

Transformed From Prejudice to Justice

Reflect

- 1) Take a moment to recall a time when you judged someone without knowing them.
- 2) Why do think prejudice is so common? How does it lead to hatred?
- 3) Can you recall situations in your life when you were treated unfairly?
- 4) Christians are called to love others. How is justice related to love?

Read Your Bible

- Proverbs 21:15
- Micah 6:8
- Luke 4:16-18

Apply God's Word to Your Life

- 1) What do you learn about God's justice from Proverbs 21:15?
- 2) According to Micah 6:8, what does God ask of us? Why?
- 3) What inspires you from Jesus' words in Luke 4:16-18? How can you put Jesus' power and mission into practice in your life, in place of prejudice?
- 4) Consider: How are justice and love both present at the cross?

All of us harbor some kinds of prejudice in our hearts. It seems to come so easily, as we form judgments and opinions about others! Perhaps it is because we live in a broken world and have grown accustomed to sin in our neighbors and in our own hearts. Judging situations and people is a reality of life. But, how often do we act unjustly: making unfair assumptions in our hearts about some people (James 3:9) and showing partiality to others (James 2:9)? Prejudice and its cousin hatred infect the heart, creating division, discord, and even violence. Taking responsibility for these sins is critical for a just society, but the issue runs far deeper. In our injustice, we assault the character of God. He makes judgments, too, but His judgments are just. He is "a faithful God who does no wrong" (Deuteronomy 32:4). He is righteous, sinless, honest, perfect and fair. There are at least two important takeaways. First, "Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13). If justice meant getting exactly what we deserve, none of us would stand a chance. When God calls us to act justly, that includes surrendering prejudices and extending mercy to those in need. After all, every time we ask God to forgive us, we promise to also "forgive those who trespass against us." Second, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" (Matthew 5:6). God's people long to see the righteous Kingdom come: "Let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream" (Amos 5:24)! Do you look forward to the Day when King Jesus will come back to right all wrongs and wipe away every tear? Then we should make every effort to live in accordance with that hope, going out of our way to care for widows, orphans, the poor and the lost. We even pray for those who mistreat us (Luke 6:27-36)! Brothers, and sisters, embrace your calling! Followers of Jesus do not choose either mercy or justice; we are entrusted with both.

Pray

Father in heaven, forgive us our sins. We apologize for all our faulty judgments and prejudices. You alone are righteous and just. Your righteousness is shown perfectly in Your Son, Jesus. We could not attain or earn it, even if we spent an eternity trying! Hallelujah that You have come and made a way for us! Thank You for the cross, the place where love and justice meet. Thank You for Your mercy poured out there for me. Lord Jesus, I will follow You where You lead and serve those in need around me. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, make me a bright light in a dark world. In Your name. Amen.