



ALL SAINTS
PRESBYTERIAN

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“Praying the Psalms for Justice” | Rev. Greg Grooms | September 23, 2018

Psalm 146

1 Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, my soul.

2 I will praise the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

3 Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.

4 When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.

5 Blessed are those whose help is in the name of the LORD, the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God.

6 He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— he remains faithful forever.

7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free,

8 the LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous.

9 The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

10 The LORD reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD.

Intro

Greg Grooms sermon focused on Justice and Injustice. Why do we need justice? What is it? How can we become people who do it?

Delving into these questions and the OT reading (left column), Epistle reading (James 2:14-19) and the Gospel reading (Matthew 25: 31,34-35) were a great introduction into our special announcement by Melissa Russell who was with International Justice Mission (IJM) on what All Saints support of IJM looks like and what it helps champion.

Background

Greg lays the foundation for justice by giving us context: things on this earth are not how they are supposed to be. He does this through (as he is wont to do) a movie about a gang that tries to hold up a man waiting for a tow truck. Those things are just not supposed to happen.

Discuss:

1.) Why do we need justice? There is a reason why TULIP begins with total depravity. It's not that we are the worst we could be or sin all the time; it's just that creation has been tainted by our sin. We are not as we are supposed to be. Simply put, total depravity is why we need justice.

2.) What is justice? Greg points out that we often times think of justice as ensuring bad people get what they deserve. He uses the trial of Eichmann by the Israelis to illustrate how we tend to think of justice. But God doesn't always think of it that way. To Him, justice happens to quartet of the vulnerable. Reread Psalm 146: 7-9. Who are the 4 groups that are described as receiving God's justice? Greg's hope is that Christians are seen more and more as caring about these populations because they are near and dear to God's heart.

3.) How can we become people that do justice? Justice is Shalom. Shalom isn't just peace; it is universal wholeness. It's the way things are supposed to be. Doing justice is the promotion of peace with our talents, money and ability. Greg points to one of his favorite hymnals: “God is Working His Purpose Out” in which we ask what can we do to hasten the time before His return. Greg answers this with Micha 6:8. The Lord requires us to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.”

Conclusion/Application

Greg concludes by referencing our Gospel reading from James. If we have faith, we will show it through action. By seeing need and answering it through faith, we become just. We can become doers of justice. He closes with a quote from John Newton: I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world, but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the Grace of God I am what I am.

By: Joel Pardue

