Pro. 31:8-9, Jer. 22:3, Psalm 146:7-9, Micah 6:8; 7:18-20, Isa. 1:16-21, Isa. 59

**Opening Scripture**

*Psalm 9:7-10 NLT*

*But the LORD reigns forever, executing judgment from his throne. [8] He will judge the world with justice and rule the nations with fairness. [9] The LORD is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. [10] Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O LORD, do not abandon those who search for you.*

**Introduction**

* (Speak on the current climate of the nation after senseless murder of George Lloyd, May 6 Sean Reed a 21 year old military veteran was shot and killed by Indianapolis police, Amaud Arbery-racial profiling victim, -tie in the Matthew 24 Birth Pangs i.e. Locusts Swarms in Africa, pestilence around the world, hatred among ethnic groups)
* Ask the question- What is the job of the believer in this hour? Is it to pursue Social Justice or Is it simply to preach the Gospel?
* The answer is Both. My goal tonight is to provide biblical evidence that illustrates that the two are NOT mutually exclusive.

*Matthew 25:31-40 NLT*

*“But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. [32] All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. [33] He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. [34] “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.*

 *[35] For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. [36] I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’ [37] “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? [38] Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? [39] When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ [40] “And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’*

**We can see clearly in the text that God is very invested in how we treat those who are considered “the least of these”.**

(Lead into giving an operational definition of Social Justice)

What is Social Justice?

Justice is the concept of fairness. Social justice is fairness as it manifests in society. That includes fairness in healthcare, employment, housing, and more. Discrimination and social justice are not compatible. While “social justice” as a term sees widespread use these days, it’s not new. As the Industrial Revolution wound down, American legal scholars applied the term to economics. Now, social justice applies to all aspects of society, including race and gender, and it is closely tied to human rights.

The principles of social justice

Social justice depends on four essential goals: human rights, access, participation, and equity. Social justice can’t be achieved without these four principles.

Human Rights (Universal Declaration of Human Rights)-

Article 1. Right to Equality

Article 2 Freedom from Discrimination

Article 3 Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security

Article 4 Freedom from Slavery

Article 5 Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment

Article 6 Right to recognition before the law

Article 7 Right to equality before the law

Access- Being able to access essentials like shelter, food, and education is crucial for a just society **Ps. 82:2-5**

Participation- When the most vulnerable and marginalized among us are given a voice

**Pro. 31:8-9**

Equity- Many people believe that “equality” is one of the principles of social justice, but it’s actually “equity.” What’s the difference? Equity takes into account the effects of discrimination and aims for an equal outcome. There’s a graphic that demonstrates this well: three people are trying to see over a fence. One of them is already tall and able to see – they represent the most privileged in society. The other can just barely see and the last person – the most vulnerable in society – can’t see at all. “Equality” gives everyone one box to stand on, even though the tallest person doesn’t need it and it still doesn’t allow the shortest person to see. “Equity” doesn’t give the privileged person any boxes. Instead, the middle person gets one box and the last gets two. Now, everyone is at an equal level. **Eph. 2:13-16**

-From Humanrightscareers.com

(Now that we have a picture of how Social Justice is defined, we need to ask the following question, Is it possible for us to see Social Justice for all people in the world we live in?)

The biblically correct answer is No… However, this is not because this is not God’s desire, but because we live in a world that is Sick with Sin and as long as we live on this earth, there will be oppression, persecution, and exploitation.

So the next question is… Why should we even bother to pursue social justice in this life?...**Because, as believer’s-followers of Jesus Christ it is in our very nature to destroy the bonds of oppression... Because it is what our Lord did for each of us…**

*Isaiah 1:16-20 NKJV*

*“Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, [17] Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. [18] “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. [19] If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land; [20] But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword”; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*

*Psalm 82:1-5 NLT*

*God presides over heaven’s court; he pronounces judgment on the heavenly beings: [2] “How long will you hand down unjust decisions by favoring the wicked? Interlude [3] “Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. [4] Rescue the poor and helpless; deliver them from the grasp of evil people. [5] But these oppressors know nothing; they are so ignorant! They wander about in darkness, while the whole world is shaken to the core.*

*Proverbs 31:8-9 NLT*

*Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. [9] Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.*

**Jesus is heaven’s ultimate Freedom Fighter, He not only lived a life of service, but he gave us His Spirit so that we can respond to oppression and injustice in accordance to God’s Will...instead of responding as dictated by our negative emotions.**

**How Do we respond to injustice and oppression?**

*Romans 12:17-21 NLT*

*Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. [18] Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. [19] Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the LORD. [20] Instead, “If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads.” [21] Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.*

**Benediction**

*Jude 1:24-25 NKJV*

*Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, [25] To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen*