

Day 3 Devotional - "Righteousness, Justice & Mercy" 05/01/2023

It has often been debated whether the Christian gospel is primarily about saving souls or caring about social justice. The ancient people of God would have seen all of this as one thing. Knowing God and being saved by God was directly connected to social and political justice, because there is ONE God who wants to redeem the whole world to truth, grace and new life in the Spirit. The Old Testament talks far more about interpersonal justice than it does the afterlife.

Righteousness is not just about legalistically checking all the boxes and obeying laws and rules. Laws and rules are good, but there is more to righteousness. It is also about faithfulness and loyalty in relationships ("being there" for the other person, keeping your word) and showing mercy to others. God is often described as both "righteous" and "merciful" (Isaiah 55:7). He is faithful to His Promises (even though we are unfaithful) and he is committed to His people - he cares for you and me. So, one form that his righteousness takes is COMPASSION and MERCY (Exodus 34:7). Israel's mandate from God toward righteousness is all about faithful and generous engagement with THE COMMUNITY.

'Righteousness' is an ethical term used to mark people who live generatively in the community in order to sustain and enhance the community's wellbeing. The "righteous person" is characteristically one who INVESTS in community, showing special attentiveness to the poor and needy.' Hence the righteous Israelite was someone who lives with integrity and gravitas, who by their presence and their actions lends stability to the community. [Walter Brueggemann]

As we enter 2023, how can you intentionally engage with our community and show God's compassion and mercy?

Pray for divine opportunities to share God's love with people the Holy Spirit will lead us to everyday.

Declare - we are the righteousness of God IN CHRIST Jesus. Put on the passionate zeal of God today.

James 2:14-17 TPT

My dear brothers and sisters, what good is it if someone claims to have faith but demonstrates no good works to prove it? How could this kind of faith save anyone? For example, if a brother or sister in the faith is poorly clothed and hungry and you leave them saying, "Good-bye. I hope you stay warm and have plenty to eat," but you don't provide them with a coat or even a cup of soup, what good is your faith? So then faith that doesn't involve action is phony.