

THE SCRIPTURES AND CONCERN FOR JUSTICE

The Scriptures display a strong concern for justice in the world. Keep this list of justice-centered biblical passages for use in preparing class prayers and liturgies, as a resource for assignments, and for your own reflection and prayer.

The Old Testament

Genesis 1:1–31. God creates the world; humans are called to be stewards of the earth.

Exodus 3:1–20. God is a liberator; Moses is sent to free the People of God from oppression.

Exodus 22:21–27. Justice is required toward strangers, orphans, widows, and neighbors.

Exodus 23:6–8. Legal systems must be fair.

Leviticus 19:9–18. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Leviticus 19:32–36. Respect foreigners and the elderly; be honest in business.

Leviticus 25:8–17. God wants the jubilee year and economic restoration.

Leviticus 25:23–28. The land is the Lord's; humans are guests.

Leviticus 25:35–38. Give support to poor people.

Deuteronomy 15:1–15. God gives laws on cancellation of debts and release of slaves; let there be no poor people among you.

Deuteronomy 24:17–22. Have just relations with strangers, orphans, and widows.

Deuteronomy 26:12–13. Paying tithes shows concern for people who are poor.

Deuteronomy, chapter 30. Choosing the Lord means choosing life.

Psalm 9:7–12, 18. God is a just ruler.

Psalm 25:6–18. God hears and protects the just people.

Psalm 65:9–13. God cares for creation.

Psalm 72. God liberates oppressed people; in God's day, justice thrives.

Psalm 82. God calls for fair judgment.

Psalm 103. God works for justice for oppressed people.

Psalm 146:1–10. God upholds oppressed people, bringing justice and liberty.

Proverbs 19:17. Helping poor people is helping God.

Proverbs 21:13. Do not ignore the cry of poor people.

Proverbs 31:8–9. Speak out for those who have no voice.

Isaiah 11:1–9. God's servant brings justice.

Isaiah 32:16–20. The effect of justice will be peace.

Isaiah 42:1–7. God calls us for the victory of justice.

Isaiah 58:1–12. God desires conversion of heart, not vain worship.

Isaiah 61:1–3. The Messiah's mission of justice is prophesied.

Jeremiah 7:1–11. The Temple is not a place for doers of evil.

Jeremiah 22:13–17. To know the Lord is to act justly.

Ezekiel, chapter 34. Leaders and authorities have obligations.

Amos 5:10–15. Do what is right; establish justice.

Amos 5:21–24. Worship must express real conversion and renewal.

Amos 8:4–7. Those who have power oppress the needy people.

Micah 4:1–4. In God's Reign of peace, swords will be beaten into plowshares.

Micah 6:8. Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly.

Zechariah 7:9–10. Show one another kindness and mercy.

The New Testament

Matthew 5:1–12. Jesus preaches the Beatitudes.

Matthew 5:13–16. You are the light of the world.

Matthew 5:38–48. You must love your enemies.

Matthew 6:1–4. Do not seek praise for your generosity.

Matthew 6:19–21. Your real treasure is in your heart.

Matthew 6:24–34. Seek first the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 11:2–6. The Messiah is recognized by acts of justice.

Matthew 25:31–46. What we do for our neighbors we do for Christ.

Mark 9:35; 10:42–45. To be first, become a servant for all.

Mark 10:17–31. The rich young man cannot give up his wealth.

Mark 12:41–44. The widow's offering is greater than that of the rich man.

Luke 1:46–55. Mary praises God, who exalts the poor and lowers the rich.

Luke 3:10–18. John the Baptist calls for sharing and honesty.

Luke 4:16–30. Jesus announces his mission of liberation.

Luke 14:7–14. Those who exalt themselves will be humbled.

Luke 15:1–7. Jesus responds to those who are angry because he welcomes outcasts.

Luke 16:19–31. Jesus tells the story of Lazarus and the rich man.

Luke 19:7–9. Zacchaeus meets Jesus and is converted.

John 13:1–17. Jesus washes the feet of the disciples.

Acts 2:43–47; 4:32–35. The early Christian communities shared everything; no one was in need.

Acts 6:1–6. Deacons were appointed to serve.

Acts 10:34–35. God shows no partiality.

Romans 12:3–21. All are one in Christ; our behavior should demonstrate this oneness.

Romans 14:17–19. The Kingdom of God consists of justice, peace, and joy.

1 Corinthians 12:12–27. In the Christian community, if one suffers, all suffer; if one benefits, all benefit.

1 Corinthians, chapter 13. Love is the lifestyle of a Christian.

2 Corinthians 8:1–15. Share with needy people; Christ became poor so we could be enriched.

2 Corinthians 9:1–15. Give with gladness.

Galatians 3:28. We are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 6:2. Bear one another's burdens.

Galatians 6:9–10. Never grow weary of doing good.

Philippians 2:1–11. Be a servant, like Christ.

Colossians 3:9–17. Clothe yourself in a new self, made in the image of God.

1 Timothy 6:17–19. Rich people should not be proud.

Hebrews 13:1–3. Welcome strangers and remember those who are in prison.

James 1:22–27. Be doers of the word, not just hearers.

James 2:14–17. Faith must be accompanied by action.

James 5:1–6. Unjust riches cause misery.

1 Peter 4:7–11. Let your gifts serve others.

1 John 4:7–21. We cannot love God without loving our neighbor.

Revelation 21:1–6. In the new heaven and the new earth, death no longer has dominion.