

Justice for All

A note to the leader

Obviously, your group is made up of perfectly calm, reasonable people who have never once raised their voice about a public issue. For everyone else's groups, here's a reminder: this series covers contentious social issues, so engage with love, humility, and respect.

Connect

If you were a judge on a TV competition (e.g., cooking, talent, baking, etc.), which one would you pick, and what kind of judge would you be?

Review

Take a couple of minutes to review some of the main ideas from the sermon:

1. **The Heart of the Matter.** God expects us to do the right thing and love our neighbor in every situation, even if they hate us. If God requires us to help and love our enemy, he surely requires us to help strangers, neighbors, and friends. The heart of the matter is that God is after our attitude towards people.
2. **The Truth of the Matter.** The first three verses of the text are about truth and the emphasis is on absolute honesty when we speak about other people. This is shown through four key phrases in those verses: 1) Don't spread false reports, 2) Don't help a guilty person by being a malicious witness, 3) Don't follow the crowd, and 4) Don't show favoritism to the poor.
3. **The Fairness of the Matter.** God calls us to ensure justice is applied fairly to everyone, especially the poor, the vulnerable, and those without power or influence. We must resist false accusations, bribery, and unequal treatment because God himself is the ultimate judge and holds us accountable for how we pursue justice.

Read Exodus 23:1-9

Make Observations: After reading Exodus 23:1-9 out loud, give your group a few minutes to make observations on their own. Then go around the group and share the things you observed and discuss them. Take your time with this section.

Discuss

1. Reread Exodus 23:4-5. What obstacles does someone face in helping their neighbor, especially when it's someone they don't like? What could a modern version of "your enemy's donkey fallen under its load" look like?
2. Where have you seen false reports or gossip change the way people feel about someone or a situation? What was the result or impact of it?
3. God says not to favor the poor in a lawsuit (v. 3) and also not to deny justice to the poor (v. 6). What happens in a society that takes verse 3 seriously and ignores verse 6? What happens in one that takes verse 6 seriously and ignores verse 3?
4. If a teenager asked you, "Why should Christians care about what happens in courtrooms?" what would you say? Try to come up with at least five reasons.
5. If someone you love were actually guilty of something, what would it look like to love them and still want justice?
6. Looking back over the whole Dignity Revolution series (immigration, abortion, poverty, justice), which topic stirred up the most conversation or tension for you, and why?

Apply

Break up into smaller groups of three and respond to this question:

Pastor Eric gave a few tangible ways to take as the first steps in pursuing justice — being in a Community Group (way to go!), being a regular giver, being an engaged citizen, serving others, and pursuing your passion without judgment. Which of these do you want to start engaging with to pursue justice? What is one small step you could take, starting this week?

Pray

As a group, pray for our justice system, including judges, jurors, prosecutors, defense attorneys, police, corrections officers, and criminal justice leaders. Pray that they would be honest, resist bribes, and treat every person with dignity. Then, pray that we would be people who would respond to injustice with a posture of love.