

Tim Keller

Doing Justice

Evangelizing and saving souls and rehabbing a house for someone is also moving us toward redemption.

The point of Jesus' miracles is to show the redemptive power of his miracles. Poverty and injustice are not part of the natural order. Jesus' redemption restores the natural order of things.

Book of Proverbs – a study of justice

What is justice?

What is doing justice?

Who should do justice?

How can you become one of those people that does justice.

Proverbs 29:7

What is justice?

Justice and shalom are closely linked. Shalom is translated peace. Our translation of peace is too weak. Physical shalom is good health. Social shalom is an interwovenness among the various social segments of society for the common good.

Doing justice is repairing the fabric of society where it is falling apart.

Proverbs 3:27-28

When you invest your resources in people in need, that's doing justice. Your power has to be given to the people around you to do good. You will be re-weaving the fabric of society to enable other people to flourish – economically and socially.

Modern Americans have an incredibly individual approach to everything. Who you are is the product of many influences and circumstances – not just your own efforts. The Western idea of justice removes individuals from the fabric and focuses on individual rights. The biblical view of justice is about what we owe each other – in the context of human community. Americans have the opposite view. Why?

The situation of poor families with illiterate children - Liberals say it's the result of structural evil. Conservatives say it's a family problem – failure of family values. It's not their fault that the children were born into poor families. A failure to be involved with the poor is injustice.

Proverbs 11:10

Righteous means those who are willing to disadvantage themselves for the advantage of the community. Is your church doing justice?

How can we become the kind of people who do justice?

Guilt will not get you to do justice. It's too hard. It takes too much work. You'll be exploited.

Proverbs 19:17

Your relationship and attitude toward the poor and your relationship and attitude toward Jesus are linked. How you relate to Jesus and how you relate to the poor says a lot about who you are.

Knowing that our God is a God of grace and loves and blesses us in spite of ourselves, we can't look at the poor and despise them. The poor are economically and socially what you once were morally and spiritually.

Have you experienced grace?

Only if you look at Christ will you understand the degree to which God identified with the poor.

Christianity is the only religion that says God suffered injustice through his death on the cross. The motivation of doing justice comes from our salvation and grace we've received from God.

Churches usually don't do evangelism and justice well. It's more one or the other that's done well in a church. We need more churches that do both well.