



14 April 2024 Justice

Justice is possible because Jesus experienced injustice himself. The only person who ever lived a sinless life died the most brutal and unfair death. But John wants us to know that not only was his death unjust, his trial was a miscarriage of justice.

Why?

- Because it takes place in the middle of the night even though Jewish law states that trials could only occur during the day.
- The Sanhedrin was supposed to be an impartial council but instead was the one that brought charges against Jesus.
- The Sanhedrin could also carry out an execution sentence only if they had a unanimous vote. But they never voted because we know that some members of the Sanhedrin, like Nicodemus voiced their objections.
- The accounts of the witnesses were inconsistent.
- Jesus wasn't given an opportunity to bring his own witnesses.
- Pilate himself even declares Jesus' innocence twice.

So why does John go through all this effort to show us this?

- It's because he wants us to know that Jesus was the victim of the greatest injustice ever. Why is this significant?
- In his trial, Jesus was identifying with every one of us who has ever had to undergo injustice—everyone who has ever been betrayed, overlooked, abused, or mistreated.
- He didn't just want to die for us.
- He wanted to walk through the broken experience of injustice so he could say to us, "I know what you are going through, because I've been there."

Tim Keller tells a story about an African American writer who was disillusioned by the injustice she had suffered as a black woman. She was taking a graduate course in Christianity when one day it hit her. She suddenly realized that Jesus didn't just suffer for us, he suffered with us. And in that moment, she realizes that Jesus had been lynched.

Because Jesus suffered injustice, we can know that he understands what it feels like to be a victim of injustice.

Discussion

1. Have you ever been the victim of injustice?
2. What injustice are you most passionate about?

Read **Isaiah 61:8, Jeremiah 9:24, Psalm 97:2.**

- What do these passages tell us about God's character?

Read **Micah 6:8.**

- What comes to your mind when you think about following God?
 - Does this verse paint a similar picture or a different one?
3. Pastor Mike has said,
"To ultimately fix the problems of injustice is impossible for us to do. Why? Because we're part of the problem. There are larger forces working in our lives, in our culture and in our institutions. The problems of injustice are imbedded in our attitudes, our thinking, our economic system, our educational system, our governments..."
 - Do you agree with this statement?
 - In what ways do you see injustice imbedded in our lives, culture and institutions?
 4. Because Jesus personally experience injustice not only on the cross but also in his trial, we can know that he understands the pain of being a victim of injustice.
 - How does this comfort or encourage you?
 5. Jesus establishes justice by defeating sin on the cross and calls us to join him in his mission of justice by setting things right in the world.
 - What do you find daunting about this?
 - What do you find exciting about this?
 - What are some ways you sense God calling you and your small group to be an agent of God's justice?

Spend some time in prayer (for each other, for our community and for the world).