

Greetings church,

In chapter 8, Kenneth Reid seeks to connect and integrate the concept of social justice into the theological concept of redemption. I greatly appreciate his work and efforts. “Social justice, properly understood, is grounded in God’s holistic redemption plan.”¹ And this makes so much sense. The redemptive work of God is not limited. This is the truth. I have heard people claim, repeatedly, that only a selective few can be saved. But the selective few *always* change depending on who it is that makes the claim! This constant contradiction and lack of consistency is what invalidates everyone’s opinion who tries to make a claim for the select few who can be saved. Thus, we return to scripture and the scriptures make clear that the redemptive, salvific work of God is *not* limited but open to all who would humbly and fearfully receive such a gift. In light of God’s holistic, unlimited redemption plan, try this definition of social justice and see how it feels: “treating people equitably, working for systems and structures that are fair, and looking out for the weak and the vulnerable”². Sounds pretty biblically based, doesn’t it?

Reid starts by addressing a big part of the problem in trying to talk through social justice. “Injustice is not just about politics; it is about real people who are made in the image of God.”³ Politics is limiting. If we only talk about justice or social justice through a political framework or lens, someone will *always* be left out. Politics is a human construct, not a Godly one. Thus politics is tinged with the brokenness and sin of humanity. Thus the starting point for a constructive conversation about social justice cannot and must not be a political one. Politics enters into the conversation about social justice *way* down the line. According to the above definition, conversations about social justice start with deciding to treat people equitably. This is biblically founded and rooted. As I have preached on the regular, *all* humanity are God’s image bearers. The scriptures do not limit God’s image bearers to a select group of limited people. ALL are God’s image bearers. Thus, in treating one another equitably we are also honoring, loving, and fearing God whose images we all bear. If social justice is to start with equity, people will inevitably ask “why?” This is the “why?”.

Much like politics, a human made system, all human made systems and structures are tinged with the brokenness and sin of humanity. Thus the equity we strive for in individual relationships must also be pursued into the larger systems and structures of societies. We know they are broken because we broke them. But we don’t throw our hands up in the air and pray for Jesus to come quickly. With faith in the assurance of said return, we boldly and bravely step into the gaps of equity and bring these gaps to light as we seek to honor the image of God in every single person God created now! Why wait when, as disciples of Christ, we have been invited by the Triune God to participate in the work of kingdom building today and everyday. “May Your will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven.”

Our sin and rebellion, the brokenness of humanity, has created the categories of “the weak” and “the vulnerable”. God *has* taken care of everything already but not yet. Doesn’t it stand to reason that, while we wait, we should take *some* responsibility in cleaning up the mess we’ve made?

In Christ’s Service,
Pastor Eddie

¹Reid, Kenneth J. *Justice and Redemption* in Let Justice Flow Like Water: Toward a Theology of Biblical Justice. Editors Joshua M. Greever, D.A. Horton, and Justin McLendon. B&H Academic, Brentwood, TN; 2025. p193

²ibid, p195

³ibid, p195