

Daniel Perrin – L12: Love and Justice: The Two Greatest Commandments –
Wednesday, March 19: Called to Establish Justice

1. God's Love and Justice — Not just a Character Description for study — a divine Pattern to study and follow
 - a. **Micah 6:6-8** —
 - b. **Amos 5:15, 24** — *Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate. ... But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.*
 - c. **Isaiah 1:17** — *Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.*
 - d. **Deuteronomy 27:19** — *'Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.'*

2. Establish Justice is not a political statement. It is a Biblical statement.
 - a. Not a plea to support a social justice organization OR to organize a boycott some product or group OR attack and tear down the structures of ruling government.
 - b. Jesus did not do those things on Earth — He preached a gospel of repentance and He went about doing good (Acts 10:38) — THEN He sent His disciples out to follow His example.

3. The prophets did much more than Predicting the Future
 - a. If I were to summarize the Prophets' messages in one phrase:
 - They show us GOD'S PERSPECTIVE — in other words, they tell us WHAT'S ON GOD'S HEART
 - God's Perspective of TIME is Predictive Prophecy
 - God's Perspective of PEOPLE is their Needs / Priorities / whether their heart beats on the same frequency as His)
 - We must have both
 - Understanding Bible prophecy DOESN'T mean that we don't need to care for the NEEDY

4. The Lesson Shared *a few* things the Prophets said — There are MANY that were NOT included.
 - a. **Micah 3:3** — refers to the wealthy leaders of Israel who took advantage of the poor as those who ... *eat the flesh of My people, flay their skin from them, break their bones, and chop them in pieces like meat for the pot, like flesh in the caldron.*
 - In **Vs. 9-10** of the same chapter God described Israel's leaders as those ... *who abhor justice and pervert all equity,¹⁰ who build up Zion with bloodshed ...*
 - b. **Amos 4:1** — Speaking to the WIVES of the wealthy — there's no gentleness in this rebuke: *Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, "Bring wine, let us drink!" ...*
 - Then in **5:11** — *Therefore, because you tread down the poor and take grain taxes from him, though you have built houses of hewn stone, yet you shall not dwell in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink wine from them. ...*
 - Finally in **6:1** — *Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in Mount Samaria, notable persons in the chief nation, to whom the house of Israel comes!*
 - c. **Isaiah 5:8** — *Woe to those who join house to house; they add field to field, till there is no place where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!*
 - d. **Ezekiel 22:29** — *The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.*
 - e. **Leviticus 23:22** — *When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor shall you gather any gleaning from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God.*
 - **Amos 5:21-24** — God says He doesn't want ANY more of their religious rituals because they are defiled by misusing the weak and poor

- f. The Old Testament prophet most associated with predictive prophecy is Daniel.
- **Daniel 4:27** – *Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”*
- g. **Even called to care for the stranger — w**
- **Who’s the stranger? Someone NOT FROM HERE — Someone from SOMEWHERE ELSE**
 - The Bible uses the word “stranger” — WE would say “foreigner” / “immigrant”
 - A person about whom, we may say, “THOSE people don’t belong HERE.”
 - I pay a high price to live here / I was born here / I worked to earn my place here
 - The Stranger is almost always POOR POOR POOR
 - As soon as I say “immigrant,” someone will think this is political
 - Justice and Mercy for the Stranger (ANY POWERLESS GROUP) is NOT a political issue
 - BUT Prophecy naturally addresses issues that are also debated in the political sphere:
 - WHY? Because prophecy deals with issues that divide humanity
 - And God has an opinion on how we treat people
 - How we treat foreigners and strangers
 - How we treat children from the moment of conception
 - How we treat abused women whose value is BEYOND what humans can measure
 - God cares about people forced into a slave trade that still exists
 - God cares about how we spend money — because the spending on our luxuries and appetites and addictions can support slavery
 - God speaks about caring for those who are bent over by addiction —
 - **Luke 4:18** – *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*
 - **Mt. 25** — Judgment is based on what you did for the widows, poor, strangers
 - God’s system is not a broken welfare system
 - It is PEOPLE WHO WILL ACT ON BEHALF OF GOD’S INTERESTS

5. What does establishing justice look like? Can’t give specifics, but here are some broad descriptions:

- a. NOT convenient
- b. Not popular
- c. Not going to make people comfortable because by your decisions to care for others, someone else is going to feel rebuked for their careless way of living
- d. Not going to be met with overwhelming gratitude
- e. Not going to be one-and-done
- f. WILL – Costs something
- g. Requires sacrifice AND time
- h. Involves decisions about how we spend money
- i. Requires study to understand issues we may be unfamiliar with
- j. Will take effort to find those who are treated unjustly
- k. Spoken simply: stop being selfish. FIND and HELP people in need.
- l. **God doesn’t turn a blind eye, and neither should we**

6. Did you know that Ellen White cared for orphans in her home.

- a. Did you know that she bought fabric at good prices when she could find it so that she could have clothing made for people who needed it when she encountered them?
- b. Did you know that she would buy cheap household items when she could find them so that she would have extras to share?

c. Did you know that she employed people who were out of work so they wouldn't be embarrassed by receiving a hand-out?

- **Matthew 23:4,23** – For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. ... Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.
- **James 5:1-5** – Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! ²Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. ⁴Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. ⁵You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.