



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Speaker: Chris Royalty // Sunday: January 15, 2023

- 1) Begin your time by briefly praying and asking the Holy Spirit to help you as you discuss and study.
- 2) Read Luke 19:1-10 together.
- 3) What stuck out to you as you read? Is there anything you don't understand? Is there anything you'd like to discuss?
- 4) How well positioned are you to see Jesus? Do you need to move in some way (physically, socially, spiritually) in order to get a clearer sight of the Lord?
- 5) What evidences of repentance do we see in Zacchaeus? What evidences of repentance were present at your conversion?
- 6) The crowds disapprove of Jesus's fellowship with Zacchaeus, yet Zacchaeus comes to faith in the Lord. How commonly do you think Christians resemble the attitudes of the crowds who did not think Zacchaeus was worthy to be with Jesus? How can we better spot those attitudes and root them out?
- 7) In this story, when Zacchaeus begins following Jesus, he then shows justice towards those he had wronged. Read the following short explanation of the concept of justice in the Bible . . .

Justice Is Care for the Vulnerable

By Tim Keller

Micah 6:8 is a summary of how God wants us to live. To walk humbly with God is to know him intimately and to be attentive to what he desires and loves. And what does that consist of? The text says to “do justice and love mercy,” which seem at first glance to be two different things, but they are not. The term for “mercy” is the Hebrew word *chesedh*, God’s unconditional grace and compassion. The word for “justice” is the Hebrew term *mishpat*. In Micah 6:8, “*mishpat* puts the emphasis on the action, *chesedh* puts it on the attitude [or

motive] behind the action.” To walk with God, then, we must do justice, out of merciful love.

The word *mishpat* in its various forms occurs more than two hundred times in the Hebrew Old Testament. Its most basic meaning is to treat people equitably. So Leviticus 24:22 warns Israel to “have the same *mishpat* [“rule of law”] for the foreigner as the native.” *Mishpat* means acquitting or punishing every person on the merits of the case, regardless of race or social status. Anyone who does the same wrong should be given the same penalty. But *mishpat* means more than just the punishment of wrongdoing. It also means to give people their rights. Deuteronomy 18 directs that the priests of the tabernacle should be supported by a certain percentage of the people’s income. This support is described as “the priests’ *mishpat*,” which means their due or their right. So we read, “Defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:9). *Mishpat*, then, is giving people what they are due, whether punishment or protection or care.

This is why, if you look at every place the word is used in the Old Testament, several classes of persons continually come up. Over and over again, *mishpat* describes taking up the care and cause of widows, orphans, immigrants, and the poor—those who have been called “the quartet of the vulnerable.”

This is what the LORD Almighty says:

Administer true justice, show mercy and compassion to one another.

Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the immigrant or the poor.

Zechariah 7:10–11

In premodern, agrarian societies, these four groups had no social power. They lived at subsistence level and were only days from starvation if there was any famine, invasion, or even minor social unrest. Today this quartet would be expanded to include the refugee, the migrant worker, the homeless, and many single parents and elderly people.

The *mishpat*, or justness, of a society, according to the Bible, is evaluated by how it treats these groups. Any neglect shown to the needs of the members of this quartet is not called merely a lack of mercy or charity, but a violation of

justice, of *mishpat*. God loves and defends those with the least economic and social power, and so should we. That is what it means to “do justice.”¹

- 8) Do you think Christians give appropriate emphasis to justice in our Christian lives? Why or why not?
- 9) End your time in prayer. Ask God to help you apply the things you’ve discussed and learned during this time of study.²

¹ Timothy Keller, Generous Justice: How God’s Grace Makes Us Just, 1st ed. (New York: Dutton, 2010), 3–5.

² Some of these questions taken or adapted from Thabiti Anyabwile, [Exalting Jesus in Luke](#), Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018), Lk 19:1–27.