



Social **JUSTICE**

GOD'S WAY

LEVITICUS 19:1-18

**April 11 -
May 16**





SOCIAL JUSTICE GOD'S WAY

A STUDY

through Leviticus 19

April 11 - May 16

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Social Justice God's Way

Does God care? About injustice? About the poor? About the oppressed? About broken systems? About ME?

Our God is Elohim, the God of justice who commands His children to be people of justice. As we work our way through Leviticus 19 we will discover the great love that God has for us and the systems He set in place so that the vulnerable are cared for. So get ready to go on an adventure on one of the most neglected topics of the Bible, in one of the most neglected books of the Bible. Each week as we learn together, may we have open minds to receive, open hearts to believe and open hands to do JUSTICE.



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THE ROOT OF JUSTICE

LEVITICUS 19:1-8

April 11



The Root of Justice

Everyone has things that motivate them. The threat of getting fired might motivate you to get out of bed each morning. The desire to graduate valedictorian might motivate you to study extra hard for a test. The fear of gaining weight might motivate you to not eat that extra cookie. The desire to lose weight might motivate you to lace up your tennis shoes and go for a run. Everyone has motivators and not all motivators are created equal. Some motivators are guilt oriented, which are usually short lived, other motivators are grace oriented.

When it comes to social justice, what motivates you? Your answer determines not only how active you are in justice, but also HOW you go about pursuing justice, or perhaps even more importantly how you DEFINE justice. As we begin our study of Leviticus 19, we will find that there is one motivator that is far superior to all others. That motivator is love. Specifically it is the love of God that shines in our heart which in turn awakes in us a love for God. And when we love God we begin to love the things He loves. What Leviticus 19:1-8 teaches us is that the roots of justice are found in the God of justice.

Motivated with you,

Pastor TJ



You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some acts of injustice you have witnessed within the past year?
2. What are some ways people try to outsource loving God?
3. In what ways have you grown in your love for God this week?
4. In what ways do people try to outsource justice?
5. What are some ways parents can teach children to love God?
6. Where do you spend the majority of your time and how does that impact your love for God?
7. In what ways did you learn justice or injustice at home?
8. What does Sabbath keeping look like to you?
9. Which aspect of the weekly church gathering has been most helpful for calibrating your heart and why?



You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

Discussion Questions

10. Take some time to send out personal invites to people who may have gotten out of the rhythm of Sabbath.
11. What things (idols) in our lives are most effective in leading our hearts away from God?
12. As you think on the titles of God's justice mentioned in the sermon, which is most meaningful for you and why?
13. In what ways has the things God loves grown to be things you love?
14. What are some practical things you can do this week to extend your fellowship with God to "the poor, the stranger, the Levite, your male and female servants"?



Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports



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RADICAL GENEROSITY

LEVITICUS 19:9-10

April 18



Radical Generosity

One of my first memories is of my dad carrying me to the local ice cream shop and purchasing for me an ice cream cone. After handing it to me he asked for a bite. Well, if you know of my obsession with ice cream, you can imagine my response...“absolutely not, this is MY ice cream!”

So my dad took the whole cone from me and ate it all himself. He then went back and purchased a second cone for me. At last, that coveted prize was mine. My dad AGAIN asked for a bite. And yes, I AGAIN refused to give him a bite. So my dad, AGAIN, took the whole cone and ate it all for himself. He then went back AGAIN and purchased for me a third cone. He asked for a bite. I refused. He ate the ice cream cone, I got none. This process was repeated several times...I’m a slow learner. Eventually, after several ice creams, an empty wallet, and a bellyache, my dad’s lesson sunk in. Gifts are meant to be shared.

This week as we come to Leviticus 19:9-10 we find that every good gift from God is not meant for us to use selfishly on ourselves alone, but for us to look around and invite others into the blessings we have received. We are blessed to be a blessing. May we not be like selfish little five-year-old TJ, quick to receive a blessing, slow to give a blessing.

Blessing others with you,

Pastor TJ



You shall not strip your vineyards bare.

Discussion Questions

1. How did owning land in ancient Israel put one in a position to help others?
2. What are ways people today can use their position to care for the poor, alien, and marginalized?
3. Has anyone ever used their position to help you personally?
4. Read Leviticus 25:23. How does the concept of God lending rather than giving possessions change how you manage possessions? What other passages support this mindset?
5. What are some sacrifices you have/can make in order to increase your giving?
6. Discuss John Wesley's method and model for money management.
7. What systems have you found helpful for maximizing giving rather than maximizing profits?



You shall not strip your vineyards bare.

Discussion Questions

8. How does the principle of moral proximity help you be active with the needs of the world without being overwhelmed by those needs?
9. Who is in your sphere of moral proximity that you are burdened to care for more?
10. Is there a place or a people you feel led to make yourself morally proximate in order to meet a need that no one else is meeting?
11. How does this text dignify the poor and needy among us?
12. Is there anyone in your small group, family, or community that are in need? If so, take some time to pray and ask how you can sacrificially give.
13. Read Leviticus 19:34-36. Discuss how God's care for us motivates us to care for others.
14. In what ways can we integrate care for the poor and gospel evangelism?



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**EMPTY POCKETS,
EMPTY PROMISES**

LEVITICUS 19:11-12

April 25



Empty Pockets, Empty Promises

Last week we discussed injustice through withholding goods for the common good. This week we look at the opposite, injustice through taking from another. This text speaks of four specific sins: Theft, deception, lying, and swearing falsely. Each of these can be summarized in one word: Dishonesty.

A parallel passage that might help you understand Leviticus 19:11-12 better is Leviticus 6:1-7. Most of us probably think we are doing quite well in the area of honesty, but as the Bible pulls back the layers of dishonesty, we will find that we all fall short and are in need of an honest and honorable Savior who can rescue us from ourselves. Only then can we learn to be honest in all our dealing with ourselves, one another, and Christ, that we might not profane His name.

Seeking the Savior with you,

Pastor TJ



You shall not steal

Discussion Questions

1. What are the four sins mentioned in the text and how does one sin lead into the other?
2. The sermon gave an example of how sin leads to more sin (David and Bathsheba). Can you think of other examples? Why do you think sin so easily leads to more sin?
3. What were the examples of the theft of possessions mentioned in the sermon? What would you add to the list? Which has been most convicting to you and why?
4. What were the examples of the theft of people mentioned in the sermon? In what ways can you help to bring justice to these areas?
5. In what ways can the church be a voice and active pursuer of justice in regards to modern slavery?
6. What were the examples of the theft of relationships mentioned in the sermon? Are there any relationships that you need to restore personally or help mediate restoration?
7. Have you ever experienced theft, deception, or lying? In what ways did that action affect you? Can you look back and see how God has worked it for good?



You shall not steal

Discussion Questions

8. In what ways have you seen society damaged through the sin of dishonesty?
9. Why do you suppose the Bible goes to great lengths to help us understand that all sin is first and foremost a sin against God?
10. Two extreme responses to a sermon like this could be despair or legalism. How does the gospel keep us from either extreme?
11. What three steps for processing the sin of dishonesty are mentioned at the end of the sermon? Discuss each step and what they look like practically for you.
12. Finish by discussing the perfect work of Jesus on the cross for our sins. How does Leviticus 6:6-7 help prepare us for that work?



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POWER PLAY

LEVITICUS 19:13-14

May 2



Power Play

This Sunday we continue our study of Leviticus 19, looking at doing social justice God's way. This week's passage focuses on how we use our power. Whether it is a corrupt politician, a police officer who shoots an unarmed person of color, one ethnic group targeting another or a bully at our child's school, we are inundated with examples of the abuse of power. But what about us? Do we ever abuse our power?

Maybe we feel like we don't have any power, but the reality is every day we find ourselves in situations where our actions (or inactions) profoundly affect others. This week we will look into God's word to discover the source and purpose of power.

Pastor Ben



You shall not oppress your neighbor

Discussion Questions

1. The sermon mentions that Orthodoxy + Orthopraxy = The Gospel. What is orthodoxy and orthopraxy and how can we be sure that we are applying both to our lives today?
2. How does the sermon define power?
3. What are some modern examples of force, threat, or blackmail in order to get more than what is fair?
4. What are some modern examples of how a hired worker's wage might remain with you overnight?
5. What things do we take for granted and what can we do with the blessings we have been given?
6. What are some modern examples of exploit through another's vulnerability?
7. What are some ways society or people make individuals feel powerless?
8. What is the fear of the LORD and how does this help us do justice?



You shall not oppress your neighbor

Discussion Questions

9. Take some time to discuss how God is in charge and has the final say. What examples from the Bible and in life have you witnessed that testify to this?
10. What are some examples of the use of physical, verbal, emotional (moody), positional (title), intellectual, economic, theological, power in the world today for both good and evil?
11. Have you ever experienced abuse of power?
12. How does Jesus demonstrate proper use of power and what ways can we use our power for good this week?



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**THE SAVIOR
OF BROKEN SYSTEMS**

LEVITICUS 19:15-16

May 9



The Savior of Broken Systems

I am certain all of us can think back to a time when injustice was done to us through an individual. I am also certain that each of us can think of examples when injustice was done not through an individual but through a corrupt system. Perhaps a military coup, rigged jury, corrupt police department, redlining, unfair voting requirement or restrictions, disadvantaged economic systems, racist politicians or laws, etc.

No matter what country you go to or what time in history you visit, systems have failed us in some way. This week as we turn our attention to Leviticus 19:15-16 we see the Savior of broken systems, the LORD who calls on us all to make righteous judgments toward our neighbor.

As we study Leviticus 19:15-16, we will not find answers to all our questions. We will not solve all the world injustices or fix the broken systems that perpetuate injustice. But we can look closer to home to see how WE can change, to see what WE can do, and to see how our SAVIOR binds the wounds of the broken.

Seeking the way of justice with you,

Pastor TJ



You shall do no evil in judgement

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways are we called upon to be judges and in what ways are we to avoid judging? What Bible passages help clarify the topic of judging?
2. As you compare Leviticus 19:15 to 19:35, how would you describe the different contexts for just judgments?
3. In what official capacities have you been called to judge people, events and situations and how have you sought to do righteous judgment?
4. In what unofficial capacities have you been called to judge people, events and situations and how have you sought to do righteous judgment?
5. Do you have a natural bend toward the rich and privileged or the poor and oppressed?
6. In what ways does society (and even certain social justice movements) pervert justice by being partial to the poor or deferring to the rich?
7. Several categories of implicit biases were mentioned in the sermon. In which categories have you struggled (or are you struggling) to be just?



You shall do no evil in judgement

Discussion Questions

8. How have you seen bias spread through slander?
9. What are some helpful tactics to diffuse slander when it is happening in your presence?
10. Are there any areas of justice that you feel the church has been too silent on? What can we do to be more vocal of the injustices in this world?
11. Several examples were given of men and women who spoke up for justice rather than standing on the blood of their neighbor. Who has been a role model for you in speaking up for justice?
12. Take some time to discuss how Jesus laid in His own blood rather than standing on the blood of those who have come to Him for forgiveness.
13. Take some time to unpack the phrase, "I am the LORD speaks to those who do injustice to remind them that there is a day of reckoning." What will that day be like?
14. How does "I am the LORD," encourage those who have received injustices in this world?



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**THERE'S ROOM
AT THE TABLE**

LEVITICUS 19:17-18

May 16



There's Room at the Table

John Lennon and Paul McCartney once wrote, "Love, love, love. Love, love, love. Love, love, love. Love is all you need."

I think we are all aware of the power of love. It is something that we all crave. We all know a bit of its transformative power. We sing about it. We watch movies and read books about it. We seek it from parents, friends, lovers, and even strangers. When we don't receive it from others we turn to things to fill up the lack of love in our heart. Perhaps food or drink or pleasure.

Yes, we all know a bit about the power of love. Love is a great idea in theory, particularly when we are on the receiving. But what happens when we are called to love hard people in hard places? What happens when our idea of love is put to the test by those we deem not worthy of love? What happens when we run headlong into the immovable wall of Leviticus 19:18, "love your neighbor AS YOURSELF"?

As we end our series in Leviticus 19, we must ask two vital questions: Who is our neighbor? How do we love them when there is so much anger and hatred in our heart due to the hurt they have inflicted upon us? Let us turn to God and hear what He has to say about love and why love, true love found in Jesus Christ, is really all you need.

Learning to love with you,

Pastor TJ



You shall love your neighbor as yourself

Discussion Questions

1. As a group, go back through Leviticus 19:9-18 and note the various words used to describe your neighbor. How are these words different? How does the pyramid of Leviticus 19:9-18 grow from casual to intimate relationships? How does this inform how we are to relate to all people, stranger and family, alike?
2. In Luke 10, how does Jesus' interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 inform how we view who our neighbor is?
3. The sermon lists several groups of people who are your neighbor. How many can you recall? Who would you add to the list?
4. As you look at your list, what groups do you need to be more intentional about fellowshiping with?
5. What is one thing you can do in the next few weeks to be more intentional with those groups?
6. Why do you think Leviticus 19 and Matthew 5 are more concerned with hate in our heart than with hate with our actions?
7. Read 1 John 2:11, 4:20; Have you ever struggled with hate in your heart? How did you overcome (are you overcoming) that hatred?



You shall love your neighbor as yourself

Discussion Questions

8. Is there someone right now that you need to be reconciled to? If so, make a commitment to begin a conversation with that person.
9. The sermon gave the example where David chose not to seek revenge against Saul. What other examples from the Bible can you think of where someone chose or did not choose to seek revenge? What can we learn from those examples?
10. What are some common ways people “guard hate” (bear a grudge)?
11. What strategies have you used to guard your heart and not your hate?
12. Like Corrie Ten Boom, if you have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit enabling you to love hard people in hard places, share with your group.
13. How does the love of God in Jesus help motivate us to love others?
14. What are some wise and unwise ways to “reason frankly” with a neighbor who has offended us?
15. What does it look like to love someone else AS YOURSELF?
16. As a group, discuss Jesus’ great love for us and his refusal to hide, express, and nurture his hate toward us who have come to Him in faith, but rather reason frankly (Isaiah 1:18).



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