

ACTING AGAINST INJUSTICE?

“This Is The Way” Series – Part 09

Connect question: Can you remember one of your earliest memories of discovering that life was unfair? How did you handle this situation?

Introduction: It is often futile to make sense of any statistics, but let's give it a try...just for fun!

In WWII the average soldier would spend 9 total hours in actual combat per year of duty. During the Viet Nam War the average soldier would be involved in over 200 hours of actual combat per year. Why do you suppose there was such a high increase of time spent in combat?

Here's another question: According to the World Prison Population List (11th edition) there were around 10.35 million people in penal institutions worldwide in 2015. The US had 2,173,800 prisoners in adult facilities in 2015. That means the US held 21.0% of the world's prisoners in 2015, even though the US represented only around 4.4 percent of the world's population in 2015. So why does our nation have highest incarceration rate in the world?

It is difficult to provide answers to the second set of stats and not talk about injustice. Is there injustice in our criminal and rehabilitation system? Do we experience injustice in our day to day living here in NWA? How are Christians to live out a Biblical worldview in an age of injustice?

Read MATTHEW 5:38-48

Mat 5:38 “You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’

Mat 5:39 But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also.

Mat 5:40 If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too.

Mat 5:41 If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles.

Mat 5:42 Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow.

Love Your Enemies

Mat 5:43 “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy.

Mat 5:44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!

Mat 5:45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

Mat 5:46 If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much.

Mat 5:47 If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that.

Mat 5:48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Discussion:

What was God trying to teach us about the creation of laws when He stated, "*Eye for eye and tooth for tooth*"?

What rights must Christians be willing to give up as they serve Christ and respond to wrongs committed against them?

Does "do not resist the evildoer" mean that we should never resist evil or an evil person?

Why is it so hard to give up our right to personal retaliation?

Should believers always turn the other cheek when insulted? If not, why not, and how should we discern when to pursue justice?

If possible, describe a time when you decided to turn the other cheek and the results.

What was Christ referring to when talking about being sued for a shirt and offering one's coat as well?

How can we prepare for unplanned interruptions and handle them graciously?

Describe a time you willingly sacrificed time and energy for someone who was rude and/or ungrateful and the effects of that sacrifice on them and yourself.