



JUSTICE

By Pastor Rollan Fisher

Justice: Continuing the Conversation

WARM UP QUESTION (5-10 min): How has God helped you to empathize and lament with others?

READ: Proverbs 28:5

'Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it completely.'

FOCUS: We will come to understand Biblical justice when we embrace empathy, lament and the centrality of Jesus as our hope.

OBSERVE (10 minutes)

Empathy

*Biblical empathy enters into another person's **experience** and helps them shoulder it as if it were their own.*

- 1 Tim 3:15
 - God is alive. There is a right way to behave, The Church is His household and a pillar of truth in the world.
- Romans 12:9-12, 15
 - Love genuinely. Hate what God hates. Be fervent for good. Rejoice and weep with those who do. Embrace empathy with God and humanity.
- Galatians 6:2
 - Christ's love in us moves us to action bearing the burdens of others.
- Matthew 5:4
 - We are blessed when we mourn what God mourns. We are then healed (comforted) as a result.

Lament

*Lamentation is a biblical term referring to a passionate **expression** of grief or sorrow.*

- 1 Peter 3:8-12
 - Be unified in heart and mind. We are called to bless those who curse us while seeking and pursuing peace. God sees and hears the righteous when they do this. He answers their prayer. He is against evil doers.
- Romans 12:16-21
 - When we live righteously, God will avenge us. We are called to repay evil with good. Judgement is in God's hands. Mercy is in our hands. Overcome evil with good.
- Romans 3:23-24
 - We were made to glorify God. We ALL have sinned. Justification by grace is a gift. Jesus is our redeemer.
- 1 Peter 1:13-16
 - Be prepared. Pray. Don't be ignorant. Be holy.

The Centrality of Jesus As Our Hope

We come to understand Biblical justice through the person of Jesus Christ.

- Psalm 127:1
 - The Lord is sovereign in building and watching over civilizations. We must be doing what He is already doing to have true and lasting results.
- Ephesians 6:10-20
 - The Lord is our strength and might. The Lord is our offense and defense in the spiritual battle. The true battle is waged in the spiritual realm and not the flesh. In Jesus Christ, God provides the spiritual weapons of truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer.
- Matthew 12:17-21
 - Jesus is God's chosen, perfect arbiter. Jesus welcomes the weak and broken. In His name all have a hope of true mercy and justice.
- Acts 17:30-31
 - We have all been ignorant and rebellious of God's righteous ways. God now commands repentance from sin and faith in Jesus. This allows mercy to triumph over judgement.

REFLECT AND DISCUSS (30 min)

- Why is empathy central to true heart change?
- What role does lament play in true heart change?
- Discuss why there must be a perfect arbiter for hope to reign in our hearts.
- Discuss how Jesus fulfills the role of perfect judge.
- Discuss why Jesus is worthy to sit on God's throne and the throne of our hearts.

PRAY & TAKE ACTION

- Pray Luke 6:37-38. Ask God to help you entrust judgement and condemnation to Him as the one perfect judge. Ask for God to empower you to give mercy and forgiveness. Ask for empathy.
- Pray Luke 6:46-49. Receive Jesus Christ as the foundation for your life. Stand in His righteousness through any storm.
- Pray Ephesians 6:10-20. Be aware of and equipped to fight the spiritual battles of our day.
- Pray Ephesians 2:10. Ask God to reveal the good works you are designed to do aiding in Biblical justice. Ask God for His help in accomplishing these good works.

1 Tim 3:15

'if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.'

Romans 12:9-12, 15

'Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.'

Galatians 6:2

'Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.'

Matthew 5:4

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.'

1 Peter 3:8-12

'Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.'"

Romans 12:16-21

'Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.'

Romans 3:23-24

'for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,'

1 Peter 1:13-16

'Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Psalms 127:1

'Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.'

Ephesians 6:10-20

'Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.'

Matthew 12:17-21

'This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; and in his name the Gentiles will hope.'"

Acts 17:30-31

'The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.'