

Justice and Judgment

- I. Sometimes we are called upon to render judgment in the court of the church and we may be called upon to sit on a jury in a civil court.
- A. As a church we have judicial authority over our individual members. **1CO 5:12; 6:1-5.**
 - 1. Our power only extends to separating company from an offender.
 - 2. Church membership is voluntary and apostates are free to leave. **JOH 6:66-68.**
 - 3. This is a power of free association that can only be harmed by church incorporation, not helped by it.
 - B. In all criminal prosecutions, the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to a trial by jury.
 - 1. jury: In legal use. A company of persons (orig. men) sworn to render a ‘verdict’ or true answer upon some question or questions officially submitted to them; in modern times, in a court of justice, usually upon evidence delivered to them touching the issue; but in the earliest times usually upon facts or matters within their own knowledge, for which reason they were summoned from the neighbourhood to which the question submitted to them related, or in which the person or persons lived as to whose conduct or death an ‘inquest’ or investigation was held.
 - 2. trial: *Law*. The examination and determination of a cause by a judicial tribunal; determination of the guilt or innocence of an accused person by a court.
 - 3. In such a case, the jury sits as the judge.
- II. This is a study of the system of justice and judgment among men.
- A. God’s judgment is total and extends to all the crimes that men have committed. **MAT 12:36; GAL 3:10; JUDE 1:14-15.**
 - B. In a human system of judgment, it is the responsibility of the judge(s) to determine guilt or innocence of a defendant accused of a specific crime committed at a specific time.
 - 1. Anyone who stands to be judged in a human court is a sinner. **1KI 8:46; ROM 3:23.**
 - 2. Therefore, the issue to be decided is not whether the accused has ever done anything wrong, but rather whether he is guilty of the specific crime with which he is being charged.
- III. The execution of justice and judgment is more important than religious sacrifices and rituals. **PRO 21:3; ISA 1:10-24; MAT 23:23.**
- IV. Isaiah 59 gives a vivid description of a society in which justice and judgment are absent. **ISA 59:4, 8-9, 11, 14.**
- A. Such a society is characterized by deceit, violence, and destruction. **vs. 4-7.**
 - B. Where there is no justice, there can be no peace. **v. 8.**
 - C. In vain does such a society look for light and guidance. **vs. 9-10.**
 - D. Where there is no judgment, there is no salvation. **v. 11.**
 - E. There will be no true justice in a society that legislates God out of its affairs. **v. 13.**
 - F. The decent law-abiding citizen becomes a prey in this kind of society. **v. 15a; 2TI 3:3.**
 - G. Such a state of affairs displeases the Lord. **v. 15b.**
 - H. The despicable condition of this society was not owing to a lack of self-esteem, nor a lack of wealth, nor a lack of redistribution of wealth, nor a lack of jobs, nor a lack of schools, nor a lack of tolerance for alternative lifestyles. It was owing to a lack of justice.

- I. Though men may fail to execute justice, God will nevertheless execute His judgment. **vs. 16-18.**
 - J. Man's injustice does not escape the cognizance of the ultimate, supreme Judge. **ECC 5:8; PSA 82.**
 - K. If man would execute judgment, God would not have to step in. **1CO 11:31.**
- V. When the system becomes corrupted, people tend to look for a knight in shining armour to cure all ills and in so doing they court tyranny. **ISA 3:5-7; 1SAM 8:3-5.**
- VI. The general ignorance of the principles of justice has led to the pitiful state of affairs in our nation. **ISA 5:13; HOS 4:6.**
- A. Equal opportunity and equality before the law is being cast off in favor of equalization of standards of living through wealth redistribution.
 - B. Uniform justice through the law has commonly given way to "social justice."
 - C. Public officials are too often elected not to uphold or restore justice but to bend it to the benefit of a class of voters.
 - D. The rights and property of individuals are too commonly deemed inferior to the concerns of the state, of regulatory agencies' whims, of international concerns, and the "global" concerns of spurious science.
- VII. What are justice and judgment?
- A. justice: I. The quality of being just. II. Judicial administration of law or equity. Exercise of authority or power in maintenance of right; vindication of right by assignment of reward or punishment; requital of desert.
 - 1. just: That does what is morally right, righteous. **just before (with) God** or, simply, **just**: Righteous in the sight of God; justified.
 - 2. right: sb. The standard of permitted and forbidden action within a certain sphere; law; a rule or canon. 2. That which is proper for or incumbent on one to do; one's duty. 3a. That which is consonant with equity or the light of nature; that which is morally just or due. (Often contrasted with *might* and *wrong*, and in ME. freq. coupled with *reason* or *skill*.)
 - 3. right: adj. Of persons or disposition: Disposed to do what is just or good; upright, righteous. Of actions, conduct, etc.: In accordance with what is just or good; equitable; morally fitting. In later use chiefly predicative.
 - B. judgment: The action of trying a cause in a court of justice; trial. 3a. The sentence of a court of justice; a judicial decision or order in court.
 - C. judge: sb. A public officer appointed to administer the law; one who has authority to hear and try causes in a court of justice.
 - D. judge: v. To try, or pronounce sentence upon (a person) in a court of justice; to sit in judgement upon.
 - E. Judgment requires discernment between that which is good and that which is bad, which requires a standard of good and bad.
 - F. Inherent in the definition of *justice* is a standard of right which is a law.
 - 1. The lawgiver is God. **JAM 4:12; ISA 33:22.**
 - a. It is by the wisdom that comes from God that justice is decreed. **PRO 2:6; 8:15-16.**
 - b. The ultimate source of your law is your god.
 - c. If the ultimate source of law is humanity, then humanity cannot be under the

- law.
2. All men from the supreme magistrate on down are under God's law. **PSA 103:19; COL 2:10; PSA 2:10-12.**
 3. In a just society, rulers themselves are restrained by law. **DEU 17:14-20.**
 4. We need judges in the church and in the nation that are informed in the laws of God. **EZR 7:25.**
 5. When God and His law are ruled out of a society, justice is gone.
 - a. Absolutes will give way to relativism.
 - b. Right will be determined by might or by poll and therefore subject to continual flux.
 - c. There can be no stability in such a system.