

Minister's Message – June 2005

Justice

Guilty! You are sentenced to 20 years in prison. With these words Miss Corby's hope of freedom was shattered. 'Where is justice?' many are crying out, for they believe she is not guilty.

Injustice is terrible. We all hate injustice. This means of course that we all have a sense of justice. We know what is right and what is wrong – injustice is wrong. We also want to see justice done. We are not calling for those who are obviously guilty of drug smuggling to be set free.

Injustice came into this world along with sin. It is seen all around us at all levels in society and in every human society. In school once I was punished for doing something another boy did – see, I can still remember that injustice done towards me! In some societies injustice is more blatant than in others. Judges often take bribes which blind their eyes to the truth.



Abraham knew that God is a just judge. God is truth and justice in his very being. When he came to destroy the wicked city of Sodom, Abraham made a plea for his nephew, based on this fact.

Solomon knew that God is just. When he was made king he asked God to give him a sense of justice. He wanted to be able to administer justice for the people. *Give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, that I may discern between good and evil* (I Kings 3). Miss Corby might have wished for Solomon to have been her judge! Remember the wise judgment Solomon gave in the case with the two women claiming the one baby (see I Kings 3).

Where do we find justice? Tragically some judges care little about justice. They have their own agenda. They want to advance their own reputation or fill their own pockets with money. There was once a widow who could not get justice because the judge would not hear her. However, she kept on until he finally gave her justice (Luke 18). The poor, the widow, and the orphan usually suffer where injustice reigns.

What can we do in the face of injustice? We can cry out to God, the judge of all the earth. He judges in the highest court in all the earth – and heaven. His judgment is just. The oppressed slaves in Egypt cried out to him. He heard them and sent Moses to bring them out and give them freedom. Jesus said he came to *set at liberty those who are oppressed* (Luke 4:18).

Justice! Justice! we cry. But what if we are guilty? Do we still cry for justice? No – our cry becomes Mercy! Mercy! In the Bible God makes it very clear that we are all guilty before him. When we make judgments – as we have done in the case with Miss Corby, or in heaps of other matters – we leave ourselves open and in fact condemn ourselves. We find the finger of condemnation pointing back at ourselves. You who judge others, don't you do the same thing? Therefore, do you think that *you will escape the judgment of God* (Romans 2:3)? The conclusion is – *all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23).

We all stand guilty before the judgment seat of God. What can we do? We can only plead for mercy. And wonder of wonders, the most amazing thing in all the world is that God will forgive those who so plead.

Why does he forgive? Because of his love – because of his amazing grace! How does he forgive? Through his only Son, Jesus Christ! Jesus came to take our punishment – the death penalty. He died on the Cross that we might be set free. *For all have sinned and...are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Romans 2:24).

Even if Miss Corby is a victim of injustice at the hands of men, let her be assured that she will not only receive justice before 'the Judge of all the earth', but also grace and mercy if she cries to him, believing in Jesus Christ as her only *advocate with the Father* (I John 2:1).

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