

# What's at Stake?

*Joy Over One, Pt. 4*

*Psalm 11 (CSB)*

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# I. PRAYER

## II. INTRODUCTION

### a. We are going to continue in our series “Joy Over One” this morning.

- i. This series is all about how there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.
  - And we are saying that we want to be a church that wants to celebrate along with heaven often because we are seeing people come to know Jesus as their Savior for the first time.
  - That’s why we are all committing to finding one person, just one, who lives here locally and does not know Jesus...and we are committing to...
    1. Praying for them daily.
    2. Inviting them to come to church.
    3. Sharing the gospel with them
  - And if this is your first Sunday with us or if you have missed some of the other messages in this series, I would encourage you to go to our website and listen to those sermons.
- ii. **But who is your one?**
  - Have you identified someone, and have you begun to pray for them?
    1. Pray that God would make them receptive to the gospel and pray that God would give you opportunities to engage with them?



**b. Because this morning, I want us to talk about what's at stake for your one...or for anyone that we know who does not know Jesus.**

- i. What's at stake if we don't take seriously the call on us from God to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to our one.
  - But before I explain it, I think we all have to agree on something.

### **III. JUSTICE**

**a. And that is every single one of us in this room, every single human being on this planet, desires justice.**

- i. Every one of us believes justice is good, right, and ought to be administered equally to all forms of injustice.
  - And I don't think this is something that I have to convince you of, but for arguments sake...let's think about this...
- ii. On average, 1 million children a year are bought and sold as a commercial sex slave.
  - Where they will be abused dozens of times a day every single day with no hope of escape...and no real hope of their abusers being brought to justice.
    1. If that doesn't make you want to start burning some buildings down, I don't know what will.
    2. Our gut cries out for justice when we hear things like that?



- iii. Or think about oppressive governments like North Korea, China, Saudi Arabia, Syria, amongst many others...
    - How do the people of these countries get justice from their dictators?
      1. They have an iron grip on their power.
      2. They have economic or military leverage on other countries like us.
      3. How do these people get justice?
      4. It's nauseating to think about that these dictators will not answer for their crimes.
  - iv. Or what about the guy who walks into a school, kills dozens, and then shoots himself.
    - Is that justice? Did that person get away with it by committing suicide?
  - v. We live in an evil, broken world where people suffer under unthinkable injustice and there seems to be no solution to the greater problem.
    - The desire and the hope of world peace has become a laughable talking point and not a serious pursuit.
- b. But, it's easy to think about our desire for justice when it comes to these overwhelmingly heinous crimes that I've brought up.**
- i. But we all desire justice in our own lives.
    - Isn't this why YELP is so popular?
      1. If a company doesn't give you good service or live up to their promise...you have a way now to deliver some justice in a bad review.



- When a friend or family member says something harsh to you, yells at you, or does something that makes you mad, we have an instinct to pursue justice.
    1. Maybe we give them the silent treatment. Maybe we're passive aggressive. Maybe we're actually aggressive.
    2. But we have methods to hand out punishment to one another as a way of delivering justice when someone does something we don't like.
  - If we are lied to, if we are slandered, if we are taken advantage of, ripped off, or whatever form of injustice you can think of...we want justice.
- ii. We have an instinct that if you do something unjust, you have incurred a debt, and justice is not met until that debt is paid.
- That is a human instinct.

**c. But here's the problem...justice is elusive.**

- i. There is always injustice the world.
- There are always different perspectives on what is just and unjust.
  - The system is manipulated.
  - People get away with injustice. Deals are made. People turn a blind eye.
  - People use their power to not have to face justice.
  - Justice is elusive in this world and if you think about it too much, it is depressing.
    1. There is nothing more frustrating than someone getting away with injustice.



## **d. And I want to tell you why this is the case.**

- i. Back in Genesis 3, we read about the first sin...one could say the first act of injustice.
  - Adam and Eve were in the garden, in paradise with God.
    1. God was their creator, their protector, their leader, and the one who had all authority.
    2. This means God was the one who determined what was good and what was evil.
    3. God was the one who determined what was right and wrong.
    4. God was the judge of what was just and unjust.
  - But see, that first sin in Genesis 3 was Adam and Eve's desire to have the knowledge of good and evil...to be like God.
    1. They didn't want to submit to God as judge.
    2. They wanted to be the ones who determined what was good and what was evil.
    3. They wanted to be the ones that determined what was right and wrong.
    4. They want to be the judge of what was just and what was unjust.
  - This was treasonous against God. It was unjust. And God exiled them from his presence and let them live the lie that they could handle the knowledge of good and evil without God.
    1. That they could be a better judge than God Himself.



- ii. And so now, all of humanity, all of us, inherit this sin and we commit this sin.
- We, along with Adam and Eve, view ourselves as the one who can be the judge of what is just and unjust.
    1. We don't naturally submit to God, we claim that authority for ourselves.
    2. When we are born, that is our default.
    3. Therefore, we are born alienating from God.
  - And what this means, is we have an entire planet of people that believe they are the judge of what is just and not just.
    1. 7 Billion judges and opinions on justice in this world.
    2. Proverbs 16:2 - *"All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes..."*
    3. I'm the one who determines what is true/not true, I am the one who determines what is right/wrong, I'm the one who determines what is just/unjust.
  - We have an entire planet of people who believe that they can never be wrong. That it is those people out in the world who deserve justice...but not me.
    1. You can't judge me! You don't know my heart!
  - And so, injustice flourishes in our world because we are in one massive human stalemate where everyone thinks they are right in their own eyes.
    1. And, when everyone thinks they are right in their own eyes, injustice flourishes.



- iii. If you think about it...our entire justice system as a country is built on the assumption that everyone is right in their own eyes and we have to protect ourselves against that.
- The job of the prosecutor is to prove that the accused is guilty...because we assume they are right in their own eyes and will not confess.
  - The job of the defense attorney is to protect the accused from the justice system because they are right in their own eyes and are also capable of injustice.
  - The entire system is built on the fact that everyone is right in their eyes and therefore no one person can be trusted!

**e. And so, the only way that true justice can be achieved in our world...where true peace can be accomplished...is if every single person on the planet...EVERYONE... stopped looking outside of themselves for injustice and began looking inside of themselves.**

- i. Where everyone took responsibility for their part of the injustice in the world.
- Where everyone didn't believe they were always right and began to wake up to the fact that we are many times the one who is wrong.
  - But it has to be everyone, or injustice flourishes.



ii. **Just think about your household or your marriage.**

- If you have a rough marriage or rough relationships with the people in your household, if everyone in your household or both the husband and the wife stay busy pointing the finger at the other person as the source of the problem...your relationships will not heal.
  1. Injustice will continue to flourish in your house.
- But your relationships will begin to heal, if everyone in your house is willing to point your finger at themselves as the source of all the problems and address their own part in the problem.
  1. That's when things begin to heal.

iii. **And it's the same for all society. Injustice will flourish because everyone is right in their own eyes and it's not until everyone is willing to point the finger at themselves where justice will begin to be realized.**

- And that's a pipe-dream. That is other-worldly...it is not possible to be achieved in this world...in fact, what I just described is the Kingdom of God.
- A world where God King, where God is judge, and he rules with righteousness, fairness, and equity...and we all submit to him as the one who determines what is good and what is evil...what is just and unjust.
- Where we lay down what we have tried to steal from God...and that is His right to be judge.



**f. And so, here is what I want us all to understand this morning... we all need divine judgement.**

- i. We cannot achieve justice on our own...we need divine judgement.
- And because we all desire justice and we all believe justice is good and right, I think we all want divine judgement.
  - We want a God who sees all, who does not allow one act of injustice to fall through the cracks, who will judge every single person according to the same exact standard with perfect equity and fairness.
    1. That those men who are enslaving those little girls and making money off of them being abused day in and day out will one day meet the wrath of their creator...who defends the oppressed.
    2. That those who abuse power to oppress people will one day stand powerless in front of a holy, all powerful God.
    3. That all of us will stand before our creator and will be judged according to the exact same standard as every single other person in the world...perfect equity.
  - We all desire this and we all need this. Our world needs this.
    1. We need God to step in and achieve justice for us...because we can't do it.
    2. We can't handle the knowledge of good and evil.
  - And this is what the Scriptures say about God.



## IV. PSALM 11

a. Psalm 11 is a Psalm written by David and in this Psalm, David is despairing because one cannot escape all the injustice and evil in the world...

i. **Read Psalm 11:1-3**

- Injustice flourishes everywhere in the world.
- There are no foundations of justice!
- What can the righteous do?

ii. **Read Psalm 11:4-7**

- David takes refuge in the fact that although it seems the foundations of justice seem to have crumbled in this world, the Lord has not lost control.
  1. He is on his throne and he sees all.
  2. No act of injustice, no sin, will go unnoticed by God.
- And those who have been declared guilty of sin and injustice will face the wrath of God.
  1. **Read Psalm 11:6** – Portion in their cup = what they deserve...their destiny.

iii. So, here in this Psalm, we see God as a judge.

- A good judge who does not turn a blind eye to evil and injustice...and we should rejoice in the fact that God will bring perfect justice into the world!
  1. Two weeks ago, we studied Psalm 96 together and if you remember, it said this about God.
  2. Psalm 96:11-13 – ***“<sup>11</sup> Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and all that fills it resound. <sup>12</sup> Let the fields and everything in them celebrate.***



*Then all the trees of the forest will shout for joy<sup>13</sup> before the Lord, for he is coming—for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his faithfulness.”*

- iv. And this judge will give everlasting life in God’s Kingdom to the righteous and he will punish the wicked...with fire and sulfur...by sending them to hell.
  - Jesus explains this to us in many different places in the Gospels. We learn more about hell from Jesus than any other author in Scripture.
  - Look at what Jesus says about the judgement of God in Matthew 13:41-43a:
    1. *“The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom all who cause sin and those guilty of lawlessness.”<sup>k</sup> <sup>42</sup> They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father’s kingdom.”*
- v. In the end, the earth will be judged and justice will prevail.
  - Hell is real and it is a place of eternal torment.
  - And Psalm 11:7 tells us this is good and this is right.

## **b. The question is this: who is righteous and who is wicked?**

- i. And the answer to that question is terrifying.



- Psalm 14:2-3
  1. *"The Lord looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God. <sup>3</sup> All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one."*
- Everyone is right in their own eyes. Everyone desires to be the judge of what is just and unjust. We are all culpable in creating a world where injustice flourishes.
  1. If one could see a record of our inner thoughts, our deepest motivations, and our hidden secrets...no one would argue.
  2. God sees.
  3. We all deserve the just judgment of God.
- ii. **And here's the thing...we are not in a position to argue with God about this.**
  - Because I know what runs through our head when we talk about how all people deserve the judgement of God...
    1. We say - God, how is this fair?!?
    2. We just talked about these people who commit these unthinkable atrocities.
    3. How do I deserve the same judgement as them?
  - And listen, questioning the judgement of God is reaching for the same fruit on the same tree as Adam and Eve.
    1. It is saying to God - God, in my judgement...I am not as bad as those other people...I don't deserve the same judgement as other people do!
  - And God says, you have all turned away from me.



## V. THE GOSPEL

### a. And understanding the fact that all deserve the judgement of God is critical to understanding our faith.

- i. Because that means that our only hope, my only hope, your only hope, the one that you have committed to share the gospel with, their only hope is the mercy of God.
  - No one has the chance to live a life that will somehow impress God and cause him to judge them as worthy of his Kingdom.
  - No, our only hope is the mercy of God.
  - That God would do something, because there is nothing we can do.

### ii. Ephesians 2:4-5

- *<sup>4</sup> “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved!”*
- In God’s great mercy, he made a way to cast his judgment upon our sin that didn’t result in our destruction.
  1. Jesus came and bore our sins on his back and went to the cross to endure the wrath of God in our place.
  2. And Jesus took our guilt, our shame, and the debt we owe for our sin and he takes them to grave to finish them off.
  3. And Jesus rose again from the dead and gives us new life, cleansed from our sin, righteous in the sight of God, welcomed into the Kingdom of God for all eternity.
  4. Saved from eternal punishment in hell to eternal reward in the Kingdom of God.



- And 1 John 1:9 says - *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
  1. God is eager to save people who will bend their knee to their creator, confess that they are sinners who deserve His judgement, repent of their sin, and receive his mercy in and through Jesus Christ.
- iii. **This is what it means to be a Christian. This is what it means to surrender to Christ.**
  - God is not looking for people who will impress Him with their righteousness...
    1. He is looking for people who will finally admit that they are not right in their own eyes...
    2. That they have a sinful heart...
    3. That they deserve hell...
    4. And who will lay down their demand to be the one who determines what is good and evil...
    5. And will surrender and receive the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

#### iv. **Think about it for a second...**

- Let's say that someone you loved hurt you really deeply. Betrayed you. Broke your trust.
  1. Imagine if your spouse cheated on you.
  2. Or a friend stole money from you.
  3. A parent walked out on you.
  4. Or something like that...
- And the way that they tried to regain your trust and reconcile the relationship was not by acknowledging what they did to you



and apologizing...but was by doing nice things for you...

1. You know they brought you gifts, complimented you, offered to do things for you...
  2. Instead of acknowledging what broke the relationship, they just moved and thought if they were extra good and nice, that would be enough.
- How would you feel? Would you trust this person again? Would the relationship be reconciled?
    1. Of course not. That's disingenuous. Those nice things would do nothing to repair the relationship.
    2. That's just manipulative. That's not love.
    3. There is no acknowledgment of wrong doing. There is no validation of your hurt.

v. **Well, it's the same with God.**

- God is not looking for people who will do enough good works to reconcile the relationship, that's impossible.
  1. God can't be manipulated or flattered.
- God is looking for people who will humble themselves, accept responsibility for their sin, ask for forgiveness, and surrender their lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

**b. And the Bible says that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.**

- i. God is overjoyed to lavish his mercy and grace on those who will humble themselves and cry out for his mercy.



- ii. But for those who do not humble themselves before God, they will face the wrath of God.

**c. This is what's at stake.**

- i. ...For you...if you have not surrendered to Christ and received his grace...
  - You will go before the judgement of God with your sins upon your own head instead of on the cross.
  - And it will be just and right for God to cast you into hell.
  - But friend, mercy is available if you will surrender to Christ.
- ii. ...for your one...the person you've committed to.
  - If your one has not surrender to Christ and received His grace...
  - They will go before the judgement of God with their sins upon their own head instead of on the cross.
  - And it will be just and right for God to cast them into hell.
  - But mercy is available and you have been given the message of mercy so it can be delivered.
- iii. Brothers and Sisters, let us be faithful to deliver the message of mercy and not be so self-centered to let our fear or our busyness to get in the way.
  - Who is your one?
    1. Will you warn them about the judgement of God?
    2. Will you proclaim to them the mercy of God in Christ?



- Let us pray for boldness in us and that God would soften the hearts of those we share with.

## **VI. PRAYER FOR THE ONE**

## **VII. COMMUNION**

- a. This morning as we reflect on the justice of God...it's a unique opportunity to reflect on the cross.**
  - i. To remember what Jesus endured in our place so we don't have to face the wrath of God for our sin...
  - ii. So, I'd like us as a church family to come to the communion table together.
    - To take bread, break it, and remember the broken body of Christ in our place.
    - To take the cup, and remember the shed blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins.
  - iii. **Brothers and sisters, our God has been so good to us.**
    - He has redeemed us. He has set his mercy upon us. He has given us new life.
    - It would be appropriate for all of us to spend some time before God on our knees...if you're able...
      1. In the posture of repentance.
      2. In the posture of the one who is worshiping not the one demanding to be worshiped.
      3. And praising God for the mercy of the cross.



4. And reminding ourselves that we didn't deserve it...it's all grace.
  5. And asking God to continue to change us, transform us, and make us more like Jesus.
- Spend a few minutes on your knees in worship to God...and then when your ready come forward and take the bread and the cup.

**b. For those of you who have not surrendered to Christ.**

- i. Mercy and forgiveness is available to you.
  - Now is the time to surrender your life to Christ.
    1. No reason to wait. It's dangerous to wait.
    2. If you would like to come forward to pray, I'll be available and we have other prayer ministers available.
    3. We would love to pray with you as you surrender to Christ.
- ii. But let's take a few moments to remember and celebrate the cross.

