TITLE: Justice

TEXT: Ps. 9:16; Deut. 16:18-20; Is. 10:1-2 & 59:4-16

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about Justice.

 With the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Ginsburg this past week all we will probably be hearing over the next couple months is the battle that will take place over her replacement on the court.

 The primary, actually the sole role of a judge is to administer justice. Scripture has a lot to say to us about Judges and the administration of justice. As Christians we are called to be a people regulated by Justice. We are called by God to live by justice and be administrators of justice to others.

 Justice is an attribute of God.

**Psalms 9:16 (NIV)**

**16The LORD is known by his justice…**

 The LORD is known by his justice and if we are going to be a reflection of God in and to our world then we need to embrace and manifest justice in our own lives as well.

 God, talking to His people in….

**Deuteronomy 16:18 - 20 (NIV)**

**18Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the LORD your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly.****19Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous.****20Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.**

**19Do not pervert justice or show partiality.**

(BUT)

**20Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.**

When God was about to give His people a national identity, make them a nation of people, one of His first priorities was to establish government.

 A structure of rule! And part of that structure of rule was to be judges who would administer justice as a vital part of that structure.

As a people, they were called to follow justice and justice alone!

A primary function of government for Gods people is to establish and maintain and follow justice!

 So just what does justice mean?

**Justice *tseh'-dek***

**jus·tice *n.* 2.a. The principle of moral rightness; equity. b. Conformity to moral rightness in action or attitude; righteousness.**

Our nation’s constitutional government was molded after this principle.

 Our Founding Fathers molded and drafted our Constitution and Bill of Rights from the precepts that they found within Scripture.

They took these Scriptural precepts and Scriptural concepts and with, I believe much prayer and seeking guidance from above, molded and crafted our founding documents.

Founding Father John Adams once said this:

*“We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion… Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people…It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”*

 Our Founding fathers understood from our nation’s conception that the foundation that they were building this nation upon, our constitution, would only work for a moral and religious people because they were founded upon principles that God Himself had laid down in His Word as an absolute standard for right or moral living!

 Our founders established a three part government.

 It would have an executive branch, a legislative branch and a judicial branch. Each would play a part to the whole but each a separate part.

 The Executive Branch would consist of a president and his cabinet and would have the power and authority to enforce laws..

 The Legislative Branch would consist of citizens chosen to represent the common people to make and pass law.

 The Judicial branch was to consist of judges who would administer opinion on constitutional law and the laws of the legislative branch.

 And within the frame work of democracy this would be a government chosen by the people who comprise the republic.

 A government of the people, by the people and for the people who make up this republic we call America.

We the people elect, we choose the person that we want to be our president and lead and represent us as a nation.

 We the people elect, we choose the people who we want to make laws for us and represent our views as a nation. Senators, congressmen, representatives, governors, mayors, city council members, ect….

 Judges for the most part, are not chosen by we the people but they are appointed by the people that we do choose and elect to represent us.

 As far as federal court judges go they are chosen by the sitting president and then confirmed or not confirmed by the Senate.

 This is a set of checks and balances that the founders built into our system of government to help protect, we the people, from tyrannical judges

 The Judicial Branch was created to be the weakest branch of Government for that reason. They were not given the power to make or enforce law but only to make judgments concerning the Constitutional validity of the laws that the legislative branch of Government makes!

 Otherwise, the Judiciary could end up usurping power that they were never intended to have and bypass the will of the people.

 There is a phrase that you hear a lot today with regards to our courts and that is “legislating from the bench.”

First, It is important that we understand just what that phrase means.

 To legislate from the bench means to make law from the bench. It speaks of judges who strive to legislate or make law within the court by judicial decree…

 This is a power that they were never intended to have and in fact are legally forbidden to have.

 Within our form of constitutional government, the executive and legislative branches of government are to make and enforce the laws, and it is the responsibility of the judiciary, the courts to simply render their opinion as to the rightness or constitutionality of the laws that the other two branches of Government make and enforce!

 This is the balance of powers that our founders set up as a protection for, we the people” from tyrannical judges and courts!

 Keep in mind that presidents and congress comprise elected representatives of the people, while judges, for the most part, are not elected into office but appointed.

 Since judges are not elected by the people and subject to the discretion of the people to keep their position, the founders saw it necessary to keep them from making law because they are not directly accountable to the people.

 If we have a president that we want to get rid of then we can vote him out of office the next time around!

 If we have a congressman or senator or representative that we feel is not representing us properly in the affairs of government then we can vote them out of office the next time around!

 We do not have that control over judges because they are not elected but appointed to their positions.

 So the founders saw fit to make them the least powerful branch of government in that they were not given the power to make or enact or enforce law but only to administer judgment of the laws that elected representatives of the people would make!

 More and more we find our courts today doing what they have never been given the power or authority to do and that is legislate from the bench! To not just administer justice within the law but to actually change the intent of the law or the constitution by judicial interpretation!

 Activist judges have taken over a lot of our high courts and are in fact legislating from the bench, and this is the most dangerous thing that we face as a free people and as a Christian today.

 Let me give you a prime example of what an activist court has done and how they did it.

 The first amendment to the constitution says this.

 “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

 This is a word for word quote of the first amendment!

*“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”*

Notice anything missing that possibly you thought was contained in the first amendment?

 What about the words “separation of Church and state?”

 They are not there nor have they ever been there!

 The first amendment simply says: *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”*

 The first amendment was not intended to protect the government from the Church but to protect the Church from the Government!

 The intent of the founders at the 1st amendments inception was crystal clear! They were saying: We do not want in America what we had in Great Brittan: “We don’t want one denomination running the nation. We will not all be Catholics, or Anglicans, or any other single denomination, we do want God’s principles, but we don’t want one denomination running the nation!”

 This intent was well understood, as evidenced by Supreme Court rulings after the first amendment was ratified!

 In 1799 the court declared:

*“By our form of government, the Christian religion is the established religion; and all sects and denominations of Christians are placed on the same equal footing.”*

 What was this court’s interpretation of the 1st amendment?

 We do want Christian principles—we do want Gods principles---but we don’t want one denomination to run the nation!

 The phrase separation of Church and state didn’t come into existence until 1801 and it was not in any of the founding documents but in a reply to a letter that Thomas Jefferson had received while president of the United States.

 In late 1801 the Danbury Baptists Association of Danbury Connecticut had heard a rumor that the Congregationalists denomination was about to be declared the national denomination. That concerned them, as it should have, so they fired off a letter to then president Jefferson stating their concerns.

 On Jan 1st of 1802 Jefferson wrote the Danbury Baptists assuring them that “the first amendment has erected a wall of separation between Church and State.”

 His letter explained that they need not fear the establishment of a national denomination---and that while the wall of the first amendment would protect the Church from government control---there would always be open and free religious expression of all orthodox religious practices, for true religious duties would never threaten the purpose of legitimate government!

 In 1854 someone tried to use the Jefferson letter to back up a separation of Church and state philosophy.

 They used it to try to get chaplains turned out of the military and Congress.

 Both the House and Senate judiciary committees investigated for about a year to see if it would be possible to separate Christian principles from government.

 This is an excerpt from their House report on March 27,1854:

 *“Had the people (the foundering fathers) during the Revolution, had a suspicion of any attempt to war against Christianity, that Revolution would have been strangled in its cradle. At the time of the adoption of the constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged, but not any one sect (denomination)… In this age there is no substitute for Christianity…That was the religion of the founders of the republic, and they expected it to remain the religion of their decedents…..”*

 It wasn’t until about 100 years later in 1947 that the Jefferson letter came back into play by a high court.

 The 1947 Supreme Court quoted one phrase out of the letter, “The first amendment has erected a high wall of separation between Church and State. That wall must be kept high and impregnable” and they completely ignored the content and context of the rest of the letter.

 Dr. William James, the father of modern Psychology perhaps explained the Court’s new strategy best when he said: “There is nothing so absurd but if you repeat it often enough people will start to believe it.”

 And then in 1962 a Supreme Court with activist judges did something unprecedented… They took it upon themselves to redefine one word of the Jefferson letter and then use it to change the meaning of the 1st amendment!

 The word “Church” in the Jefferson letter contextually had always been defined to mean “a federally established denomination.”

 The 1962 Supreme Court declared that the word Church would now mean, “any religious activity in public.”

 They then legislated from the bench and declared that now Prayer must be taken out of our schools….

 And that Court decision has set up a steady stream of erosion whereby activist judges, with their own ideologies, reinterpreting the constitution to fit those ideologies that, I believe, are driving this nation closer and closer to the sure judgment of God!

 Today we have courts going completely around the will of the people to see their will imposed upon the people!

 So what does Scripture have to say about this?

  **Isaiah 10:1 - 2 (NIV)**

**1Woe to those who make unjust laws,**

**to those who issue oppressive decrees,**

**2to deprive the poor of their rights**

**and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,**

**making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.**

 In 1973 the majority of Americans were against abortion on demand and yet it was an activist Supreme Court that actually encouraged the killing of our unborn through legalizing abortion! They determined that the killing of an unwanted child was a constitutional right of a woman!

God has said:

**1Woe to those who make unjust laws,**

**to those who issue oppressive decrees,**

**2to deprive the poor of their rights**

**and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people,**

**making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless.**

Gary Bauer once said:

*"America's experiment with rule by judges is a total failure, and for the family, it has been a disaster. The idea that our judges would some day decide what a marriage is, when human life begins, and when suicide must be permitted would have struck this nation's founders as nothing short of tyranny."*

 Let me share a Contemporary story of Little Red Riding Hood..

 Once upon a time, in a far away country, there lived a little girl called Red Riding Hood. One day her mother asked her to take a basket of fruit to her grandmother, who had been ill and lived alone in a cottage in the forest.

 It happened that a wolf was lurking in the bushes and overheard the conversation. He decided to take a short-cut to the grandmother's house and get the goodies for himself. The wolf killed the grandmother, then dressed in her nightgown and jumped into bed to await the little girl.

 When she arrived, he made several nasty suggestions and then tried to grab her.

 But by this time, the child was very frightened and ran screaming from the cottage.

 A woodcutter, working nearby, heard her cries and rushed to the rescue. He killed the wolf with his ax, thereby saving Red Riding Hood's life. All the townspeople hurried to the scene and proclaimed the woodcutter a hero.

 But at the inquest, several facts emerged:

 The wolf had never been advised of his rights.

 The woodcutter had made no warning swings before striking the fatal blow.

 The Civil Liberties Union stressed the point that, although the act of eating Grandma may have been in bad taste, the wolf was only "doing his thing" and thus didn't deserve the death penalty.

 PITA said that the grandmother deserved to get eaten by the wolf because she had killed his cousin the fox for her fur coat.

 On the basis of these considerations, it was decided there was no valid basis for charges against the wolf. Moreover, the woodcutter was indicted for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

 Several nights later, the woodcutter's cottage was burned to the ground.

 One year from the date of "The Incident at Grandma's," her cottage was made a shrine for the wolf who had bled and died there. All the village officials spoke at the dedication, but it was Red Riding Hood herself who gave the most touching tribute.

 She said that, while she had been selfishly grateful for the woodcutter's intervention, she realized in retrospect that he had over-reacted. As she knelt and placed a wreath in honor of the brave wolf, there wasn't a dry eye in the whole forest.

 This might be funny if this was not the road that justice seems to be taking in America today?

**Isaiah 59:4 - 16 (NIV)**

**4No one calls for justice; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.**

**7Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways.**

**8The way of peace they do not know;**

**there is no justice in their paths.**

**They have turned them into crooked roads;**

**no one who walks in them will know peace.**

**9So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows.**

**10Like the blind we grope along the wall,**

**feeling our way like men without eyes.**

**At midday we stumble as if it were twilight;**

**among the strong, we are like the dead.**

**11We all growl like bears; we moan mournfully like doves.  We look for justice, but find none; for deliverance, but it is far away.**

**12For our offenses are many in your sight,**

**and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities:**

**13rebellion and treachery against the LORD,**

**turning our backs on our God,**

**fomenting oppression and revolt,**

**uttering lies our hearts have conceived.**

**14So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter.**

**15Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice.**

 Folks, our national sins are piling up against us!

 Since the inception of Roe Vs. Wade in 1973 when an ideological activist court declared that a woman had a constitutional right to kill her unwanted unborn child, we in this nation have sanctioned the killing of over 60 million of our nation’s most innocent citizenry!

 This didn’t come about through legislation by duly elected officials of government who could have been held accountable for their actions by we the people, but it came about by a mere handful of judges who wouldn’t know what true justice is if it hit them in the face!

**4No one calls for justice; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.**

**7Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts;**

**ruin and destruction mark their ways.**

**8The way of peace they do not know;**

**there is no justice in their paths.**

 Tragically, this seems to describe what is going on in a lot of our courtrooms today!

**4No one calls for justice; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.**

-- John R. W. Stott,

*It is never enough to have pity on the victims of injustice if we do nothing to change the unjust situation itself.*

 So what can we do?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said:

*There are three possible ways in which the church can act toward the state:*

 *In the first place, it can ask the state whether its actions are legitimate and in accordance with its character as state, i.e., it can throw the state back on its responsibilities.*

 *Second, it can aid the victims of state action. The church has an unconditional obligation to the victims of any ordering of society, even if they do not belong to the Christian community, "Do good to all people."*

 *The third possibility is not just to bandage the victims under the wheel, but to jam a spoke in the wheel itself. Such action would be direct political action, and is only possible and desirable when the church sees the state fail in its function of creating law and order.*

 So what can we as Christians do in regards to all this?

 Be involved in our political processes and vote, not our pocketbook, but vote our Christian conscience!

 Learn where the candidates running for any office stand on moral issues and then vote our Christian conscience!

 This November may be the most important election of our lifetime in America.

 Many of our elected leaders are simply ignoring the will of those who gave them their jobs.

 Many of our courts have Judges with personal ideologies that cloud their judgment in the administration of true justice and ungodly opinions are the result..

 Even though we don’t vote directly for Judges we do vote for the people who often appoint them.

 And sadly, more and more, judges are not appointed because of their judicial integrity to the constitution but by their personal ideology or their political alignment.

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 Why is this important? Because it has been the Courts that has had the largest negative impact on American society over the last 50 years! Especially on issues that threaten the stability of the family and the freedom of the Church!

 God was ordered out of our schools and public places by the Supreme Court!

 The Killing of our unborn children was made legal by the Supreme Court!

 In 2015, the U.S. **Supreme Court** held in a 5–4 decision that the Fourteenth Amendment requires all states to grant **same**-**sex marriages** and recognize **same**-**sex marriages** granted in other states regardless of what a state constitution says.

 What makes this election year so important for the Church is that I feel that time for national repentance may be running out. We may very well one day soon face the full judgement of God for national sins---maybe we already are….

 We need Godly men and women who will administer true justice to fill these positions, not people with evil or wicked ideologies……

 I will not stand up here and tell anyone how to vote.

 But as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ I will tell you to vote your Christian conscience this November! To make it a matter of sincere prayer and take Christ into the ballot box with you.

 Know not just where a particular candidate running for office stands but know what their party platform is for most will always go along with their party regardless of how them may personally feel.

 I think that the intensity of this election, and it will most likely be the most intense of our lifetime, is because of the battle that is going on in the spiritual realm right now over the soul of America!

 John Jay, our nation’s first Supreme Court Chief Justice said this.

**“Providence (God) has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty---as well as the privilege and interest—of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.”**

Will you allow God to use you to jam a spoke in the wheel of injustice? As we collectively vote our Christian conscience we will be doing just that. We can make a difference in the direction our nation will take!

 Whether it will come back to God or continue to slide down the slippery slope into the abyss of apathy which always leads to national demise.

**Do not pervert justice or show partiality.** (BUT) **Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.**

Close with a quote from early American evangelist, Charles Finney in 1835…

“The Church must take right ground in regard to politics... Politics are a part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to the country as part of their duty to God... God will bless or curse this nation, according to the course Christians take in politics.”