

Week 7: A God who is Just

1. When we think or talk about justice, a common question that comes up is “Where is God in the midst of . . . (insert any given tragedy or injustice we are currently facing)?” In the Psalm the author both affirms that God is just (vv. 3-5, 7-9) and cries out for God to act in the face of the current injustice they are facing (v. 13, 19).

- a. As Christians, how do we respond to the fact that God is both a God of justice and that God’s world is full of injustice. How should we answer the question, “Where is God when . . .?”

2. In the Scripture righteousness and justice are so closely related that they are hard to separate. They both have to do with doing what is right—that which conforms to God’s will and character—in the context of relationship (with God, with others, with our communities, etc.). It is not about conforming to some abstract standard, but doing what God wants you to do in relation to that person or group.

- a. How do you believe that we typically define “righteousness” and “justice”?
- b. Does the Bible’s definition challenge or adjust the way you are used to thinking about righteousness and justice? If so, how?

3. The Bible understands righteousness and justice to be intimately related, so that when one is present so is the other. This means that when God brings one of these (e.g. righteousness), He is also bringing the other (e.g. justice).

- a. What does Romans 3:21-26 teach us about how God brought righteousness into the world?
- b. How then does Jesus’ sacrifice enable God to be both “just and justifier,” that is, to both punish sin and give mercy to sinners?
- c. As we saw above, if Jesus’ sacrifice brings righteousness, it also brings justice, because one leads to the other. It is critical to recognize that God’s plan has always been to work through humanity in His world. How then does our justification (being declare righteous by God) also bring justice/righteousness into God’s world?

4. While God never separates righteousness (right standing before God) and justice (doing what is right in God's sight), we often do. How have you seen this happen in the church and the world?

- a. Which of these two do you find you tend to emphasize most and have the easiest time pursuing?
- b. How can you be more balanced in pursuing both?
- c. How can the church be more balanced in pursuing both?

5. How does everything we learned help us to better answer the question, "Where is God in the face of injustice?"