
And Justice for All Pt. 4

Ivy Baptist Church Bible Study
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Goals of this series:

- To develop clear definitions of justice from a Biblical sense
- To gain a clear understanding of the responsibility of EVERY believer when it comes to justice
- To identify opportunities where believers (and churches) can bring awareness and (hopefully) change in areas where justice is needed

Opening Thoughts:

- Believers are NOT called to focus just on personal blessings. The Gospel is not a “self-help” guide
- Believers ARE called to focus on generosity, community and agape love, all working toward a COMMON good
- It’s then difficult for selfish people to think about others
- At the heart of injustices is selfish motives to maintain power, control or an advantage over others
- **Acts 4:32-37: 32 All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God’s grace was so powerfully at work in them all 34 that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need. 36 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”), 37 sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet. (NIV)**

Today’s Study: How Shall We Live?!

- **3 Greatest Injustices in America for African Americans:**

Police Violence (usafacts.org)

- African Americans have a higher rate of being handcuffed by a police officer than any other ethnic group
- African Americans have experienced higher threats and nonfatal use of physical force during police contact compared to other ethnic groups
- African Americans were more likely to have a weapon used on them by police than any other ethnic group

Criminal Justice System ([www.ncsl](http://www.ncsl.org) and sentencingproject.org)

- African Americans make up 33% of the overall prison population but only make up 13% of the US population
- African Americans are disproportionately targeted by law enforcement.
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- African Americans often receive harsher sentences (on average 19% higher) compared to others for similar crimes.

Economic Inequality (Harvard.edu and mckinsey.com)

- Historical discrimination and policies that have limited wealth building opportunities for African Americans
- Less access to quality education which impacts job prospects and earning potential over the long term
- Employment and Wage Gaps: African Americans are often concentrated in low wage jobs and face higher rates of unemployment

Isaiah 58:6-7: Is this not the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked to clothe them and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? (NIV)

How Shall We Live?! Isaiah 58:6-7:

- Fasting isn't just to abstain from food!
- It is to also loose the chains of injustice, untie the cords of the yoke and set the oppressed free (vs. 6)
- To also share our food with the hungry, provide shelter for the poor wanderer, clothe the naked and not turn away from our own flesh and blood (vs 7)

Key Verse: Proverbs 17:15:

- **Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent---the Lord detests them both**

Conclusion on How Shall We Live?!:

- We shall live with generosity and love for others for the COMMON good
- We shall live by seeking personal AND corporate blessings
- We shall live fasting AND working!