

FORGIVENESS AND INJUSTICE

Forgiveness requires us to give up our place of being judge, jury and executioner toward those who have offended us. This is hard, because we fear that if we let go of those, then the injustice of what has been done will never be addressed. But forgiveness is the actual path of ensuring proper justice, by acknowledging God for who He is and stepping out of His way.

Heart Questions: Does forgiveness feel like you are ignoring the injustice of sins committed against you? Why is it important for the issue of justice to be addressed for our hearts when forgiving others?

Putting Justice Where It Belongs

God is perfectly just and will judge the world perfectly!

Psalm 97:1-2 “The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many islands be glad. Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.”

What does verse tell us about God’s character and God’s ability when it comes to His being the true judge of the universe?

Why is it ultimately satisfying for our souls to entrust true justice into God’s hands?

According to the following verses, when will true and ultimate justice be served?

John 5: 28-29 “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgement.”

Hebrews 9:27 “And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment...”

The troubling part of God’s justice is that ALL OF US are guilty of sin before Him, and therefore deserving of His judgment. But the glory of the gospel is that God graciously made a way for us to be forgiven when Jesus bore the penalty of our sin on the cross. Because of the gospel, there

is now the possibility of salvation, rather than the only the fearful expectation of God's judgment. This means...

God's justice either... WAS satisfied on the cross for those who trust in Him.

WILL BE satisfied on the day of judgment for those who reject Him.

How does your own experience with God's grace (that you have not been treated as your sins deserve) shape the way you approach this process of forgiveness?

Finalizing Your Forgiveness List

- Share your forgiveness list with your friend.
- Work together to make sure it is detailed and complete, asking the following questions...
 - Is the list detailed and specific?
 - Does the list address the true weight of the abuser's sins by using appropriately strong language? Has anything been minimized or glossed over that needs to be re-addressed?
 - Does this list address every specific memory and pain that you have had to bear over the years?
- Make sure each item is listed specifically and separately, and that each one takes the form of a statement of commitment, such as... *"God, I choose to forgive _____ for _____."*

Though it feels hard, spend time in prayer asking God for help, and take one more round of refining and finishing your list. You and your trusted friend will pray through it together the next time you meet.