

"Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken. But you, God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay; the bloodthirsty and deceitful will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you." - Ps. 55:22-23



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## Paths of Justice

### Becoming Involved

According to Micah, it's an injustice to exploit others for personal gain (see Micah chapter 3). It's especially grievous when this behavior becomes widespread among leaders. We're reminded in the following chapter that the Lord himself will address injustice by teaching His ways to the nations – which seems to be another way of describing the Great Commission.

If you would like to get involved with addressing the problems that injustice can cause, here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. You will be a blessing and you will be blessed;
2. You will make new friends and may discover new enemies;
3. It will require sharing your time and resources;
4. You will find how God works in and through you and see that you are needed.

The angel announced to Zechariah that John the Baptist would "...turn the hearts of the fathers to the children..." (Mal. 4:6, Lk. 1:17). An increasing number of people today struggle with broken family relationships. In the absence of loving and stable homes, the world's many distractions may seem alluring, but will prove to be burdens too heavy to bear. In Mt. 11:25-30, Jesus bids all of us to come to Him and learn from Him, saying, "...my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

A good place to start may be simply to pray that God would turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and to send laborers into the harvest. Perhaps He may show you ways that you can be part of the answer to your prayers! - Tony Ticknor

Definition of injustice: Injustice occurs when someone with greater power deprives someone with lesser power of freedom, dignity, treasure, or livelihood.

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" – 1 Jn. 3:1

### Learning to Love: A Second Chance at Fatherhood

On Sunday afternoon, you have an opportunity right here at Faith Community Church to have spiritually significant conversations with families of prisoners from our community and show the love of Christ to them. The following is an example from Angel Tree about the kind of impact you can be a part of.

Shane Rubash grew up in Monroe, Washington, and had a strained relationship with his father. He longed for attention, had low self-esteem as a boy, and worked hard to feel valuable.

"All I ever wanted was for [my dad] to come to my games," Shane remembers. Bitterness seeped in, and with the stresses of early adulthood, he turned to drugs as an escape. Eventually he went through an ugly divorce, a painful addiction, and two prison

stints.

Shane tried to call his daughters, Chyanne and Alyssa, and his son, Jared, from prison many times

for more than a year, but each one went to voicemail. He didn't blame his kids, but he knew he had hit rock bottom. "God, if You're real and You can change my life, come change me," Shane said as he wept in his jail cell.

During his second prison term he enrolled in the Prison Fellowship Academy® and fully surrendered to Christ. He began to see his life restored

by Christ as he took ownership of his choices. "I started to realize that my children were collateral damage in my life." They were young teenagers when he went to prison. "I loved them, and I never wanted to hurt them, but they were damaged (over)

"I started to realize that my children were collateral damage in my life. I loved them...but they were damaged as a result of my addiction."

- Shane

## Learning to Love: A Second Chance at Fatherhood - Continued

as a result of my addiction.” Shane even wrote to his ex-wife, apologizing for the ways he’d hurt her.

Shane’s attempts to reach out to his family had gone unanswered, but then he found Angel Tree®, which would bring a gift from dad, delivered by caring volunteers. More than a phone call, this was a tangible reminder that their dad loved them. “As much as I wanted to tell them I was changing and growing,” says Shane, “I knew they had to make that decision [to respond to my communication] for themselves.”

For more than a year, Shane's phone calls went unanswered. But with every voicemail, he told his children they didn't have to call. He just wanted to let them know he was thinking of them. Then one day his firstborn, Chyanne, finally answered the phone. Shane hadn't spoken to her in three

years, but he managed to keep his composure. “She laid it all out on me—all the hurts and struggles of having her dad in prison,” says Shane. “But I got to know she was OK. I got to tell her I loved her.” Those phone calls continued at least once a month. Alyssa was the next to answer Shane's call several weeks later, and the two began speaking every few months. There was laughter. There were tears.

In 2016, Shane left prison an Academy graduate and a new man. He stayed in contact with his daughters, but Jared, 15, still wanted nothing to do with him. He had thrown every letter from his dad in the trash. On Shane's release day, when the family went out for lunch, Jared sat quietly off to the side.



Even so, Shane continued to show his son that he loved him. Shane had permission from Jared's mom to attend his son’s baseball games. He would travel for hours just to sit in the back of the stands and watch Jared play.

Alyssa had been diagnosed with scoliosis and needed surgery, and Shane stayed by her side. Jared noticed. Little by little, the door to their relationship cracked open. “God used that doctor's appointment to soften Jared's heart,” Shane explains. Jared started

answering text messages from his father, and when his car needed repair, Shane jumped at the opportunity to help. Today, Jared and Shane talk and text regularly. All three Rubash siblings are learning to embrace their father again, even spending holidays and dinners together as a family. Shane says, “They get to see how

God is working in my life.”

About Angel Tree, which helped bring this family together, Shane said: “It was about more than the gift. Even though I wasn't there, it meant a lot to them to have a gift from me. The people who brought the gifts to them were very kind and understanding of the situation. ... [In prison] I vividly heard the Holy Spirit saying, 'Continue to focus on Me, and when the time is right, I will restore you to your children.' And that's how God taught me to trust Him.” For a couple of videos about Shane, go here and look for them on the right side: <https://tinyurl.com/y7t5myn4>.

## Opportunities / Activities / Resources

- On Sunday, Dec. 2, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, we have our Angel Tree Christmas party. This is a significant outreach that all ages can participate in, interacting with the youth and adults who come.
- Please pray for our third SOAR survivor group for ladies that we are planning to begin on January 21 – that God would help us connect with those who are most in need of this opportunity for healing, community, and growth.
- Do you want to get more involved with righting injustice? Come to our Justice Team meetings where prayer happens, plans are made, and investigations continue.
- Check with Tom Castor (tcbus7@att.net) or Doug Dunsmoor (dwdunsmoor@hotmail.com) for more information about these and more opportunities.