

# DG Guide: Attributes of God

## #7 - Justice & Righteousness

### Opening Prayer

Begin by thanking God that He is not arbitrary, not corrupt, not partial, and never wrong. Ask the Holy Spirit to help your group see His righteousness not as a threat but as the most stable and glorious foundation there is, and to grow into people who increasingly reflect it.

### Starter Question

Think of a time you experienced real injustice; either done to you or done to someone you care about. What did that feel like? What did you wish for in that moment?

### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **God's righteousness is not a standard above Him — it is Him.** Morality isn't defined somewhere outside of God, with God trying to live up to it. God *is* the moral standard. He is what righteousness means. There's nothing crooked, partial, or impure in Him.
2. **Justice is righteousness in action.** If righteousness is God's moral perfection in Himself, justice is that same perfection expressed in how He governs, judges, rewards, and punishes. They are not two separate things. One is the other made visible in the world.
3. **God's justice is expressed in seven ways:** through His laws, His covenantal faithfulness, His ordering of society, His punishment of sin, His salvation of sinners, His discipline of His children, and His ultimate goal of glorifying Himself.
4. **The cross is where all of this meets.** The gospel declares that Christ has provided what justice required. He bore the punishment we deserved. His righteousness is now credited to us. This is not God winking at sin, it is God satisfying every demand of His own justice, in His Son, for us.
5. **God's justice should produce both holy fear and great hope.** Fear, because we know where we stand on our own. Hope, because we know the One who judged us has already been judged in our place, and because a day is coming when every injustice will finally and perfectly be dealt with.

# Scripture Readings

Read together: **Deuteronomy 32:1–4**, **Romans 3:21–26**, and **Hebrews 12:5–11**

## Discussion Questions

### The Nature of God's Righteousness

1. **The Standard Himself:** In the sermon, Dan showed us that God doesn't measure up to a moral standard above Him; He *is* the standard. Morality is defined by Him, not imposed on Him. How does this change the way you think about ethics, right and wrong, and the question "who decides what's good"?
2. **Righteousness vs. Justice:** The sermon distinguished between righteousness (God's moral perfection in Himself) and justice (that perfection in action). Why does this distinction matter? How does it help when people ask "why doesn't God just forgive everyone without any judgment"?
3. **Deuteronomy 32:4** calls God "the rock, his work is perfect, all his ways are just, a faithful God without bias, righteous and true." In a world saturated with corruption and moral compromise, what does it do to your heart to know there is a God who is literally, perfectly, always right?

### Justice Expressed: Law, Covenant, and Society

4. **God's Law as His Self-Revelation:** The sermon said God's law isn't an external list of rules, it's an outflow of His character. To obey His law is to act in accordance with who He is. How does this reframe your relationship to God's commands? Does it change what it means to keep them?
5. **Covenantal Faithfulness:** Nehemiah 9 shows God faithful to His covenant, in both salvation and judgment. The sermon said this is why reading Scripture matters: it shows us a God who always does what He says. Where do you need to be anchored right now in God's promises? What promise of His are you most tempted to doubt?
6. **Justice in Everyday Life:** The sermon applied God's righteousness to business, parenting, leadership, law, management, and even invoices. It's not just big ethical questions, it's everyday dealings. Where is the gap most visible between how you operate and what God's righteousness requires? What would one honest change look like?

### The Punishment of Sin and the Hope of Judgment

7. **God Cannot Be Indifferent to Evil:** The sermon was direct — God is not and cannot be indifferent to sin. His justice demands that wickedness is addressed. How do you feel about that? Where might you be hoping God will look the other way rather than trusting in Christ's covering?
8. **Perfect Judge, Perfect Standard, Perfect Knowledge:** Human judges are limited, they can only work with the evidence presented. God knows the intimate details of every heart. What does it mean that the One who judges us perfectly knows us completely, including what we've hidden from others

and from ourselves?

9. **Justice as Hope:** The sermon drew on Psalm 137, the hope of the oppressed is that God will not let evil go undealt with. For people who have experienced genuine injustice, the doctrine of God's judgment is not threatening, it's comfort. Where do you need this anchor right now: the certainty that God will one day make all things right?

## Salvation, Sanctification, and Discipline

10. **The Gospel's Great Dilemma:** How can a perfectly just God look at an unrighteous person and declare them righteous? Dan called this "arguably the greatest dilemma mankind has ever faced." How does Paul's answer in Romans 3 — propitiation through Christ — resolve it? What does it mean that Christ "provided what justice required"?
11. **Double Grace:** Justification doesn't end the story, it begins the ongoing work of sanctification. God doesn't just forgive us; He empowers us by His Spirit to increasingly reflect His righteousness. What does growing in righteousness actually look like in your life right now? Where is the Spirit pressing you?
12. **Discipline from a Father, Not a Tyrant:** Hebrews 12 tells us God disciplines those He loves; painful, but purposeful. The sermon said our obedience shouldn't be driven by fear of a cruel judge, but by delight in serving a Father who loves us. How does your actual experience of God's correction feel? Does it feel like a tyrant or a Father?

## The Glory of God

13. **The Highest Good:** Dan posed the question: what is the highest good? It's not even salvation, it's God glorifying Himself. Every act of justice, judgment, and salvation is ultimately aimed at His glory. Does that feel strange or wonderful to you? What does it look like to delight in God's righteousness, not just His mercy?
14. **Worship for All of God:** The sermon ended by saying we shouldn't only praise God for His love and mercy, we should also praise Him for His uprightness, His purity, His justice, even His wrath. These too are worthy of worship. What would it look like for your prayer life to include genuine praise for God's righteousness and justice?

## Personal Reflection

Take a few minutes of quiet before the group responds to these:

- When you imagine standing before God, what are you relying on? Your own track record, or Christ's?
- Is there an area of your life where you know you're not acting justly? What would one honest step of correction look like?
- Where in your life do you need the comfort that God's justice is real, that what has been done against you, or against others, will not be overlooked?

## Group Commitments

Choose 1–2 to commit to as a group:

1. **The Righteous Audit:** Identify one everyday area... how you handle money, how you speak about others, how you treat those with less power than you, and ask honestly: does this reflect God's righteousness? Share what you find next week.
2. **Covenant Reading:** Read Nehemiah 9 slowly this week. Notice how many times God is faithful despite Israel's repeated failure. Journal what you observe. Bring one thing that stood out.
3. **Romans 3 Deep Dive:** Read Romans 3:21–26 every day this week. Write down one thing you notice each day about how justice and salvation meet at the cross. Share your findings next week.
4. **Propitiation Practice:** This week, when you pray, consciously begin not by requesting but by declaring what Christ has done: "Justice has been satisfied. His righteousness is mine." Practise this daily and report back on how it changes the tone of your prayer.
5. **The Patience Test:** Is there a situation where you've been tempted toward retribution or bitterness at an injustice done to you? Commit this week to practising patience, grounded in the conviction that God's judgment is real and He will act. Pray specifically for the person if you can.

## Closing Exercise

Go around the group and complete this sentence:

*"Knowing that God is always perfectly right, this week I want to..."*

## Closing Prayer

Pray together, focusing on:

- Worship for God's perfect righteousness, that He is never wrong, never partial, never corrupt, and never mistaken
- Honest confession of the ways we don't reflect His justice in our everyday lives
- Thanksgiving for the cross, where justice and mercy met, where Christ bore what we deserved, and where His righteousness was credited to us
- Petition that the Spirit would grow us in righteousness, increasingly reflecting the character of the God we worship
- Hope, for the day when all injustice will finally and perfectly be dealt with by the One who judges all things rightly

## For Next Week

- Follow through on your group commitment
- Memorise: **Romans 6:23** — *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
- Come ready to share one place where you saw or extended justice this week

## Leader Notes

- **The tone should be awe, not anxiety.** God's righteousness and justice can feel threatening, especially to people carrying guilt or shame. Keep bringing the group back to the cross; this is where justice was satisfied, and it is the ground of our peace, not a new burden.
- **The sermon made pointed applications** to business dealings, parenting, leadership, and society. These are good discussion surfaces, but don't let the group get stuck in social commentary. The point is personal reflection and Christian distinctiveness, and how we as individuals and a community reflect God's righteousness.
- **Psalm 137** is one of the "hard psalms." If it comes up, Dan addressed it directly in the sermon... the hope expressed there is not revenge-fantasy but the anchor that God's justice will not let evil go undealt with. That's a comfort to the oppressed.
- **Discipline (Hebrews 12)** may surface pastoral sensitivities. Some people have experienced harsh religious upbringings and conflate God's discipline with human cruelty. God disciplines as a Father who loves, never as a tyrant. Make space for this distinction.
- **Watch for two errors:** (1) Making God's justice an excuse for human harshness or judgmentalism. (2) Avoiding God's justice entirely in favour of only mercy (or our own brand of it). The sermon held both together — they meet at the cross. Keep that tension alive.