

Can things be fair?

“That’s not fair.” How many times have you said that in your lifetime? I think right around the age of four or five we start to realize that we will not always get our way. So we yell it out loud, “That’s not fair. He took my toy. That’s not fair, she told on me. That’s not fair, she gets the bigger piece of cookie.” Then we start to grow up a bit and realize that our world is bigger than just our small part of it. If we get the chance to watch the news, or even talk with other people we find out that there are some “not so fair” issues that are bigger than who took your toy. I know you could all name a few. The list could be extended to the bullying that goes on in your school, the fact that some people have food and others don’t, the fact that racism, sexism and homophobia live in our society. But what does it really mean for our world to be unfair?

Q1: Name a few situations that you know that seem unfair. Define justice in your own words.

Jesus taught us to live for God and for one another. When testing to see if a situation is fair we use whether or not what happens in the end is pleasing to us then we might have to rethink it. God desires for all people to have a place to live, food to eat, a community and to be healthy.

Read the following scriptures and find out what kind of “fair” God is looking for.

This scripture comes from a book that is based on the sayings of a prophet. A prophet is one who spoke on behalf of God to God’s people.

Read Micah 6:6-8

Q2: What is God asking of us? Why do you think that is important?

Q3: Read on and finish Micah 6. List all the things that God is angry about. Who was it that did not follow what God was asking?

Read Micah 7:18- 20

Q4: What does God do when we strive for justice?

Well if God wants justice in the world than why don’t we have it? This is a complicated question. There are no easy answers. Yet the Bible does tell us our world is broken and sometimes overcome by darkness because of sin. Sin is not only what we do that “misses the mark” of God’s beautiful intentions for us and the world, but also what we allow to happen. Sin thrives when good people do nothing in the face of wrong and injustice. However, God continually calls us to a life that is surrounded by the greatest commandment, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” God is calling us to be God’s people of love and justice.

Read the following scriptures to find out how we can do that.

Read Matthew 25:31- 45

Q5: Who are the sheep and who are the goats? What does it take to be on either side?

Q6 : Why do you think Jesus was so serious about this?

Q7: What does this illustration have to do with justice?

As Christians our hope is that one day Christ will return to the earth make all things new and right. Our hope is that Jesus will come to earth and take away all hurt, pain, injustice, hunger and anything that is not in line with God. The Bible speaks about this time in the very last book called Revelation, a vision of the day that will come when all things will be right and just as they were meant to be from the beginning.

Read Revelation 21:1-7.

Q8: What is it that you notice that is different in this new holy city?

While we still wait for this it is part of our walk with Christ to find ways that we can stand for those who have no voice, those who have been abused, hurt or mistreated. Jesus is inviting you to a life that allows you to serve him by serving others. What are you going to do today?

Justice is rooted in the character of God and flows from the heart of God.

Justice is woven into the fabric of God's creation, part of the Image of God in every person.

Justice is commanded in God's Scriptures and integral to the promise of the gospel.

Justice is incarnated in the life of Jesus, inseparable from His words and deeds.

Justice is highlighted in Jesus' concern for the poor and demonstrated in His death and resurrection.

Justice is the early church sharing what they had, meeting the needs of others near and far.

Justice is the saints building hospitals and caring for orphans instead of pursuing worldly wealth and self-interest.

Justice is the abolitionists laboring to end transatlantic slavery, recognizing the God-given dignity and worth in each person.

Justice is the legacy of those who fought for civil rights, who began to dismantle systems of violence and exploitation.

Justice is the worth and equality of people in every land, for we are all God's creation and God's children.

Justice is God's grand design for His creation, a hope for every man, woman, and child to flourish in God's kingdom.

Ken Wytsma, *Pursuing Justice*, p. 13



The Apostle's Creed was adopted by the early church in efforts to convey what they believed about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the church, and other elements of the faith. It is a *creed*, or confession of faith, which we still recite today. *The creed is a communal "confession of hope" (Hebrews 10:23)*. Throughout the year we will work on understanding this beautiful tradition within the community of Christian faith.

Read begin to memorize the Apostles Creeds which describes what the church believes about God.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

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Q9: What is it that you notice that is different in this new holy city?