



May 12, 2024

Justice and Character of God

Scripture: Amos 2:6-8

Big Idea: God's character has always been one of universal justice. To care for the poor, the marginalized, and the disenfranchised.

The Challenge: Mankind is made in the image of God. In keeping with His character, our response to His faithfulness is to humble ourselves and turn our face toward Him. In further response, we are called to care for the poor, the marginalized, the disenfranchised. However, we do so in response to His first move, His love, His character. This call to reflect His character that calls us into action but also grounds our response.

Pastoral Prayer for this Message: "Lord, you are a God of justice and mercy. We are called to turn our face toward you and reflect Your character in our lives. Help us to represent you well and not get of the work You are doing."

Questions for Discussion:

- 1) As we look around our world, it is full of injustice. It is full of hurt and brokenness. We sometimes become numb to what is happening around us, both abroad, but locally as well. However, if we take a moment to pull back a layer or two, we realize that there is often our heart grieves for things that we may not even realize.
 - What makes you angry when you look around?
 - What is the root of that anger? Is this a righteous anger?
 - As we think of the "imago dei", where does that righteous anger come from?
- 2) God is the source of all good (Ps 25:8, Mark 10:18, James 1:17). Good is therefore defined by Him.
 - What are some of the key attributes God's character that are demonstrated in the OT?
 - As the author of all that is good, how does that change our perspectives on His character attributes?
 - What are some of the key attributes God's character that are demonstrated in the NT?
 - Is there a difference?
 - How does the NT and OT together provide us with a fuller understanding of His character.
- 3) Reading through Amos, and other prophetic books, there is a continual cry to from God to Israel to repent and turn. If not, there would be impending judgement. In the sermon, we talked about the scales of Justice.
 - Why was God so hard on Israel? What did He expect from them?
 - Why was God so hard on the other nations as seen in Amos 1-2? What did he expect from them?
 - Was there a difference? What are the consistencies in expectations?

- 4) God calls us to repent and turn to him. To humble ourselves. However, it does not stop there. We are then called to live rightly. Rom 6:1, Paul tells us to change our behavior because it matters.
 - How does the analogy of the scales of justice inform us on what Christ accomplished?
 - What does God expect from me?
 - Reading James, 1:22, what does it mean to live rightly?
- 5) When we are in right relationship with God, our lives will naturally begin to reflect his character. God is the source of everything that is good and we are called to reflect that. It is a response to relationship, rather than an end unto itself. As we look around at the injustice, Watkin says that "...no human struggle can bear this divine weight".
 - What does it mean to solve injustice in the light of a response?
 - What is my responsibility? What is not?
 - What is my posture through the fight for injustice?
 - What does God ask you to do with the remainder of the injustice that can not be solved?