

C.R.O.S.S.

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Lessons for August

This month's study, "Advocates of Justice for All," completes the quarter with five prophets. Isaiah prophesied that God would come as a Redeemer, bringing righteousness and justice to Israel. Jeremiah warned the people against trusting in the lying words of false prophets. The people sinned and then went to worship as if nothing was wrong! Ezekiel called for confession and repentance in order to build a healthy faith community. Zechariah gave God's clear instruction for showing kindness, mercy, and justice to others. Lastly, Malachi informed the people that God requires justice and faithfulness and would bestow bountiful blessings in proportion to what they were willing to give.

These prophets urged listeners to repent of the injustices they were committing and live out their identity as people of God.

Listen  God is still speaking,

Bible Fact

Justice—Justice is rooted in the very nature of God (see Isaiah 40:14). He evenhandedly rewards good, and He does not ignore the sins of any. Human judges do well to remember God in their courts. God does not take bribes or pervert justice in any way.

(From Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology
[www.bibletools.com])



Scripture of the Month

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice". – Proverbs 21:2-3

God wants us to act justly towards one another, but it is easier said than done. Responding with justice is not difficult with our close friends, but it gets hard when it is someone we don't know well and especially if it is someone we just barely tolerate. With those individuals it is easy to act unjustly.

We all have those moments when we say or do the wrong thing. We excuse our attitudes and behaviors; we justify them in our own eyes. We decide it is "okay" because they deserve it. But, God desires for us to put our standard of right and wrong aside for His standard. He has told us not to return evil for evil (Romans 12:17), not to show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great (Leviticus 19:15). Many people show bias, oppress the weak, and break laws as though they are unaware of the error of their ways. All are injustice!

God wants us to practice what is good; seek justice, alleviate oppression, defend the cause of orphans, and plead the widow's case (Isaiah 1:17). We are also reminded that we have been saved to do good works (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 1:22, 27). Our good works are acts of mercy, justice, and kindness. The Lord is more pleased when we do what is just than when we offer Him sacrifices.



Series: The Malnourished Christian

Service

Part 5 of 7



"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve..." (Mark 10:45).

In order to grow Christians need regular exercise; we call that exercise service. Service is essential for the believer.

In the book, I Am A Church Member by Thom S. Rainer, he talked about people to look at the church like a country club. They come in, join, and then sit back expecting to be "served" as part of their membership benefits. But our membership in the family, the body of Christ, is far from that concept. Just as Jesus did not come to be served, we as His disciples were not called to be served either. We are called to work and our job description is the Great Commission.

Let's look at Jesus as our example. He came to be about His Father's business. What did that look like? It looked like healing the sick and giving sight to the blind. These acts of ministry were designed to effect His primary goal, bringing the Gospel unto men that they might be saved. He came to seek and to save those who were lost.

That is our work too. As we were reminded in the Deeper in Christ Conference, our primary mission is to save souls and that requires work. We cannot sit inside the church waiting for them to come in, we must go out and reach out to bring them in. That is service - walking the talk, putting feet and hands and action to our profession of faith.

We need to take Jesus to a dying world. They will be saved and we will have the benefit of regular exercise. Yes, regular exercise (service) has benefits.

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. (Romans 6:22)

God said "Go!" So let's get up and go; let's serve!

Quotable Quotes

There ought to be consistency between the worship of the church and the work of the church.

Pastor Aaron Willford, Jr.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Children in the Bible

1. This king was seven years old when he began to reign.
2. This boy's mother brought him a little coat each year.
3. This king was 12 years old when he began to reign.
4. This young man was 17 when he was sold into slavery.
5. This king threatened to cut a child in half.
6. This child, dropped by his nurse, was crippled for life.
7. This man raised the son of a widow from the dead.
8. This boy was 8 years old when he began to reign.
9. This child fought his brother even before he was born.
10. This boy was 13 years old when he was circumcised.

GOT JOKES!



And the award for the "best known tourist guide in written history "goes to Moses" - Awarded for leading thousands people over deserts for over 40 years, while listening to "Are we there yet?"

Ha! Ha! Ha!

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Bible class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!"

As she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late... But please don't shove me either!"

Test Your Knowledge Answers

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. 2 Kings 11:21 | 6. 2 Sam 4:4 |
| 2. 1 Samuel 2:19-21 | 7. 1 Kings 17:20-23 |
| 3. 2 Kings 21:1 | 8. 2Kings 22:1 |
| 4. Genesis 37:2, 27 | 9. Genesis 25:22-25 |
| 5. 1 Kings 3:25 | 10. Genesis 17:24-26 |