

November 20, 2016

**Revisit Justice and Mercy:** This is such a timely and needed study for Christians here and now I couldn't help but revisit it.

We Christians are accused of being strong on judgment and short on mercy. Is that true of you personally? Do you see the church (Kingsway) being judgmental enough? Too much? Discuss some examples to "prove your position." Recall some illuminating Scriptures:

We criticize each other when we appear to be "soft on issues." Are we current and tolerant? Are we traditionally intolerant? Where do you draw the line between soft/tolerant and hard/intolerant? Is your position situational or rigid? How do you love: the homosexual, the liberal, those who believe differently than you doctrinally, the illegal immigrant? Is there a different position for Christian believers for each of these issues, or can we find a general philosophical position for Christian believers? What verses do you refer to for guidance here? Does God "overlook" any evil?

In Exodus 34:6, God reveals Himself to be a God of mercy, grace, patience, and goodness. In Exodus 34:7 He reveals Himself to require justice. For God to be merciful, He must right the wrongs that people do; that requires justice. To be fully just He must allow for the weakness and limitations of His creatures; that demands mercy. We must be becoming more and more like Him therefore we also must demonstrate mercy and justice in our relationships with our fellow men and women.

Scriptures: 1Kings 20:31ff; Romans 12:19-21; Romans 13:1-10; Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8:9-12;

To The Humble:

**Big Idea:** Love everyone according to their worth to God, not their value to humans.

**Scriptures:**

Proverbs 11:2 (NLT) - Pride leads to disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

Proverbs 22:4 (NLT) - True humility and fear of the LORD lead to riches, honor, and long life.

Luke 14 (NLT)

2 Thessalonians 1:3-12 (NLT) <sup>3</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, we can't help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing. <sup>4</sup> We proudly tell God's other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering. <sup>5</sup> And God will use this persecution to show his justice and to make you worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are

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suffering. <sup>6</sup> In his justice he will pay back those who persecute you. <sup>7</sup> And God will provide rest for you

who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels, <sup>8</sup> in flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don't know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. <sup>10</sup> When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people—praise from all who believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him. <sup>11</sup> So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. <sup>12</sup> Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

James 3:13 (NLT) - If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom.

James 4:5-8 (NLT) - <sup>5</sup> Do you think the Scriptures have no meaning? They say that God is passionate that the spirit he has placed within us should be faithful to him. <sup>6</sup> And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."<sup>7</sup> So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.

Do you ever struggle with the sin of pride? What steps that have helped you, can you suggest to help others avoid, overcome, feel forgiven for this sin?

Proverbs 22:4 sounds like a formula for riches and long life. Validate this proverb.

After reading 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12, discuss what these verses have to do with humility. Recall a recent testimony in this class that demonstrated your conclusion.

How is humility reconciled with the call for boldness presenting the Gospel; with "visualizing" to achieve success? Tell me a story illustrating humility in the daily walk of life.

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