

“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” - 1 Tim 2:5-6

Paths of Justice

Our Allegiance to God’s Word

I learned of Martin Luther and how his 95 theses began the Reformation in high school history class. He nailed his grievances to the church door and that action was the beginning of the division of the Church of Rome. Because of Luther’s protest we are called Protestant. Luther’s theses concerned the power of the church, the Pope, indulgences and the relationship of man to God. The church stood between man and God even to the point of selling indulgences to absolve sin. His reading of the scriptures convinced him that man had direct access to God without going through the church or any man. Luther’s argument was about authority and we wrestle with the same issue today. To who or to what do we owe our allegiance? What is first in our lives...our jobs, the government, important people, our pay check, the church...or is it God and His Word? The Justice Mission’s goal is to value what God values and to, as best we can, do what God tells us to do in His Word. That brings us to support those who are defending those who are treated unjustly such as children from broken families or the unborn who are threatened with abortion. - Tom

Injustice For Sale?

On October 31st, it will be 500 years since Martin Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church. They were both the outcome of his own heart-wrenching search for righteousness with God as well as the beginning of the Protestant Reformations that have shaped the modern world.

Years before that, Luther had given away all of his possessions and became a monk. He prayed, fasted, and even went without sleep, endured the cold, and whipped himself in his pursuit of righteousness. He wanted to love God fully but only became more terrified of God’s wrath. Eventually, through lectures that he gave as a professor on the Psalms and a study on the book of Romans, the light began to dawn: the righteousness of God comes by faith (from Rom. 1:17).

In turn, Luther came to understand that the church is not an institution defined by a series of popes or people holding offices that can be traced back to the apostles, and that salvation does not come through the sacraments administered by it. Rather, the church is the community of those who have put their faith in God.

With his burden of sin lifted and these newly-discovered ideas, Luther strongly objected to the practice of selling indulgences, which were documents prepared by the church and bought by people either for themselves or for those who had died in order to free them from some of the punishment due to their sins. Johann Tetzel, for example, preached that “Once the coin into the coffer clings, a soul from purgatory heavenward springs!

(over)



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

“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” - Rom. 1:17

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“The 95 Theses” are also called the “Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences,” which is a list of questions and propositions for debate “[o]ut of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light.” The first two theses are about how God calls us to seek repentance and that salvation comes through faith alone, not works. The rest of them support these first two, and many directly criticize the practice of indulgences.

Why is this important to raise in a newsletter about justice missions? Because remaining in a state of unforgiveness and rebellion against God, the source of all goodness, love, and moral value, leads to all manner of injustices. Setting ourselves against the knowledge of God not only brings consequences on ourselves but also can harm others in significant ways.

That is why it’s crucial to clearly understand what to do about this and to share it with others, which is what we aim to do as we go about correcting injustices. Namely, we must realize that without God’s grace and forgiveness,



we'd all be doomed. With them, we all must face the truth about ourselves, be grieved about the ways we've fallen short of being fully virtuous, and turn away from those things; we need to accept God’s gift of forgiveness in Christ, learn how to follow God’s commands, and seek the good of others out of the love that we ourselves have been given from God, which includes rescuing them from injustices.

Furthermore, looking back on it, being duped into buying indulgences may seem silly, but how might we be similarly misled? At least they recognized that they had violated God’s standards and needed forgiveness. What forms of entertainment do we purchase that teach people that

there is no such thing as sin? How many tens of thousands of dollars do we give toward courses that preach that there is no God or salvation through Christ? These are serious issues that affect people’s eternal destiny, so we, like Luther, need to act out of love for the truth and a desire to bring it to light.

Opportunities / Activities

- Sunday, October 8th is our baby shower for Tosha! Please pray for her baby boy J’air who was born a month early and sign up for meals for her through the email that went out to the church.
- We were blessed to have the president of PDHC, Julie Moore, and Alison Hickman from the Bair Foundation speak for us on Sept. 10; the recording of it is at <http://fccdublin.com/sermons/listen>.
- The PDHC banquet on Sept. 21st was very well attended by 1,500 people. We heard powerful testimonies of the difference they are making, a remarkable address by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, and got to know one of the ladies who trains students in Columbus area schools to make healthy decisions. If you need high-quality materials to help equip your children to make wise choices in matters of sexuality, please let us know and we’d be happy to support you with them.
- Our annual Christmas outreach through Angel Tree is coming! More details are coming, but please be in prayer and consider how you could help both with that event as well as with ongoing relationship-building with struggling families of prisoners.
- Do you want to get more involved with righting injustice? Come to our Justice Team meeting where prayer happens, plans are made, and investigations continue. Our next one is on Wednesday, Oct. 18 at 7:30 p.m.
- Check with Tom Castor (tcbus7@att.net) or Doug Dunsmoor (dwdunsmoor@hotmail.com) for more information about these and more opportunities.