

5. Think of a time when someone treated you unjustly. How hard was it for you to extend grace to them?

6. Read Genesis 50:15-21. How can this conclusion of the Joseph story bring hope in spite of the many injustices in our world?

7. Share about someone you know whose life demonstrates a commitment to restorative justice.

SERMON APPLICATION GUIDE

Justice (A Story of God Series)

“Binding Justice and Righteousness (Promise)”

Genesis 18:16-19

This series seeks to _____ a better understanding of social justice from a biblical point of view so that we can seek justice and stand against injustice together in a way that glorifies God and demonstrates love for our neighbor.

Christians can be _____ in a concern for biblical justice without always agreeing on particular solutions for injustice. We will even sometimes disagree on what constitutes injustice in our world.

Review (Creation & Separation)

The Hebrew word for justice is mishpat.

The Bible ties justice to the human dignity established in Genesis 1.

Justice is about treating all people with dignity and fairness because humans are equal before God. (Tim Mackie)

- Retributive justice is about rectifying acts of injustice by making someone pay for doing wrong.
- Restorative justice is about making sure people are treated equally and fairly and given an opportunity to flourish.

In the story of God, restorative justice is about...

- Getting us as close as possible to the way things were supposed to be (Genesis 1-2) and the way it was before sin entered the world (Genesis 3), a time of human flourishing. It's what the Bible calls Shalom.
- Living by the values of God's kingdom, doing God's will on earth as it is in heaven.

Abraham's Mission and the Binding of Justice and Righteousness (Promise)

Abraham's family will _____ justice.

Their life together will be characterized by _____, systems, and a way of life that punishes acts of injustice and help all people flourish

And Abraham's family will _____ righteousness.

The _____ word for righteousness is tsedeqah. To do righteousness means you do the right thing morally and ethically. But it's not simply about a private morality; it's a relational term pointing to restorative justice. (Ezekiel 8:5-8)

Justice and righteousness are not the same thing, but they are two _____ of the same coin.

Abraham's descendants will _____ all the nations by doing what is just and right. (2 Samuel 8:15; 1 Kings 10:9; Jeremiah 22:1)

Justice Lessons from Israel's Patriarchs and Matriarchs

The _____ isn't interested in hiding the many stories of injustices perpetrated by the patriarchs and matriarchs.

1. Extend _____ to those who treat you unjustly.

Colossians 3: ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Genesis 50:15-21

2. Is there a _____ here to those who would whitewash history or try to erase it?

3. Don't _____ righteous living. Righteous living is committed to restorative justice.

Job 29: ¹¹ Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, ¹² because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist them. ¹³ The one who was dying blessed me; I made the widow's heart sing. ¹⁴ I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. ¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. ¹⁶ I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. ¹⁷ I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth.

God is righteous and just and _____ what righteousness and justice looks like. (Genesis 21:17-18; Matthew 1:1-3)

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

2. Read Genesis 18:16-19. Then trace the binding of justice and righteousness through these key points in the story of God.

2 Samuel 8: ¹⁵ David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.

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."

Jeremiah 22: ¹ This is what the Lord says: "Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and proclaim this message there: ² 'Hear the word of the Lord to you, king of Judah, you who sit on David's throne—you, your officials and your people who come through these gates. ³ This is what the Lord says: Do what is just and right.'"

Why do you think the binding of justice and righteousness is such a priority for God?

3. What can happen when justice and righteousness are uncoupled?