

Sermon Summary - Dr Cory Neudorf, Sept 30, 2018

Actions to Reduce Poverty and Injustice

-God's heart for the poor and vulnerable Micah 6:8, "He has showed you, Oh man, what is good. And what does the lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Or as the contemporary English version says "see that justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God"

Ps 9 and 19, James 3, 4 & 5

-What supports and circumstances led to your position, vocation and relationships today?

-How much is due to things solely in our control versus only partially. What is the role of racism, sexism, or other forms of discrimination?

-The main words for "justice" in Hebrew (mishpat and sadiqah) and Greek (dikaionome and krisis) occur over a thousand times in the Bible.

-Justice Definition: "The quality of being just; fairness, being equitable, morally right" another definition states simply that justice means "the right use of power in our relationships with others" vs. Injustice " the abuse of power".

-Justice as intrinsic to God's character. This is the reason for the strength of the metaphors and warnings to the rich in James...When power is misused against the powerless, God always takes the side of the oppressed.

-We are to be God's hands and feet in the world. This is what he requires of us, as it says in Micah 6:8

-Doug Pagitt says that "Situations of injustice can be breeding ground for hope, for it is then, frustrated by injustice, that we see clearly what ought to be. We refuse to resign ourselves to the world as it is , so it can become the world as it ought to be."

- examples from public health research showing the dramatic effect of poverty on people's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health in Saskatoon, leading to 9 years less of life on average!
- Examples of actions being taken by various government departments and organizations in town.

— What more can the church do to increase justice? What can we do individually or collectively?

- the Christian response to poverty and injustice

(practical examples of what we have discussed in the new service group at Nutana and from what I have seen in other churches

Give (globally and locally)

- to organizations working in low income areas, or working to deliver programs for those in need (and not just to “Christian” organizations and causes)
-support changes in government programming aimed at reducing the gap, even if it affects your taxes! since these are investments and closely related to the original intent of the tithe!

Support fundraising initiatives (capital needs) in areas such as affordable housing, food security, skills training, or health promotion & disease prevention programs in areas of need. (Eg. Canadian FoodGrains bank, Saskatoon food council initiatives, Station 20 W, CHEP, Quint, etc)

Pray

For justice

For spiritual renewal

For people/groups in need, and individuals you encounter

For God’s Kingdom to come “on earth as it is in heaven”

For a heart that feels what God feels for the poor

Live responsibly

For sustainability, and in order to afford to help others in greater need

Spend Wisely

Volunteer

Your time, and your skills, to agencies working to reduce the gap e.g. United Way agencies, open door society, global gathering place, (service group is starting to build a list of local agencies in need of volunteer help)

Be a mentor or find ways to invest in others using your area of education, work, or interest

Be aware

Learn about health disparity and the social determinants of health – globally, and here at home.

Advocate

Write letters to decision makers, demonstrate, talk to your friends and neighbors about the need to change.

Share God's passion for the poor and marginalized

How much thought/time do we spend on this issue compared to the time God devotes to it in the Bible compared to other issues we think important and the relative time devoted to those in the Bible?