

“Biblical Justice: Part 1”
Micah 1-2 Pt 2
May 2, 2021
Faith Presbyterian Church – Evening Service
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We return tonight to the first cycle of the Book of Micah, found in Micah chapters one and two.

Last week we looked at this same passage, but our focus was on the question of the Word of God versus the wind of false teachers, who tell us what we want to hear. The question posed there was who it was we would listen to.

This evening we will dig deeper into the content of Micah’s accusations against God’s people. But as we do, we will come up against a roadblock. Micah will speak in these chapters, and in the chapters that follow, about justice. But upon reflection we would soon realize that we do not have a shared view of what justice really is as a culture ... or as the evangelical church.

That means we need to establish what biblical justice is. But before we can do that well, we need to determine what it isn’t.

And so tonight is really the first part of what will likely be two (or possibly three) sermons on the concept of Biblical justice.

Then, we will have a better grasp on how we should understand the accusations that Micah is making.

Tonight our focus will be on false theories of justice that are prominent in our culture today. Only after we’ve considered that can we focus in on the theme of Biblical justice itself in a future sermon.

With that said, we turn now to Micah chapters one and two.

Please do listen carefully, for this is God’s word for us this evening.

^{1:1} The word of Yahweh that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

² Hear, you peoples, all of you;
pay attention, O earth, and all that is in it,
and let the Lord YAHWEH be a witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple.

³ For behold, Yahweh is coming out of his place,
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.

⁴ And the mountains will melt under him,
and the valleys will split open,
like wax before the fire,
like waters poured down a steep place.

⁵ All this is for the transgression of Jacob
and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the transgression of Jacob?

Is it not Samaria?

And what is the high place of Judah?

Is it not Jerusalem?

⁶ Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country,
a place for planting vineyards,
and I will pour down her stones into the valley
and uncover her foundations.

⁷ All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces,
all her wages shall be burned with fire,
and all her idols I will lay waste,
for from the fee of a prostitute she gathered them,
and to the fee of a prostitute they shall return.

⁸ For this I will lament and wail;
I will go stripped and naked;
I will make lamentation like the jackals,
and mourning like the ostriches.

⁹ For her wound is incurable,
and it has come to Judah;
it has reached to the gate of my people,
to Jerusalem.

¹⁰ Tell it not in Gath;
weep not at all;
in Beth-le-aphrah
roll yourselves in the dust.

¹¹ Pass on your way,
inhabitants of Shaphir,
in nakedness and shame;
the inhabitants of Zaanan
do not come out;
the lamentation of Beth-ezel
shall take away from you its standing place.

¹² For the inhabitants of Maroth
wait anxiously for good,
because disaster has come down from Yahweh
to the gate of Jerusalem.

¹³ Harness the steeds to the chariots,
inhabitants of Lachish;
it was the beginning of sin
to the daughter of Zion,
for in you were found
the transgressions of Israel.

¹⁴ Therefore you shall give parting gifts
to Moresbeth-gath;
the houses of Achzib shall be a deceitful thing
to the kings of Israel.

¹⁵ I will again bring a conqueror to you,

inhabitants of Mareshah;
the glory of Israel
shall come to Adullam.

¹⁶ Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair,
for the children of your delight;
make yourselves as bald as the eagle,
for they shall go from you into exile.

^{2:1} Woe to those who devise wickedness
and work evil on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they perform it,
because it is in the power of their hand.

² They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them away;
they oppress a man and his house,
a man and his inheritance.

³ Therefore thus says Yahweh:
behold, against this family I am devising disaster,
from which you cannot remove your necks,
and you shall not walk haughtily,
for it will be a time of disaster.

⁴ In that day they shall take up a taunt song against you
and moan bitterly,
and say, "We are utterly ruined;
he changes the portion of my people;
how he removes it from me!

To an apostate he allots our fields."

⁵ Therefore you will have none to cast the line by lot
in the assembly of Yahweh.

⁶ "Do not preach"—thus they preach—
"one should not preach of such things;
disgrace will not overtake us."

⁷ Should this be said, O house of Jacob?
Has Yahweh grown impatient?
Are these his deeds?

Do not my words do good
to him who walks uprightly?

⁸ But lately my people have risen up as an enemy;
you strip the rich robe from those who pass by trustingly
with no thought of war.

⁹ The women of my people you drive out
from their delightful houses;
from their young children you take away
my splendor forever.

¹⁰ Arise and go,
for this is no place to rest,
because of uncleanness that destroys
with a grievous destruction.

¹¹ If a man should go about and utter wind and lies,
saying, “I will preach to you of wine and strong drink,”
he would be the preacher for this people!

¹² I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;
I will gather the remnant of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture,
a noisy multitude of men.

¹³ He who opens the breach goes up before them;
they break through and pass the gate,
going out by it.

Their king passes on before them,
Yahweh at their head.

This is the word of the Lord. (Thanks be to God.)

The Shape of the Passage

We begin this evening by considering the overall shape of the passage.

In chapter one, verse one, Micah begins by introducing himself, as we considered last week.

In verses two through five of chapter one, Micah describes how Yahweh is coming against his people in judgment – bringing a covenant lawsuit against them and then carrying out a just sentence.

In verses six and seven he describes the leveling of Samaria – the capitol of the Northern Kingdom. In verses ten through sixteen Micah lists the towns of Judah – the Southern Kingdom – and the lamentations they will make when God comes to them in judgment.

And then in between those two descriptions – in verses eight and nine – Micah himself laments. This is an important reminder that Micah was not hard or stoic in his proclamations, but they grieved him deeply.

Chapter two then shifts a bit as Micah focuses in verses one through five on the specific sin of the powerful seizing the land of the weak, along with the judgment that will come for this sin. Verses eight through ten have a similar focus, decrying how men stripped of their robes, women removed from their homes, and children from their inheritance.

Verses six, seven, and eleven (which we considered last week) focus on the false prophets who preach wind, and whom the people prefer.

And then verses twelve and thirteen shift to hope: Yahweh is described as Israel’s Shepherd-King, who will gather the remnant of Israel and lead them.

That is the overall shape of the passage before us – the first of three cycles of prophecy that we find in the Book of Micah.

The Details of the Accusation

Tonight we are going to focus in especially on the accusations of injustice that we find in chapter two, verses one and two and then eight and nine.

In chapter three, Micah will condemn the leaders of Israel for detesting justice [3:1,9]. But it is here that he spells their deeds out more specifically.

What then, are those deeds?

Hear those verses again. Micah writes:

^{2:1} Woe to those who devise wickedness
and work evil on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they perform it,
because it is in the power of their hand.
² They covet fields and seize them,
and houses, and take them away;
they oppress a man and his house,
a man and his inheritance.

And then jumping down to verse eight:

⁸ [...] lately my people have risen up as an enemy;
you strip the rich robe from those who pass by trustingly
with no thought of war.
⁹ The women of my people you drive out
from their delightful houses;
from their young children you take away
my splendor forever.

Commentator Dale Davis sums up the deeds of the leaders well. He writes:

“The prophet roasts those who plot their wickedness in advance and then execute it, using force to do so. Their conduct is clearly premeditated; note [the word] ‘covet’ [in verse two]. Micah says they even lie awake at night, ‘upon their beds’, scheming how to get richer; then they pull it off when they go to the real-estate office and the court the next day. [...]

“But what was their wickedness? Verse 2 spells it out. They were amassing land and property. They ‘seized’ fields; the verb is *gagal*, to take by force – it is likely that physical violence was involved. One can imagine these people turning up with eviction papers that had the stamp of the local governing authority on them. Their actions were heartless but [technically] ‘legal’. Verses 8-9 indicate that widows and dependent children may have been their special prey. A husband [or] father may have died leaving a debt, and so these sharks move in to foreclose on the loan. However, these crooks were magnanimous – they didn’t simply pick on women and children, but went after the landowners as well” as we read in verse two. [Davis, 40 (parenthetical references and remarks removed)]

It seems that what Micah has especially in view here are actions that were technically legal, but still, Micah says, unjust. [See also Waltke 2007, 96 regarding the use of foreclosures.]

These are the acts that Micah decries.

The Problem of No Shared Starting-Point

Now, as we hear those descriptions, most people today would agree that what is described is in fact unjust – that that is not how a just society should work.

And yet we begin to see the problem we will consider tonight when we ask: Why? *Why* was it unjust?

Then we begin to get different answers. We may line four people up who all agree that what Micah describes is wrong, but when asked why may give very different answers.

One, for example will point to freedom and property rights. He will explain that the landowners owned that land through legitimate means, and so they are free to keep it and their right to their property should not have been violated.

But then another will come along and say nothing about property rights but instead speak only of power dynamics. She'll explain that the entire situation is one more example of how unjust social structures and systems have been put in place by the powerful to oppress the weak, and so those systems themselves must be dismantled and the oppressed must be given the role of reshaping society into something new.

But a third person will explain it by saying nothing about property rights or power structures. They'll emphasize that what makes the situation so unjust is that it sacrifices the happiness and wellbeing of the many for the benefit of the few. Justice, he'll explain, should seek to maximize the happiness and wellbeing of the most people possible.

And then, a fourth person will give yet another explanation, speaking not primarily of property rights, power structures, or maximizing wellbeing, but of what kind of opportunities a just society should provide. In a world of inequality, she'll explain, a just society will not just protect individual freedom, but will also be willing to redistribute resources to the needy in order to create a society with equal opportunities for people to achieve their goals. But the situation described by Micah is the opposite of that: the state is stripping opportunities from the less powerful instead of promoting and protecting them.

Four people, all of whom agree that what Micah describes is unjust, giving four very different reasons as to why it is unjust and what the solution should be.

As a society today we do not have a shared view of what justice is. The debate of what justice is goes back at least to Plato in the Western world, but since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century that debate has fractured. In that period people sought to detach the question of justice from religious beliefs and metaphysical commitments, and to root it solely in human reason. The result, though, has not been consensus but division.

And that division continues today. We do not, as a society, have a shared theory of societal justice. And opposing views continue to battle in our public and political life. Alastair MacIntyre (who wrote a book titled *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*) notes that in our modern political

elections we are usually not just voting for politicians who will uphold our stance on specific issues, but who will uphold our rival concept of justice against others. [MacIntyre, 244-245]

But just as these divisions over secular justice theories have shaped the world around us, so they have also shaped us in the Church.

Because the fact is that most Christians today in our society ... and in fact most of us here this evening – most of us do not have a real coherent theology of societal justice.

As one Christian commentator pointed out last July, most church-going American Christians have a collection of issues or ethical commands they think are important, but not really a coherent theology of societal justice. The result is that we tend to borrow a theory of justice from the secular world, and then find places for those separate ethical issues that are important to us within that theory of societal justice and politics.

But if that is true, then the way we approach societal justice and politics is actually very different from how we approach most other important aspects of human life. [French]

Think, for example, of the topic of marriage. It is one thing to be able to list the moral obligations one has in marriage – to say that husband and wife should provide for one another's needs, that they should not abuse one another, that they should not commit adultery, and so on. That is a list of true ethical requirements for Christians in marriage.

That is important, but it is very different from having a theology of marriage. It is very different from speaking about the ways that Christian marriage is meant to display the relationship between Christ and the Church, the ways conduct in marriage is supposed to be an image of the gospel, or the significance for redemptive history that the Bible both begins with and ends with a wedding.

As Christians we need both individual ethical commands as well as an overall theology in order to live out our marriages well.

But when it comes to politics in general, and societal justice specifically, most Christians lack a theology of justice and have only a loose collection of ethical issues.

The result, as I've said, is that most Christians merely adopt a secular theory of justice, tack on some Christian elements, and then consider it Christian. This tendency becomes most obvious when Christians debate with one another over some aspect of societal justice – whether it's tax policy, racial equality, economic policy, health care, or something else. What you most often hear – what I most often hear – is not Christians debating the interpretation of the Scriptures relevant to the issues, or the historic positions the Church has held on an issue. Instead what you more often hear are Christians simply defending one of the four secular theories of justice that are most dominant in our society, with a few Biblical or historical proof texts in as support. But that is not how you seek to develop a biblical theology of justice.

What then are we to do?

Well, we need to be realistic. This is a deep problem, and as interested as I am in this topic, I am nothing close to an authority on it. So my goals are modest.

Over the next two or three sermons I simply hope to help us see some of the problems with how we often approach issues of societal justice, and to help us see the outline of a different, more biblically rooted way forward. That's all.

For the rest of tonight we will very briefly consider the four more dominant secular justice theories in our culture right now, what they teach, what they get right, and where they go wrong.

Next time we will consider together the roots and some initial aspects of the Bible's concept of societal justice.

For these sermons I am drawing heavily on two articles that Tim Keller wrote in August and September of last year. The first is titled "A Biblical Critique of Secular Justice and Critical Theory." The second is simply called "Justice in the Bible." Both were published on the Gospel in Life website. Much of what I will say tonight is from them, and I would commend those articles to you.

With that said, let's turn to the four secular theories of societal justice that are dominant in our culture today.

Critical / Postmodern Theory of Justice

The first that we'll consider is known as critical or postmodern theory. And this theory sees justice as being mainly about power.

Postmodern critical theory draws on the teaching of Karl Marx, and it is a position that has recently become more prominent in our culture.

Central to postmodern critical theory is the claim that "the explanation of all unequal outcomes in wealth, well being, and power is never due to individual actions or to differences in cultures or to differences in human abilities, but only and strictly due to unjust social structures and systems. The only way to fix unequal outcomes for the downtrodden is through social policy, never by asking anyone to change their behavior or culture." [Keller]

With that established, postmodern critical theory goes on to argue that all aspects of culture, including religion, are determined by social forces as well, and that the reality at the bottom of everything is nothing but power. This power can be mapped through intersectionality, by which people can be understood to have more or less power depending on their race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other factors. Within this thinking, those with the least power have the most moral authority, because only they are able to see things as they truly are.

Critical theory then asserts that the role of justice in society is to "subvert the power of dominant groups in favor of the oppressed," by putting the oppressed in positions of power.

Now, we should acknowledge some things that postmodern critical theory gets right. The Bible repeatedly points to the tendency of those in power to use their power for themselves, and to be willfully blind or indifferent to the ways they may be hurting the poor. The Bible also gives special concern for the poor and oppressed. Postmodern critical theory gets these emphases right.

But it also gets a lot wrong.

From a Biblical standpoint critical theory is far too simplistic about the most important things in life, because it reduces all of human life to power and wealth. But the Bible tells us that human life and culture is far more rich and multi-dimensional than that.

For another thing, postmodern critical theory also presents us with a very different picture of human nature, sin, forgiveness, and righteousness than the Bible does. It undermines our common humanity by not only acknowledging the role of race and class, but by making such categories supersede all other loyalties. It denies the Biblical teaching that all humans are sinful from birth, and sees sinfulness tied more to our social groups or our place in the societal system. It also offers no real forgiveness for those who do sin, and no way to unite communities that are divided by sin. In all these ways and more, the Bible contradicts the postmodern critical theory of justice.

But experience does as well. From the evidence of experience, postmodern critical theory does not fit well with real life. Its lack of any real avenue for forgiveness and restoration makes it a perspective that does not positively transform people, but rather heightens conflict in a way that does not look a lot like justice to many people.

But postmodern critical theory especially falls apart under its own critiques. If the way it critiques other philosophies is applied to itself, it ends up dismantling itself too.

If all truth claims are really just power plays, then wouldn't that apply to the truth claims of postmodern critical theory as well? If social factors completely control how we view reality, why should we trust the perspective of advocates of critical theory? And if those in power inevitably use it for domination, then once the oppressed are put in power, won't they just do the same thing?

From the Bible, experience, and its own reasoning, a postmodern critical theory of justice cannot stand.

Utilitarian Theory of Justice

Second, there is the utilitarian theory of justice. This is a theory of justice that is often operating unacknowledged beneath discussions and debates on public policy. In this view the essence of justice is the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. The one qualification is that whatever policies are pursued to achieve this maximum happiness cannot harm others.

What this perspective gets right is the idea that we should not only be concerned with our own wellbeing, or people like us, but we should value the wellbeing of the larger community, and of our neighbors. That is a truth we find in the Bible that other more individualistic perspectives sometimes miss.

That said, this theory of justice also quickly falls apart under scrutiny.

Biblically, the utilitarian theory of justice has a flawed and superficial understanding of human happiness, rooting the greatest happiness in the material things of this world, when the Bible acknowledges that only eternal realities can support our true and most important happiness.

From observing human experience we see even more problems though, as this theory fails to acknowledge the dignity of the individual, or to protect the minority from the majority. After all, we can come up with countless examples in history in which what made the majority of a society happy was the neglect or abuse of a minority. And in many cases those misusing the minority argued that their actions were actually what was best for those they misused.

And when considered according to its own claims, the utilitarian theory of justice has even further problems. The theory claims to be value-free, not telling others how to live. But the introduction of the harm principle – of forbidding policies that will actively harm others – necessarily cuts against that. After all, who gets to decide what is truly harmful? What will such judgments be based on? What will we do when people disagree whether something is harmful? We are forced to smuggle in outside value-laden understandings of justice to answer those questions – the very thing the utilitarian theory seeks to avoid.

Liberal Theory of Justice

The next two theories are called the “Liberal” and “Libertarian” theories of justice, but contrary to what they sound like, they are not narrow political stances at the extremes, but mainstream philosophical positions around us – even if they are rarely named. Most politically moderate Americans (and I’d even say most of us here) tend to hold to one or the other of these views as our default way of thinking about justice.

The liberal theory of societal justice is rooted in the idea of fairness, and is centered in two categories of rights. The first set are rights about individual freedom, like a right to speech, property, and religion. The second set are identified as social or economic rights, things like a right to an education, or to medical care, and so on. John Rawls defends this view by saying that if people devised a society from behind a “veil of ignorance” – with no idea what socioeconomic status, race, or gender they’d be born into, then *this* is the kind of society they would design purely out of rational self-interest – one which respected freedom rights, but that also will redistribute wealth and other resources enough to provide opportunities for those born into less fortunate situations.

Unlike the critical and utilitarian theories, the liberal theory is more individual than communal, and it aims for equal opportunities, not necessarily for equal outcomes, because it acknowledges the role of individuals in outcomes.

The liberal theory, like all of these, again, gets some things right. It recognizes the importance of the individual, as the Bible does, as well as the special call on society to care for those with greater social and economic needs. In some ways this is not surprising as thinkers like Charles Taylor have demonstrated that these values in secular liberalism were largely inherited from the West’s past Christianity.

But liberalism tries to take those values and replant and reform them in secular soil. And as the theory becomes secular, it also begins to have problems.

Biblically speaking, the secular liberal justice theory claims to exclude God and matters of faith from the public square and discourse about justice – something Christians are not able to do, and that opens the door to immoral applications. After all, with no supreme moral standard, who gets to decide what should be a social right? What is to prevent the state from asserting that something sinful and harmful is actually a societal right? And without the moral absolutes of Scripture, on what grounds could you even debate such a claim?

But in addition to its biblical problems, liberalism has also shown some of its deficiencies in practice. As more and more scholars have considered lately, the liberal theory's focus on the individual and the state has led to the atrophy of every other form of social life – whether the family, the neighborhood, the church, or a host of other institutions, all of which are weakened under secular liberalism. And their atrophy has not led to greater justice, but often to reduced opportunities for many.

Finally, liberalism cannot really support itself. Its whole basis is that justice is defined by the society we would rationally come up with if we didn't know what situation we'd be born into. But the fact is that we do know. And who gets to decide what everyone would come up with in such a thought experiment? Who gets to decide that? Whose values get to go into that? [MacIntyre, 249]

Liberalism turns out to be less a rational position than a way to smuggle in the very kind of faith-based and metaphysical values that liberalism denies it depends on. At the end of the day it cannot support its ethical values on rationality alone, even as it claims to be purely rational and not religious or value-based.

Libertarian Theory of Justice

Fourth and finally, there is the libertarian theory of justice – which is another common perspective in our culture, and one which many in our circles probably tend towards.

If postmodern critical theory sees justice as basically being about power, and utilitarianism sees justice as being basically about happiness, and liberalism sees justice as being basically about fairness, then libertarianism sees justice as being basically about freedom.

The libertarian theory of justice therefore does away with the social and economic rights of liberalism and holds just to the freedom rights. In this view people have “an absolute right to not be harmed, and absolute right to private property if fairly earned, and the rights of free speech and free association.”

And as with the other views, this theory gets some things right as well. The Bible of course supports the view that people should not be unjustly harmed. It also has a strong concept of private property, as implied in the eighth commandment (“You shall not steal”).

But with that said, this view also has problems.

For one thing, there are biblical problems. The Bible does support the idea of a right to private property ... but in the Bible that right is not absolute.

The Old Testament, for example, required productive landowners to leave the edges of their fields unharvested so that the poor could come and glean from them. And as it did, it used the language of ownership to explain how that produce – produce that the landowner had rightfully grown and acquired – how that produce belonged to the poor. It uses the language of ownership, so that the produce for gleaning is not seen as charity but as justice, because God says it rightfully belongs to the poor.

Another example is the law of Jubilee, in which every fifty years debts were supposed to be cancelled and lands were supposed to be returned to families that had lost them – even if they lost them through their own fault and sold them through legitimate transactions.

Now, the point of these examples is that in the Bible's consideration of justice, there is of course something like a right to private property, but it is *not* an absolute right, as the libertarian theory demands.

In addition, libertarian justice theory has a sub-biblical theory of sin and of freedom, as freedom becomes merely negative, and as the dangers of sin are emphasized in some arenas of life more than others – such as in the government rather than in the market.

In human experience, libertarianism fails to express and protect the complexity of human life, treating us as isolated individuals when experience tells us that we are richly embedded in community.

And on its own terms, libertarian theory fails to support its own claims about property which are so essential to it. As Alastair MacIntyre points out, libertarian theory roots the absolute right to private property in the idea that that property was fairly acquired. But MacIntyre points out that if we look over history, we see the same pattern again and again. The countries and families that exist today did not get their initial wealth through some sort of libertarian experiment. In many cases – or in some countries in all cases – initial wealth was acquired through invasion, theft, slaughter, or other unjust means. What was acquired may have then been passed on through legitimate transactions, but in a consistent libertarian view the starting point would matter. When people point out that one community or race or cultural is more prosperous today because of an injustice their ancestors committed beforehand, many advocates of this view shrug it off and admit that that is always the case. But that doesn't solve the problem. If the right to private property is rooted in a fair acquisition, theft at any point would seem to make subsequent ownership illegitimate. And if we argue it does not, what is the time limit on theft where it becomes just and right for the descendants of the theft to keep the profits from what was stolen, rather than return it to the descendants of the rightful owner? A year? A decade? A century? On its own terms, the libertarian theory of ownership begins to break down. [MacIntyre, 251]

The Failure of Man-Based Justice Theories

We have considered four common secular theories of justice in our culture. And as we look at them, we see that when evaluated on the basis of the Bible, on the basis of experience, and on the basis of internal logic, each one begins to fall apart.

And they fall apart ultimately because they lack a true foundation to support them. They rely on human wisdom and they quickly become over-simplistic.

Each one is over-simplistic about the dignity of humanity, the reality and effects of sin, the hope of redemption, and the fact that people were made both as distinct individuals, and as people made for deep imbedded community.

Each secular justice theory is a reminder of the limits of human wisdom. And each secular justice theory leaves us, ultimately, without a durable framework for societal justice.

The Bible's Way Forward

What then, is the way forward? Well, though Micah is not setting out a theology of societal justice, he does point us to the root. We see it in verses twelve and thirteen.

There, Micah's answer is not a theory of justice, but the person of God himself, dwelling with his people, gathering them in his presence, and leading him as their Shepherd.

While a Biblical theology of justice will have principles and reasoning, its foundation is not found in a principle or in an argument, but in a person. Biblical justice is rooted in the character of God. As we examine the character of God, expressed in his creative work, his law, his redemptive work, and the fact that we are made in his image, it is in God himself that we find an anchor of what societal justice is to look like.

We will consider that in a bit more depth next time, so that we can then apply it to Micah's words here. But for tonight, we should leave asking ourselves a few questions.

First, what secular theory of societal justice do you most tend towards?

Second, do you see the problems with it, and that while it may overlap with certain Christian principles, it is not itself Christian?

Third, do you see how there can be no reliable foundation for justice besides the character of God himself?

And finally, when faced with questions of justice in the world around us, how do you need to pursue God's heart through the Scriptures first, and how might you need to resist the temptation to simply jump on one of the secular theories in the world around us?

If we want to stand for justice, as Micah calls God's people to do, then we must know what justice is. That starts by knowing what it's not. But it proceeds on knowing where to look next. And the answer is God.

And so, as we look to God, let us give thanks that in him we have not been left to ourselves, but we truly have all we need to live as he has called us to live. For he will not forsake us.

Amen.

This sermon draws on material from:

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