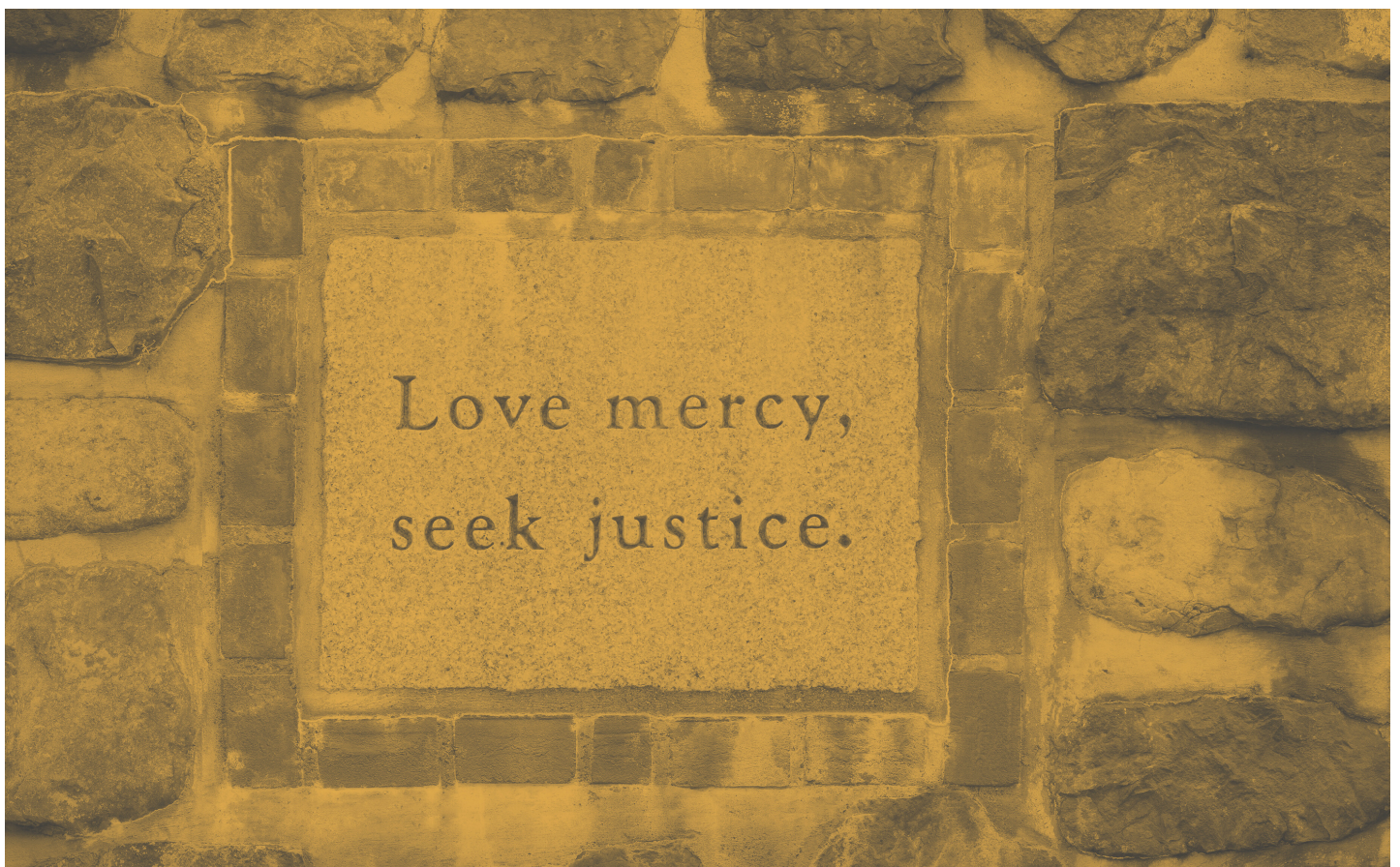


FOUNDATIONS FOR **BIBLICAL JUSTICE**

GROUP STUDY GUIDE



Sessions

01 Introduction

02 God of Justice

03 Life of Justice

04 Living a Life of Justice Before God

The purpose of this course is to highlight the foundations of Biblical Justice - what the Bible says, what God says and how it should be an important part of how Christians live their lives.



BIG IDEA

In this session we will be introduced to the Foundations for Biblical Justice course and come in prayer before God, especially acknowledging Him as a God of justice.

START THINKING

Make a list of some of God's character traits:

VIDEO NOTES

DISCUSSION

What stood out for you in the video?

Read Psalm 146.

What do you learn about God from this Psalm?

PRAYER

Ask God to

1. reveal His heart to us.
2. show us that He is a God of justice.
3. mold our hearts so we can live out the call of Michah 6:8 to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God.

SELF STUDY

- A Podcast by Tim Keller on the justice of God:
<http://podcast.gospelinlife.com/e/the-justice-of-god/>
- A 15 day devotional on a biblical response to justice: Download the 15-day participant's devotional for access to week 1: <https://www.commongood.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/HeartforJusticeDevotional.pdf>

BIG IDEA

In this session we will see that justice is an integral part of God's character.

START THINKING

What do you think the definition of justice is?

VIDEO NOTES

DISCUSSION

- Read Psalm 146:5-9 and and Psalm 33:5

Psalm 146: 5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, 6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever;7 who executes justice [mishpat] for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free;8 the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous [tzedakah]. (ESV)

Psalm 33:5 "The Lord loves righteousness [tzedakah] and justice [mishpat]; the earth is full of the steadfast love (or chesedh, pronounced "Heh-sed") of the LORD." (ESV)

- Unpack the meaning of these three words. It will be helpful to think of/look for examples of how you see God display these character traits in the Old Testament, the New Testament and how God's heart for justice is displayed through Jesus.

a. Justice [mishpat]

b. Righteousness [tzedakah]

c. Mercy/ Kindness/ Steadfast love [chesedh]

- When we think about who God is, do we usually think about Him in the way He is described in this video? Why or why not?

PRAYER

SELF STUDY

- A video by The Bible Project on Justice:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A14THPoc4-4>
- A 15 day devotional on a biblical response to justice: Download the 15-day participant's devotional for access to week 2: <https://www.commongood.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/HeartforJusticeDevotional.pdf>

DEFINITIONS

- MISHPAT

The Hebrew word, MISHPAT, translated as “justice.” Tim Keller says “mishpat’s most basic meaning is to treat people equitably. It means acquitting or punishing every person on the merits of the case, regardless of race or social status. Anyone who does the same wrong should be given the same penalty. But it means more than just the punishment of wrongdoing. It also means giving people their rights. Mishpat is giving people what they are due, whether punishment or protection or care.”

MISHPAT has to do with retribution and restoration. In this sense, justice can mean paying the consequences of an action, or it can mean seeking out people who are vulnerable to injustice so that you can help them.

- TZEDAKAH

The Hebrew word TZEDAKAH (pronounced sed-ah-kah) is translated as “righteousness.” It has to do with reflecting God’s goodness and right relationships between people; people being treated with the dignity they deserve because they are created in the image of God. TZEDAKAH refers to daily living in which we conduct all of our relationships with fairness, generosity, and equity. If we are living in right relationship with God, we should be motivated to live in right relationship with the world around us.

- CHESEDH

The Hebrew word CHESEDH refers to God’s loyal love, mercy, and kindness. We bear the image of God who restores the vulnerable, who rights relationships, and who never stops loving us with grace and mercy.

BIG IDEA

In this session we will see that Christians are called to live a life of justice.

VIDEO NOTES**DISCUSSION**

- Read Romans 3:21-26

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (ESV)

- How has God demonstrated justice toward you?

Micah 6:8 says: *"He has told you, O man, what is good: and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness (or mercy), and to walk humbly with your God?" (ESV)*

- What does a life of justice look like?

- Read the following passages and look for principles for living a life of justice.

a. Jeremiah 22:3

"This is what the Lord says: Do what is just [mishpat] and right [tzedakah]. Rescue from the hand of his oppressor, the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the immigrant, the fatherless, or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place."

b. Ezekiel 18:5-8

5 "Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just [mishpat] and right [tzedakah]. 6 He does not... 7 oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. 8 He does not lend at usury or take excessive interest."

c. James 2: 13(b)-17

13 "Mercy triumphs over judgment. 14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

PRAYER

SELF STUDY

- A 15 day devotional on a biblical response to justice: Download the 15-day participant's devotional for access to week 3:
<https://www.commongood.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/HeartforJusticeDevotional.pdf>
- In order to reflect on the implication of justice for your own life, complete the quiz on the next page.

LIFESTYLE QUIZ

LIFESTYLE STATEMENT	YES	NO	TO SOME EXTENT	GROWTH AREA
I have a good understanding of the biblical command to act justly.				
I have an understanding of the causes and extent of poverty, injustice, and division in South Africa.				
I seek to be informed about current issues in the country related to poverty, injustice, and division.				
I speak with God and seek his thinking on these matters.				
I seek opportunities to listen to the stories of people who are different to me, especially people of other race groups.				
I know what I spend my money on.				
I know how much money I have to give away.				
I pray about how I use my money and give as I feel prompted by the Holy Spirit.				
I regularly think and pray about people living in poverty and suffering injustice.				
I regularly give of my time and skills to help those living in poverty and suffering injustice.				
I look for opportunities at school/university/work/home to talk about issues relating to poverty and injustice and how we can respond.				
I am friends with someone different to me.				
I try not to use more than my share of the earth's resources.				
I am fully persuaded that responding to poverty and injustice is intrinsic to what it means to be a Christ-follower.				

BIG IDEA

In this session we will see what living justly looks like in everyday life.

START THINKING

In one sentence, what has stood out to you from the course so far?

VIDEO NOTES

DISCUSSION

- On what basis can Christians respond in mercy to humans in need?
- How is God inviting you to more fully embrace a lifestyle of living justly?

A Lifestyle of Awareness: are we opening our eyes and hearts to what God is doing and what is going on in our town around us?

A Lifestyle of Reconciliation: Reconcile the relationship between God and people and between people and people.

A Lifestyle of Generosity: Everything we have is God's and are gracious gifts to steward and manage to glorify God.

A Lifestyle of Influence: Connections, opportunities and the influence we have on others.

Take a moment now to reflect on what God has been saying to you throughout this journey and write it down.

What 2 or 3 things is God inviting you to change or participate in?

PRAYER

SELF STUDY

- Visit the Resource Page on the Serve Stellenbosch website to dig deeper into the topic of Biblical Justice.
<https://servestellenbosch.co.za/resources-2/>
- Contact Serve Stellenbosch via the website if you feel called to get involved in a specific area.
- Continue to pray and reflect on Psalm 146 and on what God has placed on your heart concerning justice.



SEEK JUSTICE | LOVE MERCY | WALK HUMBLY