

WHEN ISN'T LIFE FAIR? Ecclesiastes 4:1

If God has such a wonderful plan for our life, why do so many things happen to us that don't seem fair? Solomon basically alluded to it in Ecclesiastes 4:1 *Again I observed all the oppression that takes place in our world. I saw the tears of the oppressed, with no one to comfort them. The oppressors have great power, and the victims are helpless.*

The question of injustice can be asked in many ways. Have you ever wondered or asked any questions like these?

- Why do bad things happen to good people?
- Why do bad people seem to prosper?
- Where is God when I hurt?
- When all the things aren't fair and just in life, where is God?

If God is really God and He can do something and He's loving, where is He and what is He doing? Why doesn't He help us? **Or**, Why doesn't He do something about the injustice in the world? This morning lets look at the reality of injustice, the reasons for injustice, and what should I do about it when it comes my way.

I. THE REALITY IS THIS: LIFE IS UNFAIR!

Ecclesiastes gives us five different examples of how life isn't fair.

A. Criminals go unpunished 8:11 Why do people commit crimes? Because crime is not punished quickly enough." This is the truth despite all the bleeding heart liberals. Don't forget: God is smarter than all the compassionate liberal thinkers the world has ever known

Solomon was complaining about what we're complaining about today. Delayed justice is injustice and they would have us think that we need to be slow about getting to the bottom of things. Solomon says, It doesn't seem fair that criminals go unpunished. In our court systems today, many times the verdict is not a matter of whether a person is guilty or innocent, but do they have enough bucks to buy a smart attorney to get you off on a technicality? Then you can get paroled and go out and do it again.

B. The oppressed are unhelped. 4:1 History is simply a record that proves that humans tend to persecute each other. It is our nature to oppress each other. Throughout history, the rich oppress the poor, the powerful oppress the powerless, one race oppresses another race, white oppresses black, men have oppressed women... all around us we see racism, sexism, oppression taking place.

Doesn't James kind of speak to that very thought. James 2:3-7? It is estimated that during this last year nearly a million Christians were martyred in the world. Most of them in China and other communist countries. Over a million Christians gave their lives for being believers and who is saying anything? To say anything might be enough to cause trade problems for our nation and heaven forbid that we can't get all the things we would like to have as the greatest consumer nation on earth.

C. Politicians are unethical. Notice Ecclesiastes 5:8 Wherever you find people in authority over others you will expect to find some injustice. Actually, Does anybody honestly expect public servants to serve us. The only other observation that I believe is worse is that so many people and yes, even many Christians believe all the stuff they tell us just to get elected. And it seems that from the time a politician leaves the local level and gets to Washington they lose sight of the little guy somewhere along the way.

D. Good people are unrewarded. Ecclesiastes 8:14 The wrong people are prospering. Have you ever lost a deal or a job because of some unscrupulous person and you deserved the contract? They were willing to shave a little, take a bribe or something else, so they got it? Solomon says that doesn't seem fair. In 7:15 he says *In this meaningless life, I have seen everything, including the fact that some good people die young and some wicked people live on and on.*

E. Capable people are unsuccessful -- the good guys don't always win. 9:11 in the (GN) says, *"In this world fast runners do not always win the races... wise men don't always earn a living, intelligent men don't always get rich, and capable men don't always rise to high positions."* People train for years and years to get into the Olympics and sometimes on the day for qualifications, they get sick or have a fluke accident and they are disqualified.

Wise men don't always earn a living... You can be brilliant and still be poor while some fool inherits millions. You worked hard to make a living, pay your bills and some drug smuggler is living in a paid off mansion. that doesn't seem right, just. "

Intelligent men don't always get rich... The biggest salaries don't always go to the smartest people although many times it seems like they go to the most greedy and dishonest like many of the CEOs we hear about on the news.

In our society, we pay boxers and ball players more than we pay the President of the United States. What man is worth 3,4,5 or more million a year no matter how good a pitcher or batter he is?

But, as Will Rogers said, we ought to be thankful that we don't get all the government we pay for. **Or think about this**, Guys who are drop outs from school, who didn't study, are in MTV making millions. If you have some bizarre lifestyle you get invited on some talk show. It doesn't make sense. "

Capable people don't always rise to high positions" Maybe you deserve the promotion, but because of the color of your skin, your gender, or the boss likes somebody else... you are the best qualified but you didn't get the promotion. It's not fair. Solomon is just giving examples. He says, Let's admit it. Life isn't fair. So why doesn't God do something about it?

Is God uncaring, indifferent, helpless? No, not really. The Bible gives us four reasons

II. Why God is allowing injustice in the world. First,

A. Because He gives us the freedom to choose.

Deuteronomy 11:26 (God says) "*I am giving you the choice between a blessing and a curse...*" The Bible says we were created in God's image. That means He gave us a choice. We can accept Him or reject Him, obey Him or deny Him, do good or bad. Why? God gives us a free choice because He wants us to do good because we choose to do good, not because we have to do good. He wants us to love Him because we choose to love Him not because we have to etc.

So the good news is, we have freedom to choose. The bad news is that there are negative consequences to that because we often make bad decisions. Evil consequences in the world are simply the result of evil choices. Now actually, God could take away all the injustices in a snap. How? By taking away our freedom to choose to do wrong, take away our freedom to do injustice, to make bad choices. So the good news is you do have freedom, but the bad news is that there is negative consequences as a result of it.

One of those negative consequences is injustice.

B. Because judgement is coming.

Ecclesiastes 3:17 "Today is not the end of the story. The final chapter on injustice and unfairness has not been written yet. We need to never forget that one day God is going to balance the books. Yes, God does allow unfair things to happen to us but remember, But God does not settle all of His accounts this year.

Just because people aren't getting it now doesn't mean they aren't going to get it. Isaiah 30:18 reminds us that *For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.* Because He's a God of justice, one day He's going to settle the score, close the books, balance the accounts.

When the going get tough and unfair things happen we are often still prone to ask, *Why doesn't God judge us now? Why doesn't He bring justice now? Why doesn't He balance the books today? The reason is because*

C. He wants to show us we need a Savior.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 " *There is no one on earth who does what is right all the time and never sins.*" This means we're all in trouble. We've all be unkind, cruel, unfair and we have all been the recipients of it as well. We're all in the same boat. Did you know why the world is so unfair? The reason why the world is unjust is because it's full of unjust people. Like me! Like you! We want to believe that we're good and that we're unselfish and that we always think of other people. So God tests us. He lets the world go on to see what the natural consequences of our human nature are.

Ecclesiastes 3:18 " *God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts.*" He wants us to see what human nature is really like. He's saying that injustice reveals human nature. He wants us to clearly see that we act like animals with each other. We are naturally self-centered people. Injustice and unfairness just reveals human nature. Normal people given the right situation, in a group, are capable of anything.

Don't forget, You and I are capable of anything given the right situation. People tend to prey on each other. "We all have sinned...yet now God declares us `not guilty' ... if we trust in Jesus Christ who freely takes away our sins." We need a Savior not justice because if we got justice when other were unfair to us, then others would get justice when we were unfair to them so, instead of justice we need a Saviour. We've all blown it by being unfair to one another.

D. Pain can develop character

Romans 5:3,4 reminds us with these words, The KJV reads *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

But I like the Phillips and New English version which says it this way: *This doesn't mean of course, that we have only a hope of future joys - we can be full of joy here and now*

even in our trials and troubles and endurance in these brings proof that we have stood the test.

We always learn more from pain than we do from pleasure. We always learn more from failure than we do from success. It's in the tough times that we develop character, not the easy times. God is interested in molding and making us. Solomon is simply saying life looks pretty negative. It's not fair and there are a lot of things that just aren't right in the world.

But God can turn the negatives in our lives into positives if we let His love and power control us and encourage us. And He'll build positive things out of it. Some of you may feel you've been dealt a bad hand and what you're facing right now just isn't fair. You didn't deserve it.

III. What do you do when life is unfair.

A. When you're dealt a hand you didn't deserve, accept the fact that life is unfair.

We just need to accept it; it is a fact of life. Quit trying to ignore it, quit trying to refuse it, quit complaining about it because no matter how much we try these things, it is still a fact isn't it? John 16:33, *"In the world you will have trouble."* Jesus was realistic about life. *In the world you're going to have trouble.* The fact is, even if we spent every single waking moment of our life crusading against injustice and correcting wrongs in our society, we're not going to save society.

The issue is deeper than the system. The problem is human nature. Basically we're selfish. We think of ourselves before we think of other people. We have the freedom to choose right and wrong and a lot of times I choose wrong, intentionally, and so do you.

So if we don't get God's perspective on this we're going to go through life cynical and bitter and resentful and disillusioned, saying "Why is this happening to me? Why is this happening to my family?..." Although we cannot control the circumstances in our life, we can control our reaction to them. That's what God is watching: how we respond to the injustices of life, how we respond when life is unfair.

B. Do the right thing anyway.

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do good. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the orphan. Fight for the rights of widows.

Even when the world is unfair, we need to do the right thing anyway. Do what we can to gain justice for others. Certainly we ought to seek to correct wrongs and the injustices in life. Do what we can, while we can. Proverbs 29:7 says *The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, The wicked does not understand such concern.* When Life is unfair, instead of whining about it we need to practice Romans 12:9b and 16-20 Do the right thing anyway. And finally when we find life so unfair we simply need to patiently

C. Wait for God's reward.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen (That being Heaven). For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.

One day God is going to wipe away every tear, He's going to balance the books, settle the score, get even with the all the injustices and unfairness of life. But for us, we need to do the right thing and we will be rewarded. These temporary troubles --even 70, 80, 90 years of them are really temporary aren't they, especially in light of eternity - so keep a long term perspective!

Some of you may be going through a time right now and thinking, "It's just not fair. I didn't deserve this!" You are probably right but all we really need to know is this:

- ◆ God has our best interest at heart.
- ◆ He's given us the freedom of choice -- to choose good or bad.
- ◆ We're going to be judged one day for those choices and,
- ◆ If we respond in the right way, we're going to be rewarded for it.

That's all we really need to know when we struggle with unfairness. God's going to settle the score.

One final thought; Maybe you are feeling that life is not fair but you have never met the one who will one day settle the score once and for all. If you would like to meet him and be able to rest patiently during the unfairness of life as you wait for that settlement day to arrive, just read, believe and obey these following few lines and you will be able to be on the winning side.

Realize you are a sinner Romans 3:23

Understand that the payday for sin is death or eternal conscious separation from God.
Romans 6:23a

Know that there is a way of escape for you. Romans 6:23b and John 1:12

Desire to escape and pray this or a similar prayer.

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I confess them all to You [name them]. Lord Jesus, forgive all my sins and come into my heart as my Saviour and Lord. I receive You right now. Help me from this time forward to live for You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus' name. Amen."

On the _____ day of _____ I became a Christian by inviting Jesus Christ into my life to forgive my sin.

Signed: _____

If you have further questions or have chosen to do this, be sure to let us know so we can help you, pray for you and encourage you in your new life.

You can reach us at lapeerchurch@gmail.com Subject line: (Salvation)