

ULC Sermon Study Resource

Why Jesus? // He is Just

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Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: How would you describe your week so far in one word?

Reading: Matthew 23:23-37

Outline:

I. His Justice is Loving (v. 23-24)

- A. In this section, Jesus is stating the third of seven woes to the pharisees. The pharisees put material possessions over what is right in the law. They have neglected others and kept for themselves.
- B. The central problem with the Pharisees was not their tithing, it was that it came at the expense of everything else. Jesus refers to the scribes and Pharisees as “hypocrites” for their selfish actions.

Q. What has been a time that you or someone else has kept for yourself, rather than helping others or giving back?

II. His Justice is Life-Giving (v. 25-28)

- A. In this section, Jesus continues with the woes to the pharisees. Jesus compares them to a cup and that only appears clean on the outside, while the inside is filled with grime and dirt. This is a metaphor for the Pharisees claiming to be clean, while actually being spiritually unclean.
- B. Jesus also compares them to tombs. While on the outside, the stone looks clean, inside they are filled with the remains of the dead, and with them, hypocrisy and lawlessness. We can see by these statements that Jesus

wants us to be clean and not give in to our own materialistic desires. How can we strive to not

Q. If at the core of Jesus' vision of justice is to give life, then what would the purpose of our material possessions likely be?

III His Justice is Healing (v. 23:37)

A. In this final section, Jesus finishes his woes and reveals his true desires for Israel. He doesn't desire for violence and bloodshed between people, but for his people to find justice in him. He doesn't discard what is sick or broken, he reveals his justice by healing and mending it.

B. In essence, Jesus is saying that our lives are similar to Japanese Kintsugi Bowls. Instead of discarding us and throwing us away, God fixes us and inspires us to fill the world's metaphorical cracks with gold in places that need to be fixed. God does not seek to hide our cracks. They are the places he is revealing his beauty and glory as he mends them and fills them.

Q. Has there ever been a time that you have tried to mend a broken relationship? How did it go?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1). After reviewing Mathew 26, what does justice mean to you in a biblical context?
- 2). How is Jesus just?
- 3). How do we find his vision of justice compelling?

Suggestions for further study:

Micah 6:8: How can we both take care of ourselves, and also show justice and kindness to others?

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank you for this time to be together to dive into your word. Let this passage resonate over us and inspire us to let us recognize your works in our everyday lives. We know that you work though all things good, and that you are constantly mending our spiritual cracks. Help us to overcome those and shine your light in our everyday lives.