



## 09\_Justice and Society

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**00:00 Sonja Corbitt:** Welcome to The Bible Study Evangelista Show, I'm Sonja Corbitt, your Bible Study Evangelista here to do a summary of our Catholic Social Justice Series. I'm gonna warn you that I'm in a bit of a pensive mood. I've been trying to draw all of this together in a coherent unity, we'll say, and it seems, actually, the church does that for us, herself, which I'll get to in a few moments, but I wanted to do this series to begin with, first of all, because I felt bereft of a contribution in the middle of the up people that our nation is experiencing, and whenever I feel that way, I'm usually directed to use my gifts toward that area and so that's what I did. My gift is in teaching and knowledge, and it's sort of a prophetic gift cluster and so I wanted to contribute something, but didn't know what and that's what I was directed to do so that's how the series came about. And it was interesting to me as I was looking around, I only found the Catholic Social Justice teachings being espoused in the church by the, what I'll call the loudest voices, and those loudest voices are typically the ones that turn us off. They're the ones clamoring about things that are... They seem very out of balance to some of us.

**01:39 SC:** And of course, we seem, if we're taking sides and I'm not. I'm just trying to make it understandable here, the other side then sees us out of balance, like we're not doing enough so I want to sort of address that just a little bit. I'm going to summarize the series, each of the seven principles in part. I'm gonna summarize each of those then we're going to talk about justice as a biblical idea, I guess, is the word or a topic, we'll say, then we're gonna talk about what social means and why we call it Social Justice. And then I'd like to, I guess, look at ways that we can be conscious of these principles on a daily basis in our own lives, in our own families, in our own parishes and continue that outward vision, that kind of global vision. We really need to try to keep that in mind. That's really what the social justice principles are meant to do, is sort of expand our thinking outward because we're living in moment, to moment, to moment in our daily lives and so where our consciousness is absorbed by that, and the things that we come in contact with, the people that we come in contact with on that moment by moment basis. But really, we need to sort of try to zoom out and get that bird's-eye view of all that's going on so that that can inform what we're doing on a moment by moment basis.

**03:14 SC:** And I realize that that's very hard. This is actually what the Catholic mystics talk about when they talk about contemplation and how that gets us in touch in an experiential way with God. And when that happens, when we get in touch with Him, we experience that largeness, that connection with everything and everyone in a way that changes us fundamentally, and it causes us then to interact on a moment by moment basis, on a person by person basis, with that view of God in mind, that love and so that's really what we're trying to do through these teachings. We're trying to sort of zoom out. I know I haven't done a very good job of that for you, but I'm trying my best. I'm limited.

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**04:16 SC:** Let's get social, connect with me at Bible Study Evangelista on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and now, you can also find me on the number one Catholic app for iPhone and Android, Laudate. Let's connect. And now, let's get some Bible study in your pocket. When we think about social justice, I'm gonna just begin in the very same way that the church presents them to us. So, the seven principles of Catholic Social Justice, the very first one is the life and the dignity of the human person. The Church claims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. So, the church makes the foundation of a moral vision for society, the life and dignity of the human person and so this belief is the foundation of all the principles of Catholic social teaching, and so because it is, it has a very, very strong primary place in Catholic understanding and Catholic vision, in our Catholic vision of the whole world. We must think of the human person, every single person we come in contact with, but not just those that we're directly in contact with, but through the beingness of God, all of them, past, present and future, we are connected to all human life, all human beings. We are somehow connected to them through God and so that has to be the basis of all that we do, that means the voting, that means our interaction with one another.

**05:55 SC:** It means how we deal with our enemies. And that's why we talked about gratitude and forgiveness. We have to look at our enemies, especially, it's really, really important that we do this with our enemies because if we can do it with them, we'll do it automatically with everyone else. If we can really get a connection in our minds and hearts with the purpose and the fact that this person standing in front of me or maybe that I've interacted with in the past, so that sort of carry with me with this unforgiveness, if I can really get in a connection with a person... I'm sorry, and his or her purpose, and his or her inner life, and remember that they have an inner life and is it influenced by love? Is it influenced by God and how can I contribute to that? Well, the very best way you can contribute to the inner life of another person is to forgive them in truth, in your interior life because all of it is connected. And I know that probably makes very little sense, but just go with it for right now. So, they're in the church. I see this sort of infighting all the time and I know you see it too and so I'm gonna go ahead and address it now that we've gone through all the principles, I'm gonna do it right here because this is the life and the dignity of the human person.

**07:12 SC:** In the church, we see these arguments. On one side, it is all about abortion, because abortion is the most fundamental violence against this principle. On the other side, we have everything else, kids in cages, Black Lives Matter, gun control, capital punishment, all the other stuff sort of gets pushed to one side by one side, and then abortion stands by itself on the other side, and there's this criticism between the two, where the abortion people say rightly that if you don't have the right to life, you don't have the other rights. That is absolutely true. It is, and the church tells us that. On the other side, we have this emphasis on, yes, but we're all here now, and now that we're all here, we have to address the other indignities against life and the human person, and that is true and right as well and so the infighting does us absolutely no good at all. The truth is that we have to be conscious of both things at one time. That doesn't mean that we concentrate all of our energy and activity on all of that at once because none of us can do that, but each of us has a place, and it's unfair and untrue and ungodly to say that one side or the other is wrong. They're both right. It just might be that I'm not called to work in the same arena as you are.

**08:43 SC:** It doesn't mean that yours or mine is less important. They're both important. It is true that abortion is the most fundamental evil, moral evil that clouds human dignity right now, it is. There is no greater violence. Abortion is, it is the height and should be really a primary focus of everything that we do. It really does have to be the primary thing that we're thinking about because if we don't get that right, we're never gonna get kids in cages, Black Lives Matter, gun control capital punishment right. We're never gonna get any of that right, if we can't get the thing on abortion right and so we really have to work towards that. At the same time, however, we have to support those who are working in the other arenas too because they're all interconnected and they're all important. It's not either, or, that's my point. It's not either, or. We have to stop the infighting, we have to support one another in those endeavors, whatever they are. It's silly, it's stupid to fight over this life and human dignity issue, they're all important. Abortion is primary, but all of the other work that is going on is very important too.

**10:04 SC:** And this fighting on social media threads and all you care about is abortion and that's the only thing, and the abortion people say, "Well, you don't care about abortion and it is the only thing," and it's silly because they are both important. Some people will work on the abortion issue exclusively, and that is probably they're calling and gift, and if they didn't do it, they would be sinning. And then there are other people on the other side who's calling and gifts are in a different area, in maybe several areas, but they're working in the same principle of life and dignity of the human person and it is just as important, and they need to be supported as well because they all go together. So work in your gifts, work in your calling, work in your duty and station in life wherever God has called you and stop the criticism. Just because somebody else is not doing what you're doing does not mean that what they're doing is not important and vice versa.

**11:00 SC:** Now, Paul goes into this in great zeal and great detail, and he admonishes us in the scriptures to quit this infighting, quit this criticism. I wasn't gonna read this, but I feel strongly that I'm supposed to. So chapter 14 of Romans it is, the Passage is called the Law of Liberty. Remember that freedom is part of the dignity and the life of the human person. It is just as important as everything else. Freedom is part of our inherent human dignity. Now, I'm out of time for this segment so I can't read it. But I'll do it when I get back, but this strikes me, and so very, very important for our time. I'll read it when I get back, Romans 14.

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**12:36 SC:** The Law of Liberty, Romans 14: Receive one who is weak in faith, but not to disputes over doubtful thing. For one believes he may eat all things, but one who is weak only eats vegetable. Let him not who eats despise him who does not eat, and let him not who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another servant? To his own

master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks. For none of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. Why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother?

**13:43 SC:** For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Therefore, let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way. Now, what does all that mean? It means he's talking about eating and drinking and rules of religion, but I want you to think about it as right and left or this issue and that issue. You see it one way, you work in it one way, he sees it another and he works in it in another. Each of us does it unto the Lord, each of us is accountable to the Lord and we better stop the judging, we better stop. And whether we say it or not, we do it. We all have our positions and we stand there like we are so righteous in them, and in fact, the Bible is very clear to stop it, stop it. I don't know who I'm talking to, but somebody... Well, me, I'm talking to me, 'cause I got it first, but right after that Law of Liberty passage, there is the Law of Love. I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself, but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

**14:57 SC:** If your brother is grieved because of your food, you're no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died. Therefore, do not let your good be spoken of as evil; For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by him. Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food or for the sake of your pet issue, okay? All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eat, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin. Ouch.

**16:00 SC:** Whatever is not from faith is sin. We do what we do out of faith, that that's what we're called to do. Now, I'm not making light of the issue of abortion, I'm not. I am just saying that that has to be our primary focus and we must vote in that way, but we cannot discount all of the other stuff too, it is important and somebody needs to be working in those things. So, whether you work here or whether you work there, work as unto the Lord, work in faith that you're doing what God has called you to do and get your eyes off your neighbor. That's what Paul is trying to say, get your eyes off your neighbor and start working in the thing that God has put you in to do wherever that is, and if you don't know, ask, because there are innumerable places where we can put our shoulder to the yoke and advance a just social order, and that is what we're all called to as Catholic. Our society, in our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and euthanasia. Human life is threatened by cloning, embryonic stem cells research and the use of the death penalty. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attack is always wrong.

**17:15 SC:** I'm reading straight from the writings of the Church. Catholic teaching calls on us to work to avoid war, that means interpersonal relationships of your own. That doesn't just mean bombs, okay. War happens in the heart first, and that's what we're called to look at first and then we can expand our work, but we still have to keep in mind that we must work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding effective ways to prevent conflicts and resolve them by peaceful means. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person. Now, there is no human institution that is going to uphold this principle perfectly, there's no way, because the church also says that all structures of sin, as St. John Paul II calls them, are rooted in personal sin and thus, always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduced these structures, consolidate them and make them difficult to remove. And so, again, it all starts with the individual and that's why the church begins with this particular principle, even though if it were me. I would start from large and move small.

**18:32 SC:** But I'm a global learner, so I like to start from the the big vision and work down to the small, the forest and then the tree, and then the pine needles underneath the trees. But here we're starting from the pine needle, which is the life and dignity of the human person and we're working out to the forest, which is the whole globe. Okay. The second principle call to family, community and participation. The person is not only sacred, but also social. We'll get into I hope, in the last segment, how we organize our society and in economics, and politics, and Law and Policy, directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individual to grow in community.

**19:06 SC:** Marriage and family are the central... I'm sorry, social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. That goes directly against the Black Lives Matter mission statement on their website, and I'm just gonna leave that there. We believe people, I'm sorry, have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. Now this goes to what the Black Lives Matter thing was actually, I think supposed to be, which is what is happening underneath what we see? That should be what we're really called to look for. Don't look at the Black Lives Matter mission statement except to know that that's not what we're supporting. Instead, let's look beneath the writing, and beneath the the craziness and try to find the motivation under that.

**19:58 SC:** Of course, there's gonna be some evil motivation by other people who are using it, and are using it to advance an agenda that has nothing to do with why this tends to crop up every so often. Yes, it's used for political gain. But underneath that, there's a reality that needs to be addressed. There's a reality that there are people who are treated unjustly. I guess that's my point. There is a reality under all of that that we need to be looking at, and we need to be affirming, and addressing, and admitting, we need to admit that there is a problem there. Because if we don't, this is gonna continue and it's never gonna get resolved, but instead just get worse and worse because it is being used for political agenda.

**20:42 SC:** Instead, go find a brother or sister, a person of color, or whatever your heart is drawn to, and find out what the issue is in their eyes, find out what their difficulties are, find out why they support these kinds of protests and movements. Find out why, because chances are you would too, if you understood their point of view, you would too. And so that's what we're really called to do is look beyond the surface. Stop going with everything that you're fed out of the media and start trying to connect to your brothers and sisters and find out what's really going on underneath the surface.

**21:20 SC:** The third principle is rights and responsibilities. The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decent, corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and the larger society. And this is why we put the emphasis on responsibilities rather than rights because rights are not, as we'll see in the last segment, that's not what the Bible talks about when it talks about justice.

**21:54 SC:** It's not each person's right, it is righteousness as a whole. And that includes responsibility, and each person has a responsibility for himself and his circle of influence. And that's where we need to be focusing a lot of our attention because that's where we make a difference, and that's how it spreads to the larger community and the globe.

**22:15 SC:** The fourth principle is option for the poor and the vulnerable. We must keep the poor in the forefront of our vision at all times. Does this path have love? Is this path a path of love? And if it is, I can proceed in it, if it's not I should stop. A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring in a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment, which we'll look at in the last segment, and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and the vulnerable first.

**22:45 SC:** The fifth principle, dignity of work and the rights of workers. The economy must serve people, not the other way around. It's really that simple. That whole principle is summed up right there, the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living. It's a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be protected. The right to productive work, to a decent and fair wage, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative, and I would even add the right to limit how much money is taken from his or her paycheck to fund things that he or she does not agree with, or that are not a path of love for other people or people who won't work. It's not that they can't, but that they won't. I would say that that would also fall underneath that principle, but I'm digressing.

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**24:40 SC:** Principle number six, solidarity. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological difference is. We are our brothers and sisters keepers wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Pope Paul VI taught that if you want peace, work for justice. The gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers

demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.

**25:10 SC:** Principle seven, care for God's creation, we show our respect for the creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it's a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people, and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored. That is a summary of the Seven Principles of Catholic social teaching. There are actually, you can boil them down really to four: The dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity. Subsidiarity, remember, is what is the smallest entity that can care for this particular issue. We want it as small as possible, not from the top down, but from the bottom up. That's subsidiarity. So the principle of the dignity of the human person, the common good, subsidiarity, and solidarity. These principles are the expression of the whole truth about man, known by reason and faith, according to the church. So we talked about rights and responsibilities. And I'm not gonna go into that anymore because I don't have a whole lot of time. And I want to just look at justice as a biblical concept.

**26:20 SC:** The original Hebrew and Greek words are exactly the same as those that are translated righteousness. So that's the common rendering. In about half the cases where we have the word just and justice in the early translations, later translations changed it to righteousness and righteous. So we have to continually keep in mind that those two ideas are essentially the same. So righteousness and justice are the same idea in the Scripture. So when you see one, you can inject the other one and switch it around and you can sort of get some nuance there. "Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts for righteousness," Jesus said.

**26:55 SC:** You can just as easily say, blessed is he who hungers and thirsts for justice, okay, and that's why I put that on that picture for that week. Justice, then what is human justice? Primarily, it had to do in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, in conduct that was related to other people, especially in regard to their rights. It applied to businesses where just weights and measures were demanded throughout the scriptures, too many references to even list, but Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Proverbs, Ezekiel. It's demanded in the courts, where the rights of the rich and poor and the Israelite and the traveler are supposed to be equally regarded. Your position, a bribe, your popularity, none of that should influence a judge or a witness. Justice, "Justice, thou shalt follow," Deuteronomy 16:20 says. And so in general, this justice is contrasted with the wickedness that does not fear God and does not regard men according to Luke 18:2. So in a larger sense, justice is not giving others their rights, but it involves this active duty of establishing their rights. And that's according to how God acts. Israel waits on God's justice or cries out the justice due me or literally my justice is passed away from God.

**28:12 SC:** God is supposed to show her to be in the right as over against the other nations. Justice, then is mercy. To seek justice means to relieve the oppressed, to judge the fatherless, to plead for the widow. The this same idea appears all over the Old Testament, especially in Deuteronomy and Psalms where the translation is righteous instead of just. So in that concept of justice, the full meaning of the New Testament isn't yet reached. It's just it's talking about rights. It's talking about weights and measures, but not about this sinlessness or moral perfection. Job, he knew that there was sin in his heart and yet he still spoke of himself as just or as righteous because he works for that justice and righteousness, not that he's flawless on the inside himself, but that he's constantly working toward it. That's the sense of justice that God is himself. It's not a right or wrong or a tally mark, or a black mark for each sin or anything like that. It's more that we're working toward that

justice over the whole earth in the same way that God does himself. And so that's the meaning of being a just or a righteous person in the Bible. It's not that you're flawless or perfect, or that you do everything perfectly right. It's that your spirit is tending toward and reaching toward and pushing toward and working toward righteousness in yourself and in the world. Okay?

**29:36 SC:** So the Psalmist depends on the righteousness of God, because he knows that no man is actually righteous in God's sight. It's not a lack of humility or dependence on God, when the Psalmist asks to be judged according to his righteousness, in the same way that Job did. In relation to God, the just or the righteous man is the one who holds to God and trusts in him. That's the meaning of justice. It's not this farcical idea, this legalism, later on in the New Testament with this kind of merit and reward where God's justice is just a matter of giving everybody what he or she has earned. That's not justice. Justice instead is working toward the good of the other person. That's actually the meaning of charity, which we'll talk about later. The word justice doesn't even occur in the New Testament, and in most cases, we find that word just in the early versions, it was changed to righteous, and we know, we've already seen that the two ideas are essentially exactly the same. So you can interchange those two terms justice and righteous. And righteousness and righteous does occur many times throughout the New Testament, the idea of justice or righteousness, it becomes more spiritual in the New Testament and ethical. It's a matter of character, and God's own spirit is the standard, "Be holy, for He is holy, be holy, for I am holy." That's what the whole sermon of the mount. The key note of that was that the tendency toward justice and not particular laws or rights. Okay?

**31:07 SC:** That's why responsibility is more important than rights. We got more rights than we can possibly ever even enumerate, but we don't all work in responsibility. So that's really where our emphasis should probably be. That's where we see a lack. The give and take of justice is not enough. We're supposed to be merciful and that to everyone. Why? Because, mercy triumphs over justice," James says. The ideal is righteousness, not rights, and that is because God Himself is righteousness and not about rights. Okay? So God's justice or righteousness is found in his essential nature. But just as with man, it's not something abstract, but it's seen in his relation to the world. It's his kingship, establishing and maintaining the right. It appears as punishing the bad and rewarding the good. But even those things are always oriented to the good of the other person. The Bible puts forth God's justice as the fundamental fact in his nature, that we have to reconcile with his mercy as best as we can, because we see them as being in conflict, but they're not in conflict. The two go together.

**32:24 SC:** We conceive of God's justice or his righteousness as the action of His mercy. That's how it really is. Justice with man, justice means the relief of the oppressed and needy. So God's justice is his power engaged on behalf of human beings, of men. So justice and mercy are constantly joined together. He's a just God and a savior in Isaiah 45. He says, "He brings near my righteousness and my salvation shall not tarry. The righteous acts of God mean his deeds of deliverance. And so the Bible sings, Israel sings of the justice, and the judgments, and the righteousness of God because they're all the same. And Israel proclaims her trust in that righteousness of God, the salvation of God. And the New Testament talks about it this way too, "The Son of Man shall render unto every man according to his deeds." Matthew 16 says. Actually, it says it everywhere, Luke, Romans, Colossians, Thessalonians, Hebrews, but God's justice is more than this. The idea of merit and reward is actually superseded by something higher in Jesus's teaching.

**33:34 SC:** He speaks of that, of merit and reward, but it's the father and not the judge, that gives



that. And it's not just justice of the earth because the reward transcends all possible merit. That's what grace is. It's not deserved. We are rewarded far above what we actually deserve. And so the parable in Matthew 20 gives this whole... It negates this whole farcical scheme of merit and reward. Not that it's not true, but it's not the whole picture is what I'm trying to say. That's what Jesus shows us about justice in his teaching and in his person. God's justice is not just gracious, it's redemptive. It doesn't simply just give out rights. It establishes righteousness. And so just as in the Old Testament, the judge is the Savior. The difference in the New Testament is that the Old Testament's salvation was sort of national and temporal, and in the New Testament, it's personal and spiritual. But mercy is opposed to justice no more in the New Testament than it is in the old. They both go together. It's by the forgiveness of sins, that God establishes righteousness. And this is the supreme task of justice. And this is why we talked about forgiveness.

**34:49 SC:** The Supreme task of justice is forgiveness. Now sit with that for a little while, that kind of will blow your mind. So God is at the same time just, and the justifier of him who has faith in Jesus, Paul says in Romans 3:26, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous or just, faithful and just, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That is an amazing statement that the apostle John made in his letter, that's in 1 John 1:9, if we confess our sins, he is just or he is righteous to forgive us our sins. Righteousness goes with forgiveness. Wow.

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**36:44 SC:** The catechism says in 1807, "Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called the virtue of religion or worship. Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to person and the common good. The just man often mentioned in the sacred scriptures is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor." You see how much more simple that is? Instead of going to pursue some sort of social justice thing, instead, we need to pursue the habitual right thinking and uprightness of our conduct toward our neighbor. That makes it much more simple, does it not? So in order to be just with God, we have to be just like God. And that means that to be just or to act in justice means to extend mercy and forgiveness toward the good of the other person. And sometimes the good of the other person is not giving them what they want, sometimes there's tough love, which we'll get to in a moment.

**37:52 SC:** Tertullian said, "There is this union and agreement between goodness and justice, you cannot separate that, where the just is there also exists the good." In short, from the very first, the creator was both good and also just. His goodness created His justice arranged, arranged the world. The work of justice is apparent in the separation pronounced between light and darkness, between day and night, between heaven and earth, etcetera, as goodness conceived all things. Justice

discriminated between them, the elements, their effect, motion and state, the rise and setting of each are the just determinations of the Creator. That would include the privileges that we talked about. Each of us has a different state, a different effect, a different motion, a different duty, a different place, a different personality, a different economic status. All of those things are part of God's justice. They are in and of themselves a part of God's justice. Differences are just, but differences are meant to be used to help other people. That's where we sometimes get it wrong. He continues, "Do not suppose that his function as a judge must be defined as beginning when evil began, and so tarnish His justice with the cause of evil.

**39:05 SC:** When evil broke out and the goodness of God began to have an adversary to contend against, God's justice acquired another function, that of directing his goodness according to man's petition, and this is the result, the divine goodness being interrupted where God was spontaneously good is now dispensed according to the discipline or the reward of every man. So the entire office of justice becomes an agency for goodness, whatever it condemns by its judgment, whatever it chastises by its condemnation, whatever it ruthlessly pursue, it in fact, benefits with good instead of injuring. That's why the book of James says in 1:20, "The anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God." I'm gonna say that again in a different way. "The anger of man does not accomplish the justice of God." Because the justice of God is good and works toward the good, toward the forgiveness, toward the redemption of every human being.

**40:06 SC:** I mean, think about teenagers and how you... They won't do what you asked them to do or what you know is good for them because of this... It's like they have this veil of blindness, and they think you're out to get them because maybe what you're doing is difficult or maybe it's tough love, but at the same time it is for their good. We are the teenager. And so God whatever he allows, and whatever he brings, or we'll say allows in our lives is meant toward our good and it is also a just allowance, if that makes sense. Augustine says, "The peace of all things is the justice of order." Wow. He says for when we administer necessities of any kind to the indigent, we do not bestow our own, but render them what is there. We rather pay a debt of justice than accomplish works of mercy." So also the truth himself when speaking of the caution required and showing mercy says, "Take heed that you do not do your justice before men to show," is what he's saying. Don't do it for show. The Psalmist also, in agreement with this sentence says, "He has dispersed, He has given to the poor His justice."

**41:18 SC:** So we have to keep in mind that what we offer as a mercy is actually what is due that person automatically because of justice. So the rich man in the Gospel who was clothed in purple and fine linen and feasted sumptuously every day, he wasn't said to have stolen what belonged to other people, but he used what was his own unfruitfully and hell received him after that life, not because he did anything unlawful, but because by immoderate indulgence he gave up his whole self to what was lawful. Sit with that for a moment. St. Isidore says a man is said to be just because he respects the rights of other. Aquinas says, "Justice is a habit whereby a man renders to each one his due by a constant and perpetual will." So now we then are getting into how justice and society are supposed to work together, and it's because of this connectedness to each other, and to creation as a whole, when we talk about social justice, we're talking about the connections that we have with other people, society, social, to be social is to be connected to other people.

**42:26 SC:** So where is justice in society? Well, it's meant to occur in all of our connections. And it's meant to begin with the simple forgiveness of our enemies, that's the most powerful, the gratitude for both our... Those we love and our enemy because of what they show us and teach us about

ourselves and about our world. All of that is meant to teach us we're here to learn all of our sufferings are meant to help grow us in the capacity to love. And when we talk about justice, we have to also talk about judgment. And we kind of looked at that in the Old Testament how judgment was also a function of discernment, it was the essence of who God is. To judge something is to separate something. And we have to do that as human beings because we have brains. We have to categorize. But the truth is, we're all one in God, and so he can separate. But we don't do a good job of that. That's why St. Paul told us not to do it, not to condemn and not to judge because we don't judge properly. We don't see things properly. We don't have the global vision that God has. We don't understand how everything goes together. We're not even made to be able to. When we're dead, and the body is gone, we will understand and know as we are known, the Bible says, but until then, we are called to love.

**43:54 SC:** Justice is love. And I don't mean, it's who we feeling, in the Bible, charity or love is sacrificial when it is in the good of the other person to do so. Sometimes, it's not good to sacrifice for people over and over and over again, when they mistreat you, that is a fault on your end. You have to sometimes put up boundaries to teach people to love proper properly. And so that is a responsibility of justice, a responsibility of charity, a responsibility of love, and it's hard for us to discern. But that's why it's important to be in touch with God on a daily basis through the Scriptures so that we can know the right things to do, the righteousness or the justice that is called for in each situation. We don't always know. We work out of our carnal appetites, we work according to what we want, we work according to what's good for us. We don't look at the other person in a habitual kind of way. We're not looking outside ourselves. We're looking at ourselves. And so this so whole social justice series, my goal was to get us looking outside of ourselves, to look at our neighbor more deeply, to look them in the eye and try to see their soul, to look them in the soul and try to see God, to look in their soul and see God, and work with him toward what is good for that person. And we can really only do that in our interactions one on one.

**45:21 SC:** We can't address the whole world at one time, except by doing it this way, because our love, connection with God, reaches all of them too. That's why he says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, His justice, seek His justice first and the Kingdom of God and all these other things will be added to you." We're focusing on all the other things and not the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. What is God's righteousness? Redemption, forgiveness, gratitude, love, all of those things go together. It's all stuff we've heard before. God is love. God is light. God is the Being that connects all of us together. And when you are immersed in that being and that light and that love on a daily basis, it radiates out of you and to your neighbor. And that radiation of God through you is what we're called to. It's that simple. And when we keep that connection with God, we are walking in His justice. And when we walk in His justice, we build the kingdom of God on earth. And when we build the kingdom of God on earth, there is peace, there is the new creation, and that is what all creation is longing and stretching toward, that new creation is what everything will end in and we have a part to play in that and it starts with us.

**46:44 SC:** It starts with redemption. It starts with forgiveness. It starts with thanksgiving. It starts with that connection in God through to our neighbor. I'm gonna take a break of several weeks. I have to finish a book, so I won't be back until the end of September, the first of October, but thank you for kind of sticking with me through this series. I know it's been somewhat difficult, but I will miss you. I hope you will pray for me as I work on this this book. I'm working on it for you. It's an act of love for myself and Justin, it's my little contribution right now. So until then, my friend thank you, especially to my friends of the show, Bond A, LSC, Bonnie C, Lynne T, Jerry C, Rowena A,

Nancy B and Paul S. Thank you for being friends of the show, and I'll see you in a few weeks. I'm Sonja Corbitt, the Bible Study Evangelista.

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