

Speak Up

Proverbs 31:8-9

INTRODUCTION

⁸ *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.*

⁹ *Speak up and judge fairly;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Pastor Tony Evans once wrote this: “*Justice and righteousness are the twin towers of God’s Kingdom.*” These two are often seen together throughout the Scriptures and especially when connected to the idea of governments or kings who are ruling:

- 1 Kings 10:9—Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain **justice** and **righteousness**.”
- Job 29:14—I put on **righteousness** as my clothing; **justice** was my robe and my turban.
- Psalm 33:5—The LORD loves **righteousness** and **justice**; the earth is full of his unfailing love.
- Psalm 36:6a—Your **righteousness** is like the highest mountains, your **justice** like the great deep.
- Psalm 50:6—And the heavens proclaim his **righteousness**, for he is a God of **justice**.
- Psalm 89:14—**Righteousness** and **justice** are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.
- Psalm 103:6—The LORD works **righteousness** and **justice** for all the oppressed.

So, biblically speaking, what is righteousness? What is justice?

Righteousness—What is right or wrong from God’s perspective.

Justice—The equitable and impartial application of God’s moral law in society.

Put another way, justice means **to set right, what’s not right, in order to do what is right** through:

- Legal prosecution and punishment
- Restitution
- Civil disobedience
- Advocacy and activism

It is estimated that 63 million babies have been legally murdered by means of state-sponsored abortion since 1973 with the passing of Roe v Wade. To put it in perspective, there were 11 million Jews, along with others, who were murdered in state-sponsored genocide during WWII. In the last 50 years, we have seen roughly six times that number of babies killed by abortion. This is why some have called this—and I think rightly so—a modern day holocaust.

To be clear on couple truths:

- We believe God is author of life. If life has come into being, it is ultimately God brought that life into being. Thus, only God has the right to take that life away (Deuteronomy 32:39)

- We believe life begins at the moment of conception, is precious, and deserving of full rights as a human being (Psalm 139:13-16)

No exceptions. Thus, when we speak about situations like—should we allow abortions in the case of rape, or incest, or if the fetus demonstrates medical issues such as down’s syndrome—should we allow abortion in tough cases like this?

Refer to Truths #1 and #2.

We say emphatically NO. the gross violations of justice against the young girl does not mean that we also allow a gross violation against the child in her womb. RATHER, we pursue justice against the perpetrators and mercy for the mother.

Finally, show mercy.

In this world, there will always be situations that are not right. And they’re not being set right. Because those who have the power to do so, are not doing what is right. And because of these injustices, there is pain and misery and sorrow and poverty and shame and fear—the list could go on and on.

But we serve a King whose throne is established by righteousness and justice. And He will one day rule over the earth perfectly. But part of what it means to be in the Kingdom that is both now, but not yet, is that we His Body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way, shine a light in this dark world on what is true righteousness and what is true justice.

Part of what it means to be salt and light in this world is that whenever we encounter the pain of injustice, we do what can to bring about justice, we long for the day of our good King, but in the meantime, at the very, very least... we show mercy.

In fact, Jesus commanded us: *Be merciful, just as your Father in heaven is merciful.* And He promised us: *Blessed are those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

Biblically speaking, justice does not demand mercy, but mercy demands mercy. We who have been shown the mercy of God have been called to be merciful.

So, in practical terms, what might it look like to pursue JUSTICE and MERCY?

- Write local and national leaders expressing your desire and support for them to legislate according to God’s moral law
- Advocate for life through peaceful protests, prayer walks, etc.
- Get involved with local ministries such as Align Life (alignlifeministries.org), Love Life (lovelife.org), or Embrace Grace (embracegrace.com)
- Foster care/adoption/care team
- Pray

Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion

1. Brainstorm other ways that our church may pursue both justice and mercy in regard to the issue of abortion. Share ideas, resources, etc.
2. As you consider the tragedy of abortion, what might be “next steps” for YOU to consider as you reflect on the biblical call for justice and mercy?