

Getting to know you: How do the people around you respond when there has been injustice? At what point have you joined in with them or decided to do something different?

Reaching Out: Did anyone seize an opportunity to love someone who is not a Christian through works or words in the past week?

Share what happened?

Reaching Up: As you prepare your hearts and minds to interact with the Bible, take a moment to pray that God would:

- open your eyes and ears to God speaking to you through His Word
- make you teachable, that you might be a doer of the Word
- increase your love for God and others

Justice is one of the major themes of the Bible. Ultimately God's justice was satisfied on the cross, however we still live in a world where injustices happen every day. Our faith is unshakeable because Jesus promised to return and establish justice once and for all, but until then we trust and take part in His work to bring justice where there is injustice, and hope where there is hopelessness.

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:6-12 together and discuss the questions that follow:

1. God is Just (v.6a)

Pastor Chad shared that our earthly justice is flawed because it is enforced by sinful people. How does it make you feel when you hear that God is a just judge? Why is it impossible for God to settle for anything less than the standard of perfect, righteous living?

Justice can only be complete when there is punishment for wrong doing. How does the declaration of "God is just" bring about thankfulness in your life for Jesus' death on the cross?

2. Vengeance is the Lord's (v.6b-9)

When you read 2 Thessalonians 1:6b, Paul is working to diffuse the vengeance bomb that wants to go off in each of our lives. Instead of using this power for retaliation, what are some ways you can use these emotions and energy to show Christ's love?

Why is it difficult to wait on the Lord for justice? Are you ever tempted to "take matters into your own hands"? What would you do differently than God?

3. God provides relief (v.7a, 10)

Is there a time in your life when you experienced relief? Describe the circumstances.

What are things you can do to help you to wait on the Lord, or trust the Lord's timing in bringing ultimate justice, so that you might experience relief?

The apostle Paul's words to the church in 2 Thessalonians remind us that relief is coming. What role does the Word of God play in giving you relief?

If you have experienced relief, how can you bring that to others either in word or deed?

4. Pray Constantly (v.11-12)

Prayer and preparation for what God wants you to do seem to have a direct relationship. How might you alter your prayer life this week so that you are ready to follow Jesus each day?

Take a moment and share a prayer request with someone from your small group. Commit to pray for that person each day until your group meets again.

Jesus said to them, "You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy...I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." —John 16:20,33