

The Justice of the King

Psalm 72 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 07 June 2020

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Prayer: Please see the weekly prayer guide as a means of bringing our hearts and minds before God.

Worship: Psalm 72:11-14. (*Read aloud three times, spend time in reflection listening for God's invitation to you.*)

Sermon Summary for Psalm 72

What do we do with all that is going on in our city and our nation? For months we've had the specter of Covid-19 looming over our entire world. And just when we thought we might finally have room to breathe, we are hearing voices that cry out, "I can't breathe." Nationwide protests have ensued, which call all of us – whatever our background, whatever our preconceptions – to consider what is causing this need in those that are deeply angry and deeply moved – even those moved to violence. Yes, it's good to worry about our city being looted and property getting destroyed. It's good to be concerned when protests about violence spill over into violence. But these are symptomatic concerns. What we need are hearts concerned for what is at the root of this: the oppression and the violence and the hatred that has gone on in our country for ages (both directly and much more subtly) against people of color. Nor can we dismiss these worries thinking these sins stop at the doors of the church.

What do we do with all this? Where do we turn? Psalm 72 calls us to pray, that we might have concern for deep justice the way God does. Meaning we become concerned about extending the reign of Lord Jesus and His justice throughout creation. This isn't just praying that God's heart for justice is brought to the places of greatest need; it's praying that His life of justice would go everywhere. Even down into the deepest, darkest corners of our own lives. This means asking God to expose our own, personal injustices – not just of those whom we'd like to see exposed. And may these changes in our own hearts then extend throughout the world. For we don't just move in and out of Jesus's life of justice. This is a life change, where walking with Jesus in His paths of justice becomes our passion and an enduring, whole way of life. Having hearts that are broken by the things which break our Father's heart. What then are we praying for? For the deep concern for our Savior's justice to be rooted in our hearts. For the reign of His justice to go down deep in us and out wide into the world. For Christ's compassion, which is at the heart of His justice, to be in us and for us and through us. Because each of us is broken. Each of us needs the heart of our Father's justice, which is His divine mercy and compassion. For He alone in Jesus has made a way for justice and mercy to join together – and not in a way that leaves us condemned, but in a way that leaves us full of hope.

Discussion Questions (*It's better to wrestle deeply with a few good questions than to gloss over many.*)

- Psalm 72 is an extended prayer for a righteous king and his son. Discuss the ways that Jesus is seen in this psalm as the greater Son of David.
 - What are the attributes of Jesus' kingdom and how does this encourage and give you hope?
 - What causes people to be moved with compassion for poor, oppressed, needy, or weak? (See vs 4, 12-14)
 - What is the importance of care, compassion, and justice for these people groups?
 - What are several ways you personally or collectively can better hear those who are going unheard?
 - How can we assure that we aren't simply reinforcing our preexisting opinions or beliefs?
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Engage & Experience: Research books to read or films to watch to become better informed about racial issues or ask someone who has life experiences that will help you understand. What are constructive ways your group can engage with current tough issues?