



All Christians' Fellowship International

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Study to show "The Way of True Life." Bible Study Outline

TOPIC: **Justice**
TEXT: **Isaiah 61**

Instructions: *Read the above passages each time you come together to study this topic so everyone can participate fully. The teacher should provide additional background information and develop follow-up questions. Participants should be brief in their responses and use relevant Bible references to illustrate their points. They should be careful not to dominate the discussion to allow everyone equal opportunity to participate.*

Introduction: I once had an opportunity to visit a small urban courtroom where my cousin, a prosecutor, was at work. The hearing involved a man who had been convicted of manslaughter (killing someone without premeditation) ten years before. He had been sent to prison. As a part of his sentence, he was ordered to pay a \$10,000 restitution to the estate. Monthly payments were set at an amount the defendant could reasonably afford, given his income and expenses. Now, the ten-year repayment period was up. The law said that his debt could be forgiven. And the court session upheld that. Yet he hadn't fulfilled his obligation because he hadn't paid off the full \$10,000.

Although we don't know who was killed or who was left behind, we can assume the family of the deceased person had suffered both emotionally and financially. Was this decision justice for the family? We know that the defendant was twenty at the time he committed the crime. In addition to serving time, he made the payments that were set for him over those ten years. Was the decision justice for the defendant?

Justice can be a blurred issue for us, as it was for Israel. The prophets repeatedly reminded the people that an inner attitude of righteousness is not enough. It must show in our lives; we must also be people of just action.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does justice mean for each party in the opening story? Have you ever found yourself grappling with the question of whether justice was truly being served in a situation you've seen?
2. In verses 1-3, the prophet describes his call to serve. What groups are listed, and in what way do they need justice?
3. What common elements do you see among these groups?
4. What current situations do you know of that fit these categories of need?
5. How would meeting these needs for others be a sign of God's work in you (v. 3)?

6. Because Israel sinned and turned away from God, God allowed them to be conquered. How might verses 4-9 be a source of joy to them?
7. Notice the contrast in verse 8 between what the Lord loves and hates. What do this verse and verses 1-3 tell you about God's concerns?
8. In verses 10-11, the ruler describes God's work in him. What is God doing for him?
9. Compare the actions we are called to in verses 1-3 with the physical appearance of the ruler in verse 10. What is the relationship between right actions (justice) and being righteous?
10. Jesus applied Isaiah 61:1-2 to himself (Luke 4:16-21). How does he also fulfill the promise of verse 11?
11. What keeps you from pursuing justice? How can this passage be an encouragement to you?
12. You see injustice around you and around the world daily. What actions can you take to bring justice to the needy?