

MESSAGE 9: SHOWING FAIRNESS

Parts 1-3

LIFE IS UNFAIR...

CRIMINALS GO UNPUNISHED.

"Throughout the earth, justice is giving way to crime and even the courts are corrupt." Ecc. 3:16 (LB)

"When crime isn't punished, people feel it is safe to do wrong." Ecc. 8:11 (NLT)

THE OPPRESSED ARE UNHELPEP.

"I saw all the injustice that goes on in this world. The oppressed were crying... and no one would help them... their oppressors had power." Ecc. 4:1 (GN)

POLITICIANS ARE UNETHICAL.

"If you see... miscarriage of justice throughout the land, don't be surprised! For every official is under orders from higher up... So the matter is lost in red tape and bureaucracy." Ecc. 5:8 (LB)

"Here is an injustice... Stupid people are given positions of authority." Ecc. 10:5-6 (GN)

GOOD PEOPLE GO UNREWARDED.

"Sometimes righteous people suffer for what the wicked do, and wicked people get what the righteous deserve!" Ecc. 8:14 (GWT)

CAPABLE PEOPLE ARE UNSUCCESSFUL.

"In this world fast runners do not always win the races... wise men don't always earn a living, intelligent men don't always get rich, and capable men don't always rise to high positions." Ecc. 9:11 (GN)

I. WHY DOES GOD ALLOW UNFAIRNESS?

1. BECAUSE HE GIVES US _____

"I am giving you the choice between a blessing and a curse..." Deut. 11:26 (NIV)

2. BECAUSE HE'S GOING TO _____

"In due season God will judge everything man does." Ecc. 3:17 (LB)

3. BECAUSE IT SHOWS _____

"God is letting the world go on its sinful way so he can test mankind, and men will see that they are no better than beasts." Ecc. 3:18 (LB)

4. BECAUSE _____

"... suffering produces character..." Rom. 5:4

II. HOW SHOULD I RESPOND TO UNFAIRNESS?

1. ACCEPT _____

"Don't be surprised at the terrible trouble which comes to test you. Don't think that something strange is happening to you. But be happy that you are sharing in Christ's sufferings so that you will be full of joy when Christ comes again in glory." 1 Pet. 4:13 (NCV)

2. RESPOND _____

"Love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you." Matthew 5:43-44

"Be fair-minded. Do what is right! Help those in need of justice." Jer. 22:3 (NLT)

"The Lord demands fairness in every business deal." Pr. 16:17 (LB)

3. WAIT _____

"A person might have to suffer even when it is unfair, but if he thinks of God and stands the pain, God is pleased." 1 Pet. 2:19 (NCV)

"If you are suffering according to God's will, keep on doing what is right, and trust yourself to the God who made you, for he will never fail you." 1 Pet. 4:19 (NLT)

"These... temporary troubles are winning for us a permanent reward out of all proportion to our pain." 2 Cor. 5:17 (Ph)