

What in the world is going on? That is a question that has gone through my mind, in one way or another, many times over the last three or four months. What in the world is going on? First, we had the Corona Virus outbreak. Then we had massive shutdowns of our society and economy. Now, as if those things weren't big enough, we have had two very public killings of black men by white men in a short period of time, resulting in massive national protests and at times, violent riots. I find it difficult to even glance at the news many days without a serious rise in blood pressure. In our last pondering, we looked at the idea of freedom. Now let's look at the idea of justice.



A verse that has come to my mind many times over the last two weeks with the events surrounding George Floyd is found in Exodus 23. In verses 1-3 and 6-8 we read, ¹*"You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness.* ²*You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice,* ³*nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit...* ⁶*"You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit.* ⁷*Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked.* ⁸*And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right."*

Exodus 23:1-3, 6-8 ESV

The events of the last few weeks have shaken almost everyone, regardless of political opinion. You have either been shaken by the killing of George Floyd in police custody. Or you have been shaken by the riots and calls to disband your local police force. Even beyond that, there are those who claim that systemic racism is a massive problem in our society and radical change is necessary to correct the problem.

I find it is very easy to get caught up in the emotion of the situation. Depending on your political leanings you either are inclined to pick one side or another by default. But as we read Exodus 23, what do we see? We see that justice is in danger of being perverted in more ways than one. We assume that it is only the rich that pervert justice. Yet this passage warns against not only the rich perverting justice (vs. 8), but also the poor (vs. 3, 6), and also the many or the mob (vs. 2).

As Christians, when we hear cries of injustice, we should be quick to listen. However, we must also be careful. We must be careful because Scripture warns us that the world is not good at defining justice. (Prov. 28:5) There is a temptation to assume that because someone is poor, that injustice has been done to them. Yet this passage warns against that thinking. There is a temptation to assume that because a majority of people see something as just, that it is just, when that may not be the case. There is a temptation to let the rich pervert justice for the personal benefit it brings.

I would encourage you Christian to seek justice, to labor for justice, to pray for justice. But be careful. Make sure the justice you seek is Biblical justice. Do not side with people simply because they are rich, poor, or in the majority. Search the Scriptures and learn what God says is right and wrong. We have long neglected the Law of the Old Testament. While we do not earn our righteousness by being obedient to it (our righteousness comes from Christ), the Law still instructs us in what God sees as just. Meditate on Scripture. Wash your mind with the water of God's Word. Look at the world through the lens of Scripture. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path.

Sincerely,

A Plaid Pastor

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