



Gospel Answers Nov 4: The Answer to Justice

Series Summary: The Gospel is the good news of our salvation. That we are no longer condemned by our sin but forgiven through God's grace. Therefore, the Gospel provides the answer to our greatest need: a savior. Yet we have many other needs: answers for our pain, loneliness, shame, meaninglessness, and our desire for justice. What about these needs? The Gospel is still the answer. It is the vastly better answer to our most fundamental questions and needs.

Big Idea: This life doesn't always provide fairness or a secure sense of justice. We tend to feel the weight of a broken ideology of fairness and justice. God is a perfect, just God— and the Gospel shows how perfect He is in His justice.

Schedule:

- Live Teaching
- Small group

LIVE TEACHING

Overview of the series: People think that the Gospel is only the answer to our sin, however, it is the answer for all of our problems!

Tonight: People have always wanted a secure form of justice and fairness. The Gospel of Jesus is even the perfect answer for our issues of justice and fairness.

IS GOD JUST? IS HE A GOD OF FAIRNESS?

The world views the goodness, justice, fairness, and the wholeness of people on sliding scales based on preference. But the Bible says we're all on the same playing field...

Romans 3:23: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- Spiritually, we are all on the same playing field. There are no favorites. It does not matter what social group you belong to. There are no man-made exemptions.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- We have no right to lord ourselves over other people. Especially because of social differences. God is Lord, we have no right to think otherwise.
- We all deserve death because of our sin.
- We are all on the same level...

Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

- Justice often fixates on persuading others that someone isn't as bad as they seem.
- God says that we have no right to boast over others. We don't have the right to boast before Him when we stand before Him one day.
- But this is a good thing, because this shows the love of God in comparison to the imperfect definition of "fairness" that the world implements.

WHY THE GOSPEL IS BETTER

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- God doesn't just simply forgive out of nowhere. God "forgives justly". God does care about justice and being just. He laid out a deal for us: Believe in my Son and you're saved. If not, then you are eternally separated from me. He keeps this promise.
- The crucifixion of Jesus is necessary because we cannot be saved based on morals, ethics, or social stature.
- This speaks even louder two verses later.

Does God care about justice? Yes, so much so that 1 John 2 shows a courtroom scene:

1 John 2:1-2 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. **2** He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

- The Greek word for “advocate” is ‘parakletos’. The word means “one called to one's aid” or “one called to one's help”.
- This is similar to what we see as a defense attorney. Why is this of importance?
- Revelation 12:10 refers to Satan as the “accuser”.
- Picture a courtroom scene where you are on the stand because Satan has accused you of being a terrible sinful person, and God is the judge.
- Jesus comes in as your defense attorney and says “yeah, you can't deny the evidence. Brooks has sinned for the millionth time, and it looks bad. However, I know that He has believed in me and therefore he should be found not guilty for his sins because my sacrifice was sufficient for his atonement.”

Christianity is not a religion of fairness, and praise God for it. If it was, then Heaven would be empty because we have all fallen short of the glory of God, sin deserves hell, and only perfection can enter Heaven.

All in all the Gospel of Jesus shows us that God does care about being just, and embodies a perfection of justice because of His fairness by keeping His promises.

Transition to small groups: This is one of the greatest pictures of God being a just God in scripture. How should finding His just mercy inspire us to live by the goodness of God's mercy?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. **Have you ever found yourself asking the question “Why does God allow unfairness?” What makes that question difficult to wrestle with?**
2. **Why is it important to recognize that sin and injustice aren't simply problems out in the world, but problems that exist in our own hearts?**

Leader Note: Seeing injustice in the world, and in our own hearts and lives, is fundamental to living out the greatest commands that God gives us (love God and love people). This will lead us to remember that our hope is not in our worldly powers because people are liable to let us down. This also brings us to care for those who face the weight of injustice or unfairness, and to share the hope and love of Jesus with them.

READ ROMANS 12:17-21 TOGETHER AS A GROUP

- 3. Vs 17, “Do not repay anyone evil for evil.” This goes against everything that we often feel. Why would God’s word instruct this since this is often the last thing we want to do?**

Leader Note (follow up): The Gospel once again is the answer. Why would we not repay evil with evil? The Gospel is why. If your group does not see this, ask them, “How does the Gospel provide the answer for why we do not repay evil with evil?” The answer is that Jesus was confronted with our evil, and he responded with mercy and sacrifice. We are all sinners in need of God’s grace Romans 3 says that no one is righteous, so as those who have been shown God’s mercy, we should desire to see them come to know the same mercy as us.

- 4. What reason does the Apostle Paul give for not taking revenge in this passage?**

Leader Note: Is this the only reason for not taking revenge? No. We should also refrain from taking revenge because, as believers in Christ, we have been forgiven. We forgive because we have been forgiven (Eph 4:32).

- Many have argued that this passage contradicts the Biblical principle of an eye for an eye found in (Exodus 21:24-26). It does not! The passage in Exodus provides instructions for justice within a society. Not a license for personal revenge. Also, Jesus expounded on this passage in the Sermon on the Mount and set a higher standard for his followers (Matt 5:38-48).

- 5. Based on verses 20-21, what would it look like to care for someone who might be facing injustice or wrongdoing from others?**