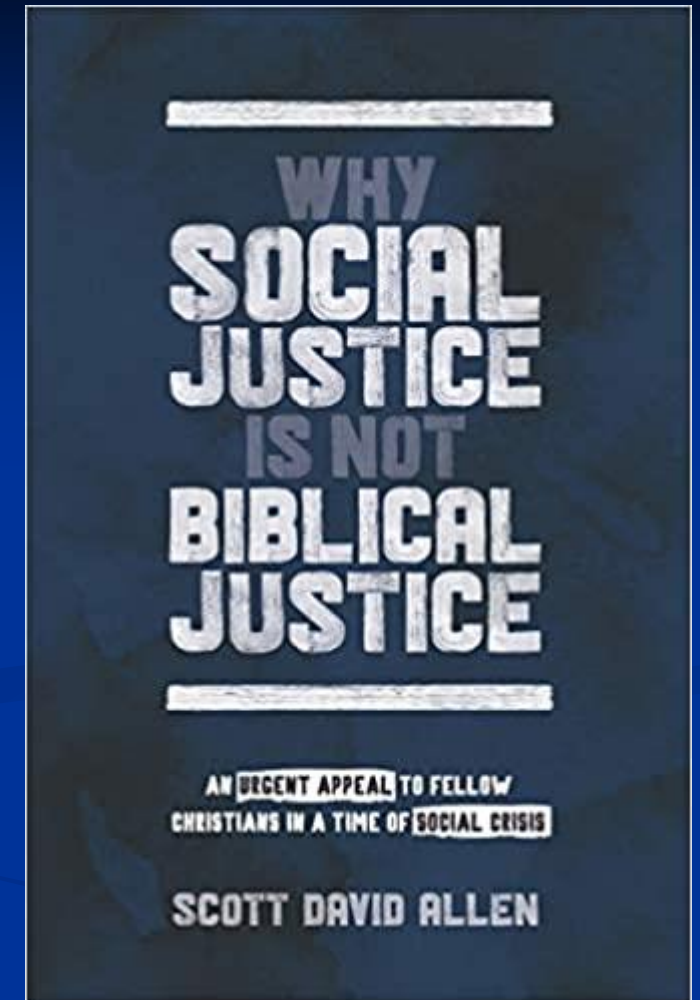


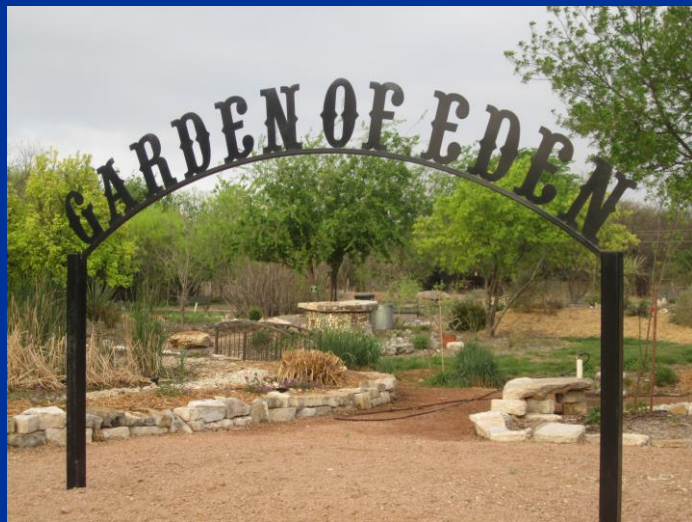
A Biblical View of Justice



*Why Social Justice is not
Biblical Justice*, by Scott
David Allen, 2020



Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat – law of liberty – Genesis 2:17



Justice in the Garden of Eden

- Genesis 2:16 – *the Lord God commanded the man, saying – law with consequences*
- Died spiritually before physically
- Self-government required to maintain liberty
- The enemy introduced injustice as justice:
 - “Thesis” - God gave freedom to choose to obey His commands
 - “Anti-thesis” - the devil sowed doubt and discontent – God is oppressing you
 - “Synthesis” - “you shall not surely die” - deny the consequences of the transgression

The Pattern of Social Justice

- (1) New thesis of doubting God, attitude of our sin nature
 - Social justice rests on the sovereignty of the group/individual and thus has denied the existence of the Transcendent God
- (2) Antithesis of discontent/entitlement (no responsibility)
 - Social justice rests on the fact that “it is not my fault”; punish oppressors on the perceived “oppressed” individual/group
- (3) Synthesis of denying consequences for one’s actions
 - An attempt to equalize outcomes by treating people unequally and violating the rule of law, ultimately resting on vengeance

Biblical Justice rests on the Nature of God

- Deuteronomy 32:4 - *He is the Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He.*
 - The God of the Bible is depicted as totally perfect (and balanced)
 - God is *both* just and loving (knowable) at the same time
- Webster (1828) – Just – *straight or close* (plumb line)
- Justice – *the virtue which consists in giving to everyone what is his due; practical conformity to the laws and to principles of rectitude in the dealings of men with each other; honesty; integrity...*

Biblical Justice defined and applied (1828)

- *Conformity to God's moral standard as revealed in the Ten Commandments and the Royal Law: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* – God is both Law and Love
 - Communitive Justice: living in right relationship with God and others; giving people their due as image-bearers of God (vertical)
 - Distributive Justice: impartially rendering judgment, righting wrongs, and meting out punishment for lawbreaking. Reserved for God and God-ordained authorities including parents in the home, elders in the church, teachers in the school, and civil authorities in the state (horizontal)

Civil Government is God's *ministry of Justice*

- The individual, family, business and ecclesia precede State
- Genesis 9:6 - *Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man*
 - The origin of civil government was for the protection of life
- God instituted the State – Civil Government (Romans 13:1-7)
 - As a ministry of justice (based on God's Law) in the earth
 - To protect the righteous by maintaining order in society (those who can govern themselves) – see also 1st Timothy 2:1-7
 - To punish the evil-doer (those who refuse to govern themselves)

Every religion has a corresponding civil government and justice

The Fruit

The Fruit of Social Justice

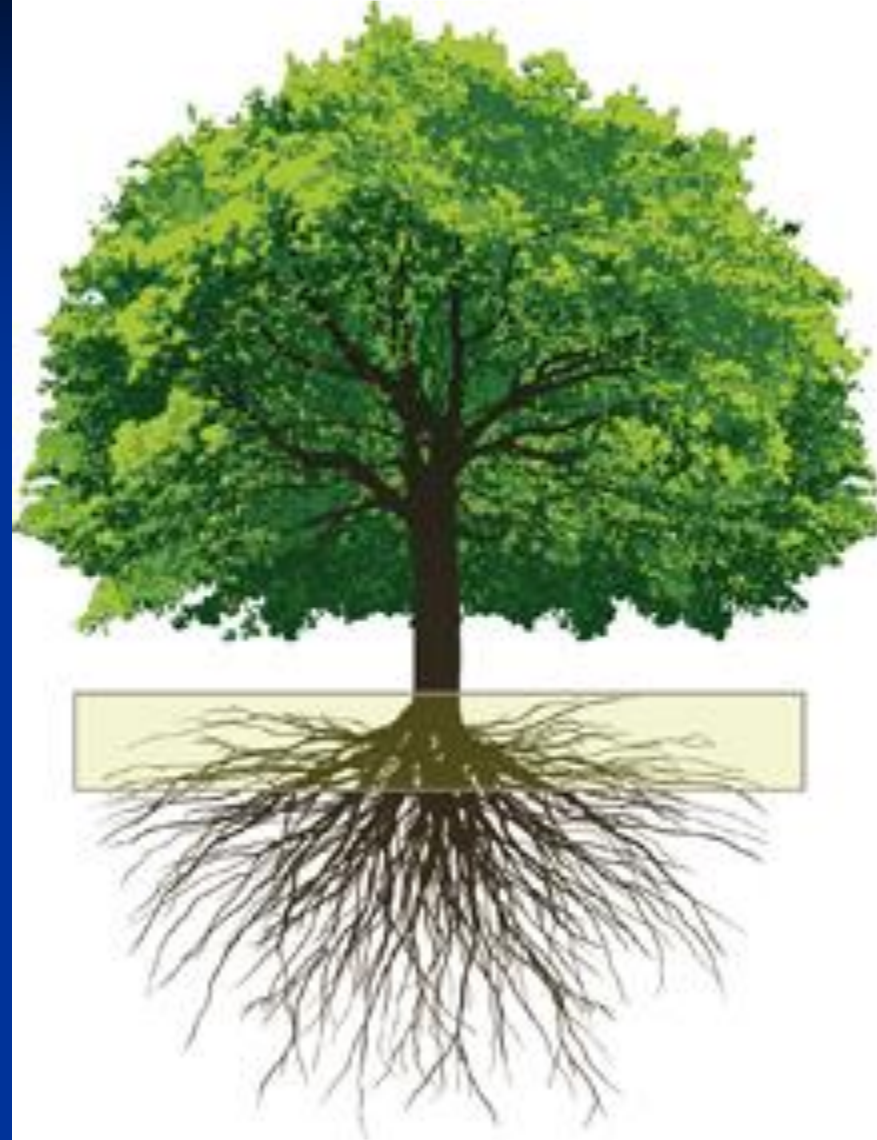
Enmity, hostility, entitlement, grievance, control-based economics



The Premise of Social Justice

Sovereignty of the Government to determine right and wrong

The Root



The Fruit of Biblical Justice

God's creation, empowerment, choice-based economics



The Premise of Biblical Justice

Sovereignty of God's Law to apply equity in each situation

“Injustice in the name of Justice” – pgs. 9-12

Justice on the Radical Left

- Defined:
- *Deconstructing traditional systems and structures deemed to be oppressive, and redistributing power and resources from oppressors to their victims in the pursuit of equality of outcome*

Selected Groups are Sovereign

Justice on the Radical Right

- Defined:
- *Preserving traditional systems and structures deemed to be just, and centralizing power and resources so that governments can give money to select autonomous individuals in the pursuit of democratic equality*

The Individual is Sovereign

“Injustice in the name of Justice”

Justice on the Radical Left

■ Defined:

- *Defined:*
justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.
"individuality gives way to the struggle for social justice"
Equality of income

Selected Groups are Sovereign

Justice on the Radical Right

■ Defined:

- *Defined:*
justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society.
"individuality gives way to the struggle for social justice"
the pursuit of equality

The Individual is Sovereign

Frederick Hayek (1899-1992) on “social justice”

The classical demand is that the state ought to treat all people equally in spite of the fact that they are very unequal. You can't deduce from this that because people are unequal you ought to treat them unequally in order to make them equal. And that's what social justice amounts to... to make people equal a goal of government policy would force government to treat people very unequally indeed....I have come to feel strongly, that the greatest service I can still render to my fellow men, that I could make the speakers and writers among them thoroughly ashamed ever again to employ the term social justice.

What are the Premises of Social Justice?

- See chart on page 56 of *Why Social Justice...*
- (1) *The human mind determines what is ultimately real*
- (2) *Our identity is determined by race, sex and gender*
- (3) *The fundamental problem in life is being unfairly oppressed by privileged groups (white heteronormative males)*
- (4) *The solution to our problem is for the oppressed to unite, unmask, deconstruct and overthrow oppressive systems*

The Scriptural view of Premises 1-4...

- True reality is a revelation from God to man; but if we reject God and our standard is ourselves, we will put God on trial
- Our identity rests on being created in God's image, but rejecting God and our position transfers our identity to external areas such as gender, race and achievement
- Our fundamental problem is separation from God through sin but rejecting this we blame others as an excuse for rebellion
- External, violent revolution is not the solution, for we only trade one tyrant for another. *Inward transformation and influence is the way the Kingdom of God manifests by love*

What are the Premises of Social Justice? (p. 2)

- See chart on pages 57-58 (Allen) for these categories
- (5) *Victims aren't responsible / oppressors cannot be pardoned*
- (6) *Our primary moral duty is to stand with the oppressed*
- (7) *We know what is true based on experiences of oppressed*
- (8) *The ultimate authority are perceived victims and they must be believed without question*
- (9) *There is no future final judgment and no god so injustice must be rooted out here and now by force and revolution*

The Biblical answer to Premises 5-9...

- All victims and oppressors can repent and be forgiven by Christ but rejecting this perceived oppressors can never be forgiven
- Our primary moral duty is to love God / others; not revolution
- Truth is rooted in the nature of God, not in ourselves
- The ultimate authority rests with God's sovereignty, and His commutative justice delegated in the individual, home, church and civil government; the alternative is all power in the State
- There is a final judgment where all will give account of their deeds; or the only justice we can get on earth - generationally

Critical terms redefined by Social Justice

Biblical Justice

- Equality as a position before God and the law
- Diversity as an expression of individuality and distinction
- The Poor can be enabled to overcome their circumstances
- America; imperfect but blessed
- Morality based on the Ten Commandments and the Bible

Social Justice

- Equality as an outcome based on experience and victimhood
- Diversity as a basis of equality, conformity and uniformity
- The Poor as victims of the rich needing redistribution of wealth
- America; cursed from the start
- Morality based on power groups enacting vengeance

The Danger of Syncretism and Obscurantism

- Contextualization – *Applying the gospel and Biblical truth to the culture in which one lives; praying for transformation*
 - Syncretism - Oxford on-line Dictionary - *the... attempted amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought... "interfaith dialogue can easily slip into syncretism"*
 - Obscurantism - *obscuring the gospel by emphasizing things that are... external to it... thus, a false "social" gospel*
- Neither the extreme of internal compromise (merging premises) or external works (putting effects before causes) is correct; we must be focused on Christ and His Kingdom!

The Result of a Secular-Sacred Dichotomy

- Religion – *Christianity absorbs Liberation Theology*
- Evolution - *Theistic evolution, re-interpreting Genesis 1*
- Charity – *Government redistribution of welfare*
- Ethics – *Moral relativism, absolutes adjusted for victim*
- Crime and Punishment – *Society at fault, pay rehabilitation*
- Law – *precedent law (antinomian), judicial supremacy*
- Foreign Policy – *Nationalism, imperialism, utopianism*
- Climate – *“Climate Justice” – punished for producing liberty*

Ideological Social Justice permeates our Culture

- Its presuppositions dominate these areas – p. 131 (Allen)
 - Public education K-12 as well as Colleges and Universities
 - Mainstream media, entertainment, and both political Parties
 - Big tech and Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Twitter, etc.
 - Major corporations and accreditations in education, law, medicine
- A remnant of the culture, however, is resiting... - p. 132
 - Rural and blue-collar communities; conservatives in both Parties
 - Majority of Bible-believing evangelicals, Catholics and Jews
 - Small but vocal academics, public figures, celebrities and leaders

Shifting Worldviews

Premodern – before 1800

- Based on Judaism, Christianity and Islam – monotheism
- Ultimate authority (and justice) in God and His revealed will
- The State must adhere to a higher law (God's, or some form of religious accountability)
- Planted in 30 AD, and then 600, it bore fruit through the 1830's

Modern – 1800-1950

- Based on Science as “god”, denial of God's Transcendancy
- Ultimate authority (and justice) on the material (not spiritual)
- The State must adhere to the higher law of scientific truth accepted by consensus
- Planted in the 1780's, it would bear fruit in the 1880's (100 yrs)

Shifting Worldviews, part 2

Postmodern – 1950 on...

- Based on the sovereign, autonomous individual
- Ultimate authority (and justice) is subjective and imaginative
- The State need not adhere to any higher law, but itself can impose its truth on all
- Planted in the 1920's, it bore fruit in the 1990's (70 yrs)

“Social Justice” worldview

- Based on the autonomy of selected, victimized groups
- Ultimate authority (and justice) is determined by the oppressed
- The State is to impose penalties unequally and selectively to the perceived oppressors
- Planted in the 1990's, it bore fruit in 2020 (30 yrs)

Consequences of Believers retreating

- 1849 - Marxism/Communism re-labels counterfeit justice
- 1859 - It finds fertile soil in the theory of Evolution
- Though Marxism fails in Russia, China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Cuba and now Venezuela...
 - *It is still taught in American Universities, High Schools / Colleges*
 - *It disguised its tenets with a new methodology and “clothing”*
- 1950 - Cultural Marxism (Gramsci – Frankfurt School) used
 - *Oppressed victims as the proletariat – the working class*
 - *Oppressors (Bourgeoisie) – business owners – are privileged...*

Why is “social justice” theory so appealing?

- *For many, especially the young, discovering a new meaning (for life)... is thrilling. Social justice ideology does everything a religion should. It offers an account of the whole; that human life and society... must be seen entirely as a function of social power structures, in which various groups have spent all human existence oppressing other groups, and it provides a set of principles to resist and reverse this interlocking web of oppression. - Andrew Sullivan, essayist, page 50 (Allen)*
- *When believers retreat from living out their worldview in their lives and the culture, false philosophies rise in influence*

We must be pro-Biblical Worldview

Social Justice

- Human Identity
 - Socially determined by race, sex, gender
- Transform Culture
 - Revolutionary where end justifies means

Biblical Worldview

- Human Identity
 - Unique individuals that bless others...
- Transform Culture
 - Christians are to be salt and light

Anti-Social Justice

- Human Identity
 - Rugged individuals who defy groups
- Transform Culture
 - Withdraw from culture; heaven only

The great emphasis in the New Testament is that the gospel is not how to escape the world; the gospel is that the crucified and risen Jesus is the Lord of the world. – N.T. Wright (p. 184)

We must be pro-Biblical Worldview

Social Justice

- Racism
 - Widespread, systemic, pervasive
- Systemic Injustice
 - Rooted in social systems, not hearts
 - Improper outcome disparities prove it
 - Brush-stroking entire cultures as a premise

Biblical Worldview

- Racism
 - All one race; and ethnic groups equal
- Systemic Injustice
 - Rooted in sin and the evil in our hearts
 - “framing mischief by law” – change laws
 - Restore the rule of law for all

Anti-Social Justice

- Racism
 - Doesn't exist, had no part in America
- Systemic Injustice
 - Deny that systemic injustice exists
 - Simply return to less discrimination by law
 - Trade power from one group to another

We must be pro-Biblical Worldview

Social Justice

- Western Civ. & USA
 - Irredeemably corrupt
 - Its premises corrupt
- Tactics
 - Power – bullying, shaming, threats, canceling, silencing
 - The end justifies the means – any means

Biblical Worldview

- Western Civ. & USA
 - Biblical premises grew over time
- Tactics
 - Serving – love, empower, bless, build relationships
 - The means must be right as well as end

Anti-Social Justice

- Western Civ. & USA
 - Almost perfect
 - Preserve the past
- Tactics
 - Use some power tactics or retreat into silence and apathy
 - The end goal can justify various means

Biblical Justice rests on God's Law

- Rests on sovereignty of God's Law (revealed/natural law)
- Justice is being right with God (communicative) and man (distributive in a decentralized fashion)
- Adjudicates disputes by applying the rule of law with equity
- Equity means getting the punishment that fits the crime
- Justice checks corruption by due process – innocent
- Justice treats each individual's identity as equal before law
- Since all human laws are fallible, Biblical justice has a built-in appeal to a higher law (God's Law) to correct injustice

The Nature of God's Justice vs. Social Justice

Biblical Justice

- Transcendent Law-Giver – God
- Rule of God's Law and Equity (restitution to victim)
- God-given Rights of Individuals
- Checks and balances against corruption in people & leaders
- Due Process of Law regardless of race, background or status

Social Justice

- Autonomy of Self / Group(s)
- Vengeance against Oppressors (reparation to groups)
- Government-granted Rights
- Redistribution of wealth and justice based on oppressed
- Unequal due process based on race, background or status

In Summary, *Christ's Kingdom is the solution!*

- True reality is a revelation from God to man; but if we reject God and our standard is ourselves, we will put God on trial
- Our identity rests on being created in God's image, and though marred by sin, can be positionally righteous in Christ through repentance and regeneration
- Our fundamental problem is separation from God through sin and this results in blaming others so we can excuse rebellion
- External, violent revolution is not the solution, for we only trade one tyrant for another. *Inward transformation and influence is the way the Kingdom of God manifests by love*