

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – 2025

Genesis 32:22-30

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Luke 18:1-8

Our sense of justice comes from God. Do you believe that? Scripture tells us that the law is written on the heart – that God has written His law on man's heart (Romans 2:15). So, do you love justice? Is justice something that you recognize, something that you long for, that resonates in your heart? I returned home from a brief trip to Nebraska to see my brother and sister and what was waiting for me? A jury summons. Why was I not elated to see it? How many of y'all have ever seen justice perverted on the tele? How many of you have followed some court case or another and the proceedings and the verdict seemed like the furthest thing from justice? Justice is loosely defined as being fair, impartial, and morally right. Law and order preserve our society. Punishing crime is a legitimate deterrent and a distinct part of justice. Protecting the weak, the lowly, the vulnerable, and the marginalized among us is a divine pursuit and are also a part of justice. The widow, the orphan, and the unborn are the most vulnerable. Abortion is an unjust law, a perversion of God's intent to protect life.

Man derives his sense of justice from God and His Word, God and His Spirit. Justice can be and is corrupted. That should rankle us. Justice is truth in action. Justice is proof that man is more than mere beast, more than a soulless proponent of the physically strong ruling the physically weak, more than a blunt instrument who adheres to the law of the jungle. Here are some quotes from the OT. "[The Lord is] The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice" (Deuteronomy 32:4). "He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord" (Psalm 33:5). "When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers" (Proverbs 21:15). "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). So, how do you feel when you look around and see injustice? How do you feel when evil prospers and just laws are flouted and what is true and good and right does not win the courtroom battle?

Do you include perseverance in your list of virtues? Why is perseverance, fortitude a virtue? In what way have you been tested to endure, to remain steadfast in your pursuit of goodness, your pursuit of truth, your pursuit of godliness? Quitters; there are no heroic stories about quitters. I suspect that you believe that Almighty God rules the cosmos. I suspect that you believe that no injustice escapes His attention, that He will put all things to rights. I suspect that you know that this world is broken and that there is no good thing that God has given to us that man hasn't corrupted. Perhaps the strongest among us, those of us who refuse to quit no matter what, are those who understand that there is nothing that man has corrupted that God hasn't or won't restore. Is justice just a matter of time?

An emblem of weakness is put forward by Christ. She is a widow-woman, an individual on the lower rung of the power-ladder in the ancient world. She has no resources with which to barter for justice. The judge is without scruples. He is a pagan, an unbeliever, a man who neither fears God nor respects man. If this woman had A.D.D. she wouldn't get anywhere with this villain in a black robe. Her only asset is persistence, and she uses it. She is without shame, without a

hypersensitive sense of polite decorum. She harangues the judge without restraint. Why? She knows that she is in the right. She knows that justice *requires* him to side with her. She knows that her cause is just – it's that simple. She demands that the judge take notice of her. Do you like her? Do you relate to her? Do you root for her? Would you like her to be on your team? Would you like her to pester the judge on your behalf?

The curious thing about this parable is that the unscrupulous judge is in the place of God. So, what's Jesus' point? Do you think that the Lord wants us to equate our heavenly Father with an unscrupulous judge? No, far from it! You are like me. Some lessons I don't like being taught. How many of you have had to go through more than one difficult scenario to even get close to learning what perseverance means? I don't think that any of us consider ourselves to be heroic, but are we prepared to stand fast regardless of what comes our way? Are we determined to plead the cause of the just before our heavenly Father – even though justice seems far off? Do you think that God tests us? Is there something, anything, in your life that necessitates you standing on His promises, day after day after day after day after day? Have you ever thought that how you conduct yourself in difficulty may be an inspiration for someone else who is going through their own difficulty? If the parable were real life, you can bet that there would be others who would take note of the widow-woman's bulldog nature and use that as fuel as they wait patiently but actively for justice to flow like a busted fire hydrant. Who are you inspiring?

It was a surprise. For the widow-woman to be rewarded for her persistence, it was a surprise. The judge bends. The judge breaks. The judge relents from his apostacy toward justice and renders a moral verdict. How very different is your circumstance. Let's review your circumstance, in the macro sense. Your enemy is yourself. Your enemy is your sinful nature. Your enemy is the very real death that your very real sin has procured for yourself. Your judge is a righteous God who knows very well what your circumstance is – it's *His* law that you have violated. But is God a cold-hearted magistrate who dishes out cold-hearted justice to all those who break His law? I suspect that most of y'all pray. I suspect that some of y'all pray a lot. But do you know what intercedes for you without ceasing? Do you know what is constantly pleading your case for justice before the Father? Christ's blood; Christ's blood pleads for you. Christ's blood is the widow woman who is constantly speaking a good word for you before the One who created justice.

Think of Him, think of Jesus. Man's justice thought that it would be a good idea to crucify the only supremely innocent person that this world has ever known. It was a travesty, a failure of colossal proportion. Justice was radically soiled by the ignorance and the hatred of man. And Jesus prayed for His Father's will to be done. Jesus' whole life was predicated and lived by the singular notion that the Father's will would be done in His life. And He was crucified. The Lord of glory was crucified because all of us corporately and each of us individually have defied justice. Sinners; we are sinners. Our sin is our enemy. But we have a new nature, a godly nature, a restored and regenerated and holy nature. And this new man cries out for justice, cries out for Christ's righteousness, cries out for God's mercy and His forgiveness and His blessing.

Man's court did not have the final word, did it? It was a surprise. A mere tomb can't hold my Lord. What a surprise! That wretched human governor doesn't have the final say over my Lord. That vindictive horde who cried for Jesus' blood doesn't have the final word. Easter; the glory

of the resurrection; the King of kings is vindicated and He rises from the dead. Almighty God loves justice and Easter is the proof. You have a risen Savior – God loves justice. Your Savior, who was crucified, is risen from the dead – God loves justice and He will give it to you. Your enemies, sin and death, do not rule over you – God loves justice. Christ crucified is justice. Christ reigns from the tree and that is justice. The crucified King is risen and reigns to all eternity and that is justice. No one can diminish it. No one can pervert it. No one and nothing can stop the Lord Jesus from ruling. Pray, dear saints. Lift the cause of justice to our heavenly Father. Pray without ceasing. When the Son of Man comes, He will find faith on earth. When the Son of Man comes, He will find us.