

God's Character:

- God is Just:
 - Deut 10:17-18 – *“For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. ¹⁸ He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.”*
 - Deut 32:3-4 – *“For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! ⁴ “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.”*
 - Psalm 89:14 – *“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.”*
 - Psalm 9:7 – *“But the LORD sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice”*
 - Genesis 18:25 – *“Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?”*
 - Isaiah 61:8 – *“For I the LORD love justice; I hate robbery and wrong”*
- God is Merciful
 - Psalm 116:5 – *“Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; our God is merciful.”*
 - Exodus 34:6-7 – *“⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation.”*

Creation and Fall – The Beginnings of Injustice

- God's Response to Adam and Eve's Sin:
 - Justice:
 - God pronounces Curses over Humanity (Ultimately Death)
 - God sends Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden
 - Mercy:
 - Adam and Eve didn't die immediately
 - God clothes Adam and Eve in their nakedness
 - Gen 3:15 – Someone will bring ultimate Justice on the Serpent
- God's Justice and Mercy work alongside one another. There is mercy in His judgments.

Israel – A Nation Called to Mercy and Justice

- **Abraham and Israel – God Covenant People of Mercy**
 - Abraham – Gen 18:17-19 - *“The LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸ seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.”*
- Mosaic Covenant: Covenant of Mercy for a People of Justice and Mercy
 - Just Laws:
 - Deuteronomy 16:19 – *“You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous. Justice, and only justice, you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”*

- Exodus 23:1-2 – *“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,”*
 - Merciful Sacrificial System
 - Justice and Mercy are near to the heart of God
 - Psalm 10:17-18 *“O LORD, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear ¹⁸ to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.”*
 - Psalm 68:5-6 – *“Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. ⁶ God settles the solitary in a home; he leads out the prisoners to prosperity, but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.”*
 - Proverbs 14:31 – *“Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.”*
 - Jonah 4:2-4 – *“And he prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the LORD said, “Do you do well to be angry?””*
 - Psalm 146:1-8 *“Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!...⁵ Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, ⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever; ⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; ⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.”*
 - Psalm 28:6 – *“Blessed be the LORD! For he has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy.”*
 - Israel’s Rebellion:
 - David’s Reign – 2 Sam 8:15 - *So David reigned over all Israel. And David administered justice and equity to all his people.*
 - Isaiah 1:23 *Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves. Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts. They do not bring justice to the fatherless, and the widow’s cause does not come to them.*
 - Jeremiah 5:1 *Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, look and take note! Search her squares to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth, that I may pardon her.*
 - Amos 5:21-24 – *“I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. ²² Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. ²³ Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. ²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”*
 - Micah 6:7-9 - *⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” ⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*
 - Hosea 6:6 – *“For I desire steadfast love (mercy) and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”*
 - Prophet’s Call to Repent:
 - Jeremiah 22:3 *Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.*

- Isaiah 1:16-18 ¹⁶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, ¹⁷ learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.
- Micah 6:8 - He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?
- God's Judgment on Injustice:
 - Lamentations 2:2 – *“The Lord has swallowed up without mercy all the habitations of Jacob; in his wrath he has broken down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he has brought down to the ground in dishonor the kingdom and its rulers.”*
- Salvation Promised: A Messiah bring Justice and Mercy
 - Jeremiah 3:12 – *“Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, “‘Return, faithless Israel, declares the LORD. I will not look on you in anger, for I am merciful, declares the LORD; I will not be angry forever.’”*
 - Nehemiah 9:17-31 – *“¹⁷ They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them. ... Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.”*
 - Isaiah 60:10 – *“Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you.”*
 - Jeremiah 31:2-3 – *“Thus says the LORD: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, ³the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.”*
 - Dan 9:9 - ⁹ *To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him*
 - Hosea 2:16-23 – *“And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer will you call me ‘My Baal.’ ¹⁷ For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. ¹⁸ And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. ¹⁹ And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. ²⁰ I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. ²¹ “And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, ²² and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel, ²³ and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, ‘You are my people’; and he shall say, ‘You are my God.’”*
 - Isaiah 9:7 *Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*
 - Isaiah 42:1 *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; ³ a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. ⁴ He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.*
 - Jeremiah 23:5 *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.*

Jesus – Mercy and Justice Himself

- Jesus is just
 - Matthew 23:23 - *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.”*
- Jesus mercifully cares for the rejected
 - Matthew 9:13 - *“Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”*
 - Hebrews 2:17 - *“Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”*
- **Cross – Perfect Justice and Perfect Mercy**
 - Justice - God’s Justice was perfectly satisfied by poured out His wrath for sinners on His Son
 - Rom 3:21-26 – *“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”*
 - *“Wonder ye heavens! be astonished O earth! that very justice which stood in the sinner's way and prevented his being pardoned, has been by the gospel of Christ appeased; by the rich atonement offered upon Calvary, justice is satisfied, has sheathed its sword, and has now not a word to say against the pardon of the penitent.” – Charles Spurgeon*
 - Mercy - Because God poured out His perfect Justice on His Son, He can now turn pour out His eternal Mercy on sinners,
 - 1 Peter 2:9-10 – *“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*
 - *“In Christ both the justice and mercy of God are glorified. By his cross, divine holiness and justice were exalted, and through his triumph, grace and mercy are poured out to the full. In glorious thoughts of this let my soul live, and in believing it, let my soul die. And let the present wonder of this glory make way for the eternal enjoyment of it in its beauty and fullness.” – John Owen*

The Church – God’s People of Justice and Mercy

- Salvation is at its Core God’s Mercy
 - Eph 2:1-5 – *“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ”*
 - Rom 9:18-24 – *“So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. ¹⁹ You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?” ²⁰ But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me like this?” ²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one*

vessel for honorable use and another for dishonorable use? ²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— ²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?”

- Titus 3:4-6 - ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior
- Rom 11:30-36 - For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵ “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.
- 1 Peter 1:3-5 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. “
- Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”
- Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- **The Church is a people of Mercy and Justice**
 - Luke 6:36 – “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”
 - Matthew 5:7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”
 - Romans 12:8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Eternity – Eternal Justice and Mercy

- Eternal Justice: Punishment in Hell
 - Every wrong in this world will be punished eternally, either in Hell or on the cross. – Jonathan Edwards
- Eternal Mercy: In Heaven with our merciful Savior

Resources:

- The Churches Mercy and Justice influence on the World:
 - *The Air We Breathe: How We All Came to Believe in Freedom, Kindness, Progress, and Equality* by Glen Scrivener
 - *Dominion* by Tom Holland
- How the Church pursues Justice and Mercy in the World Today:
 - *Confronting injustice without compromising truth* Thaddeus J. Williams
 - *What Is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* by Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert
 - *What is the Church's Mission* by Jonathan Leeman
 - *Generous Justice* by Tim Keller
 - *Spurgeon and the Poor: How the Gospel Compels Christian Social Concern* by Alex Diprima