs 31:8-9

Isaiah 1:17

Micah 6:8

Cross-references:

vs 42 “you give a tenth”

Deuteronomy 14:22 -- “each year you are to set aside a tenth of all the produce grown in your fields.”  
(14:22-29, for full context)

vs 42 “you bypass justice”

Micah 6:8 Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Zechariah 7:9 The Lord of Armies says this: ‘Make fair decisions. Show faithful love and compassion to one another.

Matthew 12:18-20 (quoting Isaiah 42:1-4) Here is my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not argue or shout, and no one will hear his voice in the streets. He will not break a bruised reed, and he will not put out a smoldering wick, until he has led justice to victory.

John 7:24 Stop judging according to outward appearances; rather judge according to righteous judgment.

vs 42 “and love for God”

Deuteronomy 6:5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength

vs 51 “blood of Abel”

Genesis 4:8-9 Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”<sup>[b]</sup> And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

vs 51 “blood of Zechariah”

2 Chronicles 24:20-22 The Spirit of God enveloped Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood above the people and said to them, “This is what God says, ‘Why are you transgressing the Lord’s commands so that you do not prosper? Because you have abandoned the Lord, he has abandoned you.’” But they conspired against him and stoned him at the king’s command in the courtyard of the Lord’s temple. King Joash didn’t remember the kindness that Zechariah’s father Jehoiada had extended to him, but killed his son. While he was dying, he said, “May the Lord see and demand an account.”

## Main Points

Religion: I do, therefore I am accepted

Gospel: I am accepted, therefore I do

Justice: treating all people equitably; moral rightness. It is giving people what they are due in either punishment, protection, or care

Justice is not only an activity of God, but its a call for all his people/ *If justice is rooted in the character and nature of God, then justice should be an outworking of the people of God.*

The things the Pharisees did were to fuel their own image, rather than to be transformed into God’s image

We are on a sanctification journey -- learning how the gospel is applied to our lives.

## Quotes

The Pharisees selectively chose to follow only certain standards, while consistently ignoring other important matters.

If your foundation isn't right, you'll never be able to be consistent

American Evangelism is what it is because we've drifted into a culture of 'do.'

Just because you didn't do it doesn't mean you aren't guilty -- you knew about it and hid it.

Let me meet you where you are, not judge you where you are.

## Questions

*These questions are designed to go deeper. Do your best not to allow yourself or anyone in the group to give surface level or "correct" answers. Be honest with yourself and each other. Also do your best to make them personal, rather than allowing each other to think in the abstract about them. Make sure you get to the last question.*

1. What challenged you? What were your takeaways? What encouraged or convicted you?
2. What questions do you have?
3. What moral and religious things do you do that have been added to the gospel?
4. Are you more concerned with those things than with living a life that reflects the heart of christianity? Is your concern for rituals or the things of God?
5. How do you justify yourself and/or judge others based on those things?
6. Are you part of luring people away from Christ? Do you create barriers to Jesus? How?
7. How do you view justice? (*For more information on justice, **see the section below**. The below definitions will help in understanding and defining justice, and what it means to live lives of justice*)
8. Does your love for God lead you to justice, or have you missed the call to justice while practicing rituals and traditions (as the Pharisees did the law & their rituals)?
9. What does it look like to live a life of justice? How can you live a life of justice today? (**See discussion below on justice and shalom**)

## Points of Theology & Useful Definitions

Justice: treating all people equitably; moral rightness. It is giving people what they are due in either punishment, protection, or care (Keller, *What is Biblical Justice?*)

There are a few words used for justice in the Old Testament.

On Sunday, Pastor Mike mentioned the one most frequently used-- מִשְׁפָּט mishpat (pronounced mish-pot, like "miss" with the sh at the end). Mishpat means judgment, justice, ordinance. It is properly "a verdict pronounced judicially." It is also one's right, privilege, due.

*Tsedaqah* צְדָקָה (pronounced sed-aw-kaw) and *Tsedeq* צֶדֶק (pronounced seh-dek) are also used a lot. These words mean "justice, righteousness." **Tsedeq more thoroughly means justice, rightness, righteousness;**

**what is right or just; straight paths.** The root, *tsadaq*, means to be just, righteous; to be or make right (in a moral sense); to be right, straight.

In the New Testament, there are more words used.

*Krisis* (Matthew 12:18) -- a separating, trial, judgment, right, justice

*Dikaiow* (Luke 7:29) -- to render righteous; to show/exhibit one to be righteous; to declare one righteous

*Ekdikesis* (Luke 18:7-8) -- a revenging, vengeance, punishment; from *ekdikew*, to vindicate one's right, do one justice; from *ekdikos*, without law and justice

*Dikaio*s (Colossian 4:1) -- righteous, observing divine laws; virtuous, keeping the commands of God; upright (only in a narrow sense is this word used judicially)

*Dike* (*dik-ay*) (Acts 28:4) -- judgment, custom, just, vengeance; probably from *deikyno*, to show or expose to the eyes, to give evidence of a thing

We often think of justice in a legal or judging sense -- someone will get justice for a wrong done, when someone is convicted of a crime we say justice is served. However, that leaves out the aspect of justice which is just behavior and treatment. Justice is both the administration of the law AND just behavior or treatment. Both kinds of justice are talked about in the Bible.

Additionally, when we talk about justice and what it means to live lives of justice, **we need to include the concept of shalom**. *Shalom* (pronounced shuh-loam) means completeness, soundness, welfare, peace; whole, entire. It comes from *shalam*, which means to be in a covenant of peace and to be complete/ to be whole, sound, safe.

Cornelius Plantinga, in *Breviary of Sin* explains shalom this way:

“The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call shalom. In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight -- a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts are employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be.”

When we treat others justly, with right behavior, and when we make sure justice is lived and carried out, we work towards a world where shalom is a reality. **So when we talk about living lives of justice -- treating others justly and making sure justice is a reality -- we also have to talk about what it looks like for everyone to live lives where they flourish, where needs are satisfied and gifts are employed, where they have delight, and are whole. What does that look like for you? For your neighbor who is from a different culture than you? For people living around the world? How do we live that justice out?**

## Pharisees

A group of religious leaders in ancient Israel. Here is some information on the Pharisees from New Testament in Antiquity (p63-64):

Pharisee means “separated ones.” They chastised those who flirted with Hellenism [Greek culture], promoted a vigorous adherence to the law, and anticipated a coming messiah who would bring a thoroughgoing righteousness to the land.

The Pharisees emphasized religious practice as personal and individual. Ironically, the focus on individualism likely came from Hellenistic influences (which the Pharisees resisted).

The Pharisees appear with surprising frequency in the Gospels as primary opponents of Jesus. He took the Scriptures seriously and was skilled at their use -- which gave him and the Pharisees much common ground.

No doubt Jesus' tendency to interpret the laws in his own way, his habit of breaking religious traditions to make a point (such as Sabbath rules), and his popularity made him a lightning rod for the Pharisees' criticisms. While the Pharisees had central theological commitments -- such as a strict theological determinism, the resurrection of the dead, and a messianic hope -- it was their focus on external formalities that set them apart. But where this emphasis became rigid, they found a debating opponent in Jesus.

It would be wrong to think that all Pharisees succumbed to this tendency toward rigidity or that all Pharisees were “legalistic.” Many Jews rejoiced in the law and in its adherence found life. Paul was a Pharisee and did not find his Jewish faith burdensome.

From the NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible (p1589)

They were reputed for their piety and meticulous interpretation of the law according to ancestral tradition. They emphasized tithing, purity rules, and the future resurrection of the righteous. In Jesus' day they especially divided into two schools, that of Hillel and that of Shamai; the latter was more conservative and probably more dominant before AD 70. Josephus [an ancient Jewish historian] estimates their numbers at roughly 6000. Although some probably grew up poor, many came from wealthy families that could afford their education in the Torah and Pharisaic tradition.

### Other Resources

Used in the sermon:

Tim Keller, *What is Biblical Justice?*

DL Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*

Resources on Justice:

*NIV Justice Study Bible*

International Justice Mission *God of Justice* curriculum

Bob Lupton, *Compassion Justice and the Christian Life*

Jemar Tisby, *Color of Compromise/ How to Fight Racism*

Sarah Quezada, *Love Undocumented*

John Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down/ One Blood/ Dream With Me*

Tony Evans, *Oneness Embraced*

Brenda Salter McNeil, *The Heart of Racial Justice*

Terence Lester, *I See You/ When We Stand*

## Discipleship Groups

**Discipleship Groups** are where our community groups divide into gender-specific groups for a time of more intentional discussion and connection. This creates a safer and more intimate space to open up our hearts in order to grow deeper in the gospel. This time begins with a discussion about Sunday's sermon and then transitions to a time of transparency where we are honest about where we are relationally, personally, missionally, and spiritually.

### Sermon Discussion (30-40 min)

See Sermon Discussion Notes above.

### RPMS (30-45 min)

<b>R</b>	How are you doing <b>RELATIONALLY</b> ? (friends, coworkers, neighbors, spouses, family -- also, how are you building relationships with people different from you or on the margins?)
<b>P</b>	How are you doing <b>PERSONALLY</b> ? (emotionally, mentally, physically, financially, etc.)

<b>M</b>	How are you doing <b>MISSIONALLY</b> ? (what you're doing daily to be on mission, how you're engaging people, etc)
<b>S</b>	How are you doing <b>SPIRITUALLY</b> ? (time with God, in Scripture, what you're learning, who you're learning from, memorization, etc.)

Prayer (10-15 min)