

NEW NORMAL #6 “Social Justice”

One of the catch phrases we are hearing in today’s cultural revolution is “social justice.” What exactly is social justice? Is social justice a political term, or is it anchored in the Bible? Was social justice included in the law that God imparted to the Israelites? Should today’s Christian speak out against injustices that exist in our society, or is that the role of politicians? Today’s teaching will answer these questions and more.

#1. WHAT IS SOCIAL JUSTICE?

- A. There is no universally agreed definition
- B. There is socio-political view of Social Justice
- C. There is a Bible view of Social Justice

#2. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE BASED ON ALL PEOPLE BEARING THE DIVINE IMAGE, Gen 1:26-27

- A. All people are made in the image and likeness of God
- B. All people should be treated with dignity & respect

#3. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE BASED ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD’S KINGSHIP, Ps 89:13-14, Ps 9:7-8

- A. God is all powerful having no rivals, v. 13
- B. God’s throne is founded in righteousness & justice, v. 14
- C. God extends love & faithfulness, v. 14
- D. God’s justice is perfect, Deu 10:17
- E. God’s throne is the model for social justice, Rom 13

#4. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE BASED ON REMEMBERING THE ISRAELITES SLAVERY IN EGYPT, Deu 24:18-22

- A. Slavery in Egypt is part of our spiritual heritage
- B. God’s people are to be better than the Egyptians, Exo 22:21-23
- C. We must treat the alien with compassion, Deu 10:19

#5. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE BASED ON CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE, Ps 68:5, 146:9

- A. God defends the orphans, widows, & oppressed, Ps 146:9, 68:5
- B. Israel’s society should reflect the character of God, Isa 10:1-2

#6. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE BASED ON LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF, Lev 19:18

- A. We live in a worldwide neighborhood
- B. Who is your neighbor?, Luke 10:29
- C. We need to love our neighbor, Mat 22:39, Lev 19:18

#7. SOCIAL JUSTICE MUST BE PART OF TODAY’S CHRISTIAN AGENDA

- A. Most governments have been corrupt in world history
- B. Christians must speak out against injustices, Amos 5:7
- C. Christians must reach out to the vulnerable, Ps 82:2-4, Jam 1:27

Hillcrest Church

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June 28, 2020

Today's Scripture

Genesis 1:26-27: Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Psalms 89:13-14: Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted. ¹⁴Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

Psalms 9:7-8: The LORD reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. ⁸He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice.

Romans 13:1-2: Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Deuteronomy 24:18-22: Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this. ¹⁹When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the alien, the fatherless and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. ²⁰When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the alien, the fatherless and the widow. ²¹When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the alien, the fatherless and the widow. ²²Remember that you were slaves in Egypt. That is why I command you to do this.

Exodus 22:21-23: "Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt. ²²"Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan. ²³If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry.

Psalms 68:5: A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

Psalms 146:9: The LORD watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Isaiah 10:1-2: Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, ²to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.

Amos 5:7: You who turn justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground.

Leviticus 19:18: "'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Psalms 82:2-4: "How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Selah ³Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. ⁴Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

James 1:27: Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#1. What are some of the socio-political characteristics you are hearing about social justice today?

#2. How do these characteristics agree & differ with God's view of social justice?

#3. What conclusion(s) can you make about God's Kingship? Ps 9:7-8, 89:13-14

#4. Why is it important for us to know that God's judgment of each of us will be totally fair and impartial? Deu 10:17, 2 Cor 5:10

#5. Why have most governments been corrupt throughout world history?

#6. When a country is lacking in social justice how does God view their injustices?

#7. At what point do we break with obeying the governing authorities we live under? Rom 13:1-2, Acts 5:29

#8. In what way is the slavery of God's people in Egypt part of today's Christian heritage?

#9. How should this influence our outlook on aliens / foreigners?

#10. How should the command to love our neighbors as ourselves influence social justice? Lev 19:15, Mat 22:39

#11. What is your big takeaway from this teaching?