



Justice – Lifegroup Questions

Jesus makes clear that genuine justice has not to do with punishing wrongdoers and a kind of holiness that cannot be in the presence of sin and evil. Rather, genuine justice enters directly into the world of sin and evil and seeks, in the midst of that world, to bring healing and transformation—a restoration of whole relationships.' Ted Grimsrud

[If you feel it appropriate with your group you may wish to prepare them by asking them to think of some examples from their own experience of justice done well and justice done not so well to fuel a discussion as part of the session]

What first comes to mind when you hear the word Justice?

Discuss.

You may have discussed a variety of vantage points on this word; some focused on the criminal justice system, some more personal memories/experiences associated with crime, or personal injustices you have faced, some may have thought of abstract ideas where peace, justice and order weave into one another.

One thread of the talk from Sunday was that justice in this world – justice where humans have been involved at any stage is a 'human-handled, rough kind of justice, the best we can do with the tools at hand'

If appropriate please share experiences and personal anecdotes of justice done well and justice done not so well.

[you may wish to prepare the group to think of some examples before they come]

Discuss

The justice that Jesus speaks of is a restorative justice, and his ideas appear to our culture, and the listeners of the Sermon on the Mount, very alien or counter intuitive.

Read MATTHEW 5:38-48 together

Discussion questions

It may be a familiar passage but what struck you from reading this passage this time? (if there's little response why not try reading the passage again from the Message Bible)

A lot of what Jesus teaches on here is, for many, a lot easier said than done. Are there things here that He teaches on that you have seen acted out in your life time well? What are the specific teachings here that you find the hardest to assimilate/that make you squirm.

Some would say Jesus' take on justice is far too forgiving/lenient? And that would seemingly leave no room for confronting injustice or people accepting consequences of their actions?

If there's time it may be worth discussing some of the large and small benefits of restorative justice.

This may lead well into re-watching the short interview with Dave Mumford from Three:13 [youtube video of service from 15//9/24 1hour 17minutes into video – 1hour 24minutes]

Where does the action of mercy fit into our system of justice, both in our country structurally – looking at the legal structure, and also in our day-to-day contexts. Can there be mercy without consequences or any kind of sanctions/calling to account for actions?

Three:13 walks with offenders as they leave prison or as they serve community sentences, many are, historically, victims of small are large injustices in their own lives which often lead them down unhelpful paths in life. Injustice in their lives leading to them committing injustice again in a downward spiral that gets worse and worse. Have you ever witnessed this kind of downward spiral – how did it play out and was the spiral broken?

This may lead to a time to pray for Three:13 as their team work hard to break those cycles of injustice.