

Doing Righteousness, Isaiah Ch. 56

Thus says the Lord, preserve justice, and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness is about to be revealed. Is. 56:1

*'Many and sharp the num'rous ills
Inwoven with our frame!
More pointed still we make ourselves
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And Man, whose heav'n-erected face
The smiles of love adorn, -
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!*

Man was made to Mourn: A Dirge. Robert Burns, 1785

Once again: trying to figure out righteousness

• Highlights of the text

- V.1: “Preserve” justice, and “do” righteousness. _____
- V.2: to those who do this, an also do not profane the sabbath, and do no evil. _____
- V.3-8: Provision for “eunuchs and foreigners,” or the outcasts, who also practice these things.
 - V.5: a name “better” . . . _____
 - V.7: a house of prayer for “all people,” _____
- V.9-12: **But**, the warning to corrupt leadership.
 - V.10: “watchmen” that are blind, _____
 - V.11: “shepherds” without understanding, _____

• Grasping God’s perspective on righteousness

- Previous warnings, Isaiah 1:4, 11-15.
 - What is the point of the statement ”Offspring of evildoers?” _____
 - What is God rejecting? v. 10-15. _____
 - What is he demanding? V. 17, 23. _____

Finding the “centerpoint” between good and evil.

- Throughout both of these texts there is one outstanding operative word, the verb “_____.” God reproves those responsible for _____ evil, and he blesses those responsible for _____ righteousness and justice. The point between them is the place where there is no action, neither good nor bad. It is apathy and ignorance, and yet it is the place that most people think is righteousness.
- Where does the practice of our Christian faith break down?
 - _____
- Do we see anything missing in our personal behavior?
 - _____
- On the positive side, do we see those behaviors evident in us which God has declared worthy of blessing?
 - _____

The Action of Inaction

When we see and do nothing, when we stand idly by while observing the distress of others, when we look the other way in order to avoid seeing those things which are disturbing and perhaps disgusting, we give our votary approval to the continuation of injustice and inhumanity. Though Jesus said we are to practice justice to the least of his brothers and sisters, we all too often leave the task to outsiders. Yet our calling as representatives of the Kingdom of God, is to bring His kingdom to earth, with all of its blessings and joy.