

SOCIAL JUSTICE: Required to live righteously (according to the Bible)

There are two aspects to salvation. There is the vertical salvation that one receives by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone apart from works (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 16:31). The instant one believes in Jesus Christ he receives the gift of salvation.

There is also what is called horizontal salvation. This has to do with fellow man. This is also known as progressive sanctification. This has to do with social justice. We see this in James 2:14-26. This is the outworking of faith. This is only accomplished by works. This is the working out of sacrificial love for all others.

It is possible to be a Christian and possess vertical eternal salvation, yet not achieve horizontal salvation. While vertical salvation delivers us from the penalty of sin and from Hell, horizontal salvation delivers us from the power of sin in the life. Apart from horizontal salvation, a person does not live a righteous life even if he is righteous positionally because of vertical salvation. A righteous life not only is righteous because of the cross (vertical), it is also righteous in dealings with social justice (horizontal). In sum, a person does not live a righteous life if he is not involved in social justice on some level. This is the overwhelming testimony of the Word of God from Genesis-Revelation. I have much to say about this. For now, consider the attitude of Job:

Job 29:12-17. Because I delivered the poor who cried out, The fatherless and the one who had no helper. 13 The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. 14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; My justice was like a robe and a turban. 15 I was eyes to the blind, And I was feet to the lame. 16 I was a father to the poor, And I searched out the case that I did not know. 17 I broke the fangs of the wicked, And plucked the victim from his teeth.

Job 31:13-28. "If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant When they complained against me, 14 What then shall I do when God rises up? When He punishes, how shall I answer Him? 15 Did not He who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same One fashion us in the womb? 16 "If I have kept the poor from their desire, Or caused the eyes of the widow to fail, 17 Or eaten my morsel by myself, So that the fatherless could not eat of it 18 (But from my youth I reared him as a father, And from my mother's womb I guided the widow); 19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, Or any poor man without covering; 20 If his heart has not blessed me, And if he was not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; 21 If I have raised my hand against the fatherless, When I saw I had help in the gate; 22 Then let my arm fall from my shoulder, Let my arm be torn from the socket. 23 For destruction from God is a terror to me, And because of His magnificence I cannot endure. 24 "If I have made gold my hope, Or said to fine gold, 'You are my confidence'; 25 If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, And because my hand had gained much; 26 If I have observed the sun when it shines, Or the moon moving in brightness, 27 So that my heart has been secretly enticed, And my mouth has kissed my hand; 28 This also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment, For I would have denied God who is above.

In His Matchless Grace,

Pastor Don