

Issues of Justice & Fairness

How Would Jesus Vote #3 • September 20, 2026

Opening



I'm going to say a name that will generate a reaction from many of you:

Lindsay Clancy.

If you've paid attention to the news stories in the past month or two, you'll know the name and have an opinion about her and her case.

If you've not paid attention, here's the recap from The New York Times.

A shocking triple-murder case that captured national attention ended in a mistrial on Friday [Sept 4, 2026], after a flurry of courtroom drama, an emergency appeal to the top court in Massachusetts and a note from jurors saying they remained deadlocked "with a heavy heart." The jury could not reach a verdict on the charges against Lindsay Clancy, who strangled her three young children in January 2023....

Ms. Clancy strangled her three children in the basement of the family's home in what the defense argued was the throes of postpartum psychosis. Prosecutors cast doubt on that diagnosis and argued that Ms. Clancy was aware of what she was doing, and should therefore be held criminally responsible for murder.¹

The debate on the outside has been fierce. On one side, you have people who are on the side of the murdered children. They want to see **justice** for Cora, Dawson, and Callan (ages 5, 3, and 8 months). They want to see Ms. Clancy receive a **just penalty** for killing her kids.

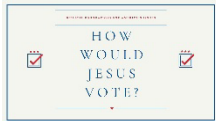
On the other side, you have people who are sympathetic to Lindsay's mental health struggles, focusing on the **person**. She had been severely depressed and suicidal, and they argued that her postpartum condition led to her children's death but *did not* make her **criminally responsible**.

¹ [Judge Declares Mistrial in Lindsay Clancy Triple-Murder Case - The New York Times](#)

There are a lot of opinions and matters to debate on this trial that lasted for over a month and for thirty-eight hours of deliberation! If she had been convicted of first-degree murder, Ms. Clancy would have faced a sentence of life in prison without the chance for parole. Conviction on a lesser charge — second-degree murder or manslaughter — could have resulted in substantial prison time, but with the possibility of parole. A verdict of not guilty by reason of insanity would have resulted in Ms. Clancy being committed to a secure psychiatric institution for an indefinite period of treatment.²

If you were serving on the jury, how would you vote?

Maybe the bigger question is, if *Jesus* were serving on the jury, **how would Jesus vote?!**



Our answer to that question – How Would Jesus Vote? – remains constant. It does not change! Say it with me.

*How would Jesus vote? **He wouldn't!***

He is **all-knowing!** He is **perfect!** He is **right!**

Jesus doesn't vote; He *declares!* Jesus doesn't consult. He *decides!* He *rules* over everyone and everything and his decisions are *unquestionable!* Jesus doesn't get entangled in political debates, nor does He need to wrestle with issues.

Jesus doesn't vote...whether in a controversial murder trial jury, on the Supreme Court as it makes rulings on such trials, or in the halls of government as they enact that laws and rules that apply to all court cases.

Jesus doesn't vote.

But if you got called for jury duty, *you* do. And if you sit in the VFW behind a cardboard screen, marking circles for senators and representatives and commissioners who will make such decisions...you do as well.

² [Judge Declares Mistrial in Lindsay Clancy Triple-Murder Case - The New York Times](#)

As Americans, we have the privilege of participating in a democracy where our decisions shape these issues.

Jesus might not need to vote...but we do.

And if Jesus is sovereign and supreme over everything...and if we owe our allegiance to God above anyone or anything else... our wisest choice is to look to Him before we make any decisions. We must make every effort to follow His lead, as closely as we can!

It's hard work! And we both know it, because this month, we are covering **"Biblical Foundations for America's Issues."**

We said that the church can and should equip you to put your faith into practice – in every arena. You need Biblical foundations in your **family**, your **workplace**, your **marriage**, your **school**...and, yes, in your voting **booth**.

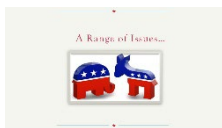
As Christians, we must have a clear Scriptural filter for the issues that face our nation. We need to look to the Bible before we fill out a ballot, trying to build a biblical foundation that we can apply to our vote.

We've talked about some difficult issues already, and today we'll continue by asking how would Jesus vote...when it comes to **issues of justice**?



American Issues of Justice

Last week's "issues of life" included some wide-ranging topics. This week's issues of justice and fairness have a list that is no less extensive! "Justice" impacts:



- **Immigration & Border Security.** Balancing lawful borders with humane treatment of immigrants.
- **Racial Discrimination.** Ensuring people receive equal treatment regardless of race.
- **Criminal Justice Reform.** Balancing punishment, rehabilitation, and equal treatment under law.
- **Police Accountability.** Protecting communities while holding officers accountable for misconduct.
- **Human Trafficking.** Protecting vulnerable people from exploitation and forced labor.

- **Poverty & Economic Inequality.** Determining society's obligations toward those lacking basic necessities.
- **Healthcare Affordability.** Ensuring illness does not become financial catastrophe.
- **Voting & Election Access.** Ensuring eligible citizens can participate fairly in elections.
- **Human Dignity & Disability Rights.** Ensuring vulnerable people receive equal protection and opportunity.
- **Government Corruption & Political Money.** Preventing wealth and influence from distorting public decisions.³

That's just a handful of the conversations involving justice being discussed in Congress and offices and coffee shops across the country.

Justice is even a big deal in Tonganoxie.

Allow me to simply say the words... "**Project Bluestem.**"

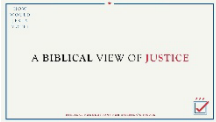


The proposed creation of a major data center in Tonganoxie has generated quite a few opinions. We've got anti-data center signs everywhere, almost as many as we had with "*No Tyson in Tongie.*" We had massive public interest at a community meeting on Wednesday. And while this issue is one of taxes and property values and public health and water use and power consumption... it is also an issue of **justice**.

Is it just, or fair, for a big company's plans to outweigh the concerns of average citizens? Is it fair for the voices of vocal, confrontational people to outweigh the voices of others who might be less vocal but open to development? Is the situation being treated with fairness? Are the county officials acting without partiality? Is it fair for citizens to only have a few minutes to speak their minds about the issue?

You and I care about **justice**, even if we think we're talking about data centers.

³ List of issues generated via ChatGPT. "Give me a list of 20 issues in American politics and/or society that could be described as an issue of "justice." Give the issue and add a short (5 to 10 words) one-sentence summary of what is at stake."



A Biblical View of “Justice”

Before we get bogged down in the politics, I think it is important for us to go back to our foundation – God’s Word. What does Scripture say about justice? Open your Bibles and follow along:

- *“Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?”* (Genesis 18:25, ESV)
- *“He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.”* (Deuteronomy 10:18, ESV)
- *“The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.”* (Deuteronomy 32:4, ESV)
- *“Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.”* (Psalm 67:4, ESV)
- *“Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.”* (Isaiah 30:18, ESV)
- *“The Lord is slow to anger and great in power, and the Lord will by no means clear the guilty. His way is in whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.”* (Nahum 1:3, ESV)
- *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9, ESV)

If by “justice” we mean **the standard by which punishments and benefits are fairly handed out**, Scripture paints a clear picture that right and fair “justice” is an essential characteristic of God. He is the sovereign Lord and Creator of the Universe. His standard for fairness and justice supersedes our own. There are countless verses and stories we could read, but they combine to form one biblical foundation:



God's justice perfectly balances people and penalties.

He holds the line between loving us and holding us accountable. He *perfectly* balances the two, because that is who He is. *God is just.*

Some of you are nodding piously in agreement with this truth. Others are shaking your heads inwardly, ready to argue.

Challenges to Justice

“God is *just*?” Really, Steve?

- *What about the kids who are starving in Haiti?*
- *What about the drug cartels that flaunt their power and crimes in the face of intimidated police and judges?*
- *What about the murderer who only gets 9 years in prison on a manslaughter charge?*
- *What about so-and-so who broke up a family yet seems to be living his best life?*

I hear you. There is often a disconnect between what seems like justice and what seems to be happening around us. Like Habakkuk, we cry out:

“How long, O Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen!

“Violence is everywhere!” I cry, but you do not come to save. Must I forever see these evil deeds? Why must I watch all this misery? Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence. I am surrounded by people who love to argue and fight. The law has become paralyzed, and there is no justice in the courts. The wicked far outnumber the righteous, so that justice has become perverted.”

(Habakkuk 1:2–4, NLT)

If you share that struggle to trust the justice of God in the face of the world around you, you aren't alone! But...let me say two things.



1. The fact that your inner core is offended speaks as **evidence that a higher standard of justice exists** – a standard based in God's nature. We intuitively know what fairness looks like because God created us with that standard. So, before you question, try to remember that *your* standard originated with *His* standard.

2. An **all-knowing and all-powerful** God knows more and can do more than you can imagine...and He might do it **in a way that you don't see, recognize, or comprehend**. His justice might not match your timing, your preference, your desires, your visibility, or your outcomes. *That doesn't mean God forgot, cared less, knew less, did less, or valued the victims less.* It just means that His justice operates at a different level than you expected or wanted.



Convenient answers? Maybe. But if Scripture is our foundation, it's true. The Bible teaches that **God's justice perfectly balances people and penalties**. And we should be grateful for that, because His *slow* justice benefits us all.

- The same **patience** that angers you when applied to the murderer is the patience you received when you disobeyed your parents.
- The same **mercy** that seems unbelievable when applied to the adulterer is the mercy you received when you rebelled against God in college.
- The same **wrath** that you want poured out on pedophiles is the wrath you were spared after you looked and lusted after pornography.

We demand justice, just like we want police to stop those who are driving crazy...but when it's us behind the wheel, we beg for the warning rather than the ticket!

Perfect justice needs a heart. God's justice has *both* fairness and love. Those may show up at different seasons in His timing and wisdom, but **God perfectly balances people and penalties!**

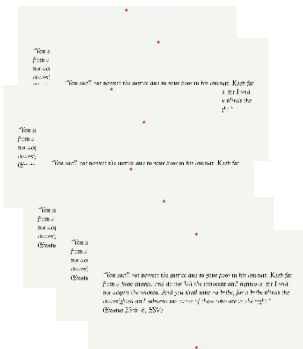


An Unbiased Approach

Because God perfectly does this, then, you and I must strive to follow Him. Scripture doesn't just tell us that God is just; God, in Scripture, tells us that **we must be just, too!**

Go back to God's Word. What does Scripture say? Open your Bibles and follow along:

- “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in



the right.” (Exodus 23:6–8, ESV)

- *“You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.” (Leviticus 19:15, ESV)*
- *“You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous. Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” (Deuteronomy 16:19–20, ESV)*
- *“Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” (Psalm 82:3–4, ESV)*
- *“It is an abomination to kings to do evil, for the throne is established by righteousness.” (Proverbs 16:12, ESV)*
- *“Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.” (Isaiah 1:16–17, ESV)*
- *“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?” (Micah 6:8, ESV)*
- *“Thus says the Lord of hosts, Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another,” (Zechariah 7:9, ESV)*
- *“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.” (1 Timothy 5:21, ESV)*
- *“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show*

partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.” (James 2:8–13, ESV)

Scripture says that you and I should practice justice like God! We need to be fair. We must avoid favoritism and bribery, arrogance and cruelty. Since God perfectly balances people and penalties, you and I need to pursue the same. We must treat people fairly and give them justice with mercy! Our votes and our policies and our positions and our practice on issues must strive to be **unbiased**!

How we do that, though? It’s a struggle. What path is the least biased?



- Do we vote to treat others with **equality** – offering **identical resources** and opportunities, regardless of circumstances or starting point?
- Do we vote to treat others with **equity** – tailoring resources and opportunities to allow for everyone to have **comparable outcomes**?

You’ve probably seen the illustration showing the difference. Which path is unbiased and “just” in *theory*...as well as in *reality*?



I know a guy who works in roofing locally. His company recently faced some inquiries about employment. ICE investigated, and everything was great – they followed the rules, made sure everyone had green cards. No problem. But then the ICE officers followed some of the workers home and ended up rounding up family members who hadn’t followed proper immigration procedures. It happened to him; it happened to other businesses he knows.

How do we vote for justice on such matters? How should we vote for policies that would address this real-world matter in an unbiased way?

You might vote with a **bias toward penalty** – a “law and order” view. The family members broke the law; they deserve the consequences. And voting that way is “fair” – we will apply the rules equally!

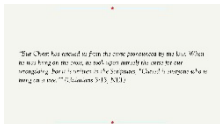


But where is the heart? What is the impact on community and family? Is that torn-apart home “fair” to the rest of the family? Where is our humanity?

You might vote with a **bias toward people** – a “social justice” view. Individual concerns are paramount. “And,” you might say, “isn’t it better for them to be in the US than where they would be deported to?” Voting that way is “fair” – we want everyone to experience the great opportunities and advantages of living in this country!

But what is the impact on resources? What about those who have been waiting in line rather than coming in unannounced? Don’t they deserve a chance first?

Unbiased justice is hard! In fact, unbiased justice is so hard that only One Man has been able to do it perfectly. And the way He did it involved a cross and the sins of the world.



“But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.”” (Galatians 3:13, NLT)

Talk about perfectly balancing people and penalties!

If we want to view justice like that Man...we will need Him to guide us. We will need His wisdom and example!

Conclusion/Challenge



Listen...I’m not going to tell you how to vote. Data centers? Lindsay Clancy trials? Immigration? I’m not going to get down in the details of fairness with you on each issue today. But let me challenge you with this: when you *do* get in the details, will you consider His “justice” as you decide where to cast your vote?

I want you to remember that your view might not be as perfect as God’s. So, open your mind and heart to the other side to strive for that godly balance.

If you lean toward “**penalties**,” pause and consider whether your vote will extend Jesus’ love and mercy and compassion to others. If your vote doesn’t

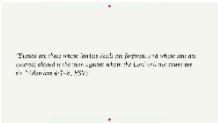
change, consider how *you* or *your church* might fill in the gap of love left by the law.

If you lean toward “**people**,” pause and consider whether your vote will avoid favoritism and treat everyone whom Jesus loves by fair rules. If your vote doesn’t change, consider how *you* or *your church* might advocate for people to play fair.

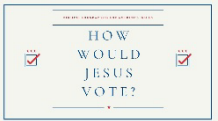


Remember, **God’s justice perfectly balances people and penalties.** You won’t ever match His perfection. But if you want to honor Him, it is your responsibility to do the best you can....

... and to praise Him for the slow justice that benefits us all!



“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.” (Romans 4:7–8, ESV)



Prayer/Invitation...

Sermon Notes

American Issues of Justice

A Biblical View of “Justice”

(Genesis 18:25; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 67:4; Isaiah 30:18; Nahum 1:3; 1 John 1:9; Habakkuk 1:2-4)

God’s justice perfectly balances people and penalties.

An Unbiased Approach

(Exodus 23:6–8; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 16:19–20; Psalm 82:3–4; Proverbs 16:12; Isaiah 1:16–17; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 7:9; 1 Timothy 5:21; James 2:8–13; Galatians 3:13; Romans 4:7-8)

Sermon Discussion Questions

- Choose one of the following issues: **Immigration & Border Security, Racial Discrimination, Criminal Justice Reform, Police Accountability, Human Trafficking.** In what way are people not treated fairly in this issue? Is the unfair treatment a matter of ignoring rules or ignoring people?
- How do you define justice?
- Why is it easier for us to demand justice when someone else has done wrong than when we are the ones who have done wrong?
- Read these verses: Genesis 18:25; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 67:4; Isaiah 30:18; Nahum 1:3; 1 John 1:9. What are some words that help describe God's justice?
- How do we square God's justice with questions like in Habakkuk 1:2-4?
- Describe a time in your life when God's justice came in the form of penalty or discipline. Describe a time when it came in the form of mercy and leniency. Which helped you more? Explain your answer.
- Why is unbiased justice so difficult for human beings? What personal biases can make it difficult for us to see an issue fairly?
- How does the cross change the way we understand justice, mercy, our own sin, and the way we should treat other people?