

Series: Imago Dei

Sermon: Image Bearing and Our Neighbors:
Becoming a People of Righteousness—Part Two

Scripture: Ephesians 4:22-24, Acts 10:34-35 (ESV)

Teacher: Jeff Norris

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2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

1 John 3:10 (ESV)

By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

In the Bible Christians have an ancient, rich, strong, comprehensive, complex, and attractive understanding of justice. Biblical justice differs in significant ways from all the secular alternatives, without ignoring the concerns of any of them. Yet Christians know little about biblical justice, despite its prominence in the Scriptures. This ignorance is having two effects. First, large swaths of the church still do not see ‘doing justice’ as part of their calling as individual believers. Second, many younger Christians, recognizing this failure of the church and wanting to rectify things, are taking up one or another of the secular approaches to justice, which introduces distortions into their practice and lives."

Tim Keller <<https://quarterly.gospelinlife.com/a-biblical-critique-of-secular-justice-and-critical-theory/>>

The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets called shalom. We call it peace, but it means far more than mere peace of mind or a cease-fire between enemies. In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight—a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. Shalom, in other words, is the way things out to be.

Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be*

From <<http://chrisbrauns.com/2007/12/plantinga-on-peace-shalom/>>

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (ESV)

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."

Ephesians 4:22-24 (ESV)

To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Micah 6:8 (ESV)

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?

Acts 10:34-35 (ESV)

So Peter opened his mouth and said: 'Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.

To image God in His righteousness means that:

1. We do what is right in caring for the poor.

- *The righteous know the rights of the poor; the wicked do not understand such knowledge. **Proverbs 29:7 (ESV)***
- *Do you think you are a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? declares the Lord.*

Jeremiah 22:15-16 (ESV)

- *When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just. **Luke 14:12-14 (ESV)***

2. We do what is right in caring for the marginalized.

- *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

Proverbs 31:8-9 (ESV)

- *Jesus spent His whole life engaging the people most of us have spent our whole lives trying to avoid. *Bob Goff**

3. We do what is right in caring for the oppressed.

- *And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed Me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."*

Luke 4:17-19 (ESV)

4. We do what is right in caring for the lost.

- *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. **Luke 19:10 (ESV)***

Matthew 25:35-40 (ESV)

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. " Then the righteous will answer him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? " And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

What is the gospel?

*A gospel that while uncompromising in lifting up Christ and His Word, life, death, resurrection, and ascension also radically moves horizontally to the love of our neighbors. **Jack Alexander**, *The God Impulse**