

SERMON NOTES - GraceNotes - Justice

These notes are designed to be read along with the associated audio / video message

1. Intro & Recap

- What is a "Grace Note"?
- 1 Peter 4:10 NKJV - "10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the **manifold grace** of God." NIV - "*grace in its various forms.*" ESV - "*God's varied grace*" NASB - "*the multifaceted grace of God*"
- Elements of grace - more than one part - Mercy, Justice, Empowering, Eternity
- Why is grace so important? It is the unique thing that sets Jesus and Christianity apart from every other religion. Eph 2:8-9 NKJV - "8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."

2. This week's element = Justice

Perhaps you have thought of Grace as only mercy?

Did you know that God is also JUST - RIGHT, FAIR, ACCURATE, CORRECT in forgiving us?

1 John 1:9 NKJV - "9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and **just** to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"**just**" = *dikaïos* - "righteous", "upright", "rendering to each what is due in a judicial sense"

Romans 3:23-26 NKJV - "23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a **propitiation** (*hilastērion*) by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His **righteousness**, that He might be **just** and the **justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus."

JUSTICE - what does it mean and how do we act when something is just & lawfully right?

- Just = right and "legal"
- "It's my right". I'm simply demanding what I am entitled to. What is Mine. What I deserve.
- My house, my family, my possessions, my free time, my inheritance. Enforceable ownership & control.

WHY IS JUSTICE IMPORTANT?

- There are consequences for sin - harmful effects. This is baked into the physical, moral and spiritual nature of the universe - a natural law - , and is because we separate ourselves from the source of life, peace, joy and health when we choose to sin...we are choosing a different source to trust - the enemy, satan.
- God cannot and will not change His nature and the laws He has created in the universe. There are consequences for sin. He calls it Justice. He has delayed judgement day as long as He can to save as many as possible. We have a sense of justice inbuilt in all of us as humans but we can never achieve it and we don't really know how to handle it properly. We want it but can't achieve it and we all need mercy and forgiveness.

How is this possible? How can mercy and justice exist together?

Psalm 85:10 NKJV - "10 Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed."

Propitiation = *Hilastērion* - also "Mercy Seat" and "atonement" (Heb 9:5 and many others)

EXAMPLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

- A **Judge** in court who pays the penalty himself - how should the exonerated prisoner behave? "I am a worm and won't live free" "I deserve this" "I live free and am eternally joyful and grateful".
1Co 15:9, 10 NKJV - "1Co 15:9 NKJV "9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."
10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."
- Abraham Lincoln issued the **Emancipation** Proclamation on January 1, 1863. (13th Amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States, was passed December 6th, 1865) 3 million slaves were theoretically freed by this proclamation, but historian & author William Harris estimates that more than one million enslaved people had been freed by the war's end, meaning that a large number did not benefit from what was legally theirs.
- An inheritance left in a **Will** - mercy but still legally yours. "**New Testament**"
Titus 3:7 NKJV - "that having been **justified** by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

3. WHAT DID JESUS ACHIEVE ON THE CROSS?

John 19:30 NKJV - "30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."

"TELESTI"

How could He pay it? Why is it "right" and just?

Why was it enough?

What He bought - legally - for us.

2Co 5:21 NKJV - "21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

4. Why is this important and what do we do now?

Hebrews 4:16 NKJV - "16 Let us therefore come **boldly** to the **throne of grace**, that we may obtain **mercy and find grace** to help in time of need."

Luk 4:18-19 NKJV - "18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.""

Isaiah 53:4-6 NKJV - "4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

We must understand Mercy (Grace Note #1) but also that it is RIGHT and legally ours now and we can rely on it

Small group discussion guidelines

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

1 - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

2 - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

3 - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

4 - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

The blessing and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.