

*This midweek study will explore the doctrine of God's justice. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.*

### Essential Doctrine: God Is Just

God establishes standards for His moral creatures that are in accordance with His righteousness, and His moral creatures will be judged according to those righteous standards (Lev. 11:44-45; Rom. 2:5-11; 2 Cor. 5:10). It would be an injustice if God were not to uphold His righteousness, because such a failure would require God to violate His own righteous character. Since humanity has sinned by failing to live up to God's righteous standards, God has taken it upon Himself to make provision by being both just and the justifier of those who place their faith in Christ (Rom. 3:25-26).

### 1 Our intrinsic desire for justice testifies that God is just (Deut. 16:20; Isa. 5:16; Rom. 1:20).

- ▶ When have you complained about something being unfair? What prompted you to say that?
- ▶ When have you heard other people say it? Why did they say it?
- ▶ Do you think life is fair? Why or why not?
- ▶ When it comes to who lives and who dies, who gets eaten and who starves do you think the natural world is fair? Why or why not?
- ▶ Why do we have this desire for justice when it doesn't seem to be part of the natural world?

#### Read Romans 1:20.

- ▶ What did Paul say we all know innately? What are some of those divine attributes we might know? Is justice one of them?

#### Read Deuteronomy 16:20 and Isaiah 5:16.

- ▶ According to these passages, how do you know justice is important to God?
- ▶ Could justice be one of those divine attributes we innately know about God? Why or why not?
- ▶ If yes, how does this innate knowledge explain our desire for justice in the world?
- ▶ What are some ways God demonstrates His justice?

### 2 Like all his virtues, God's justice is best shown in the cross (Rom. 3:25-26).

- ▶ If you had to pick just one incident to be the very best display or example of God's justice, what would you pick?
- ▶ Agree or disagree: Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection display the very best of all God's attributes. Why do you agree or disagree?
- ▶ If you agree, how does Jesus' crucifixion show God's justice?

#### Read Romans 3:25-26.

- ▶ How did Paul explain the crucifixion as a display of God's justice?

- ▶ Look carefully at verse 25. How might someone have accused God of injustice before Jesus' crucifixion? What did Paul mean when he said that God "in his restraint...passed over the sins previously committed"?
- ▶ In verse 26, how did Paul show that the crucifixion upholds God's justice even in the face of thousands of years of forgiving Old Testament saints' sins?
- ▶ Consider how horrific the crucifixion was. How serious is God about upholding justice?

### 3 We Christians ought to pursue justice as a display of God's justice (Prov. 31:8-9; Amos 5:15,24).

- ▶ True or false: Christians should display God's character.
- ▶ True or false: As God's messengers, we should work to spread His kingdom on the earth.
- ▶ How do each of the statements we just considered encourage us to pursue justice?

#### Read Proverbs 31:8-9 and Amos 5:15,24.

- ▶ According to Proverbs, who is particularly responsible for pursuing justice?
- ▶ How does Amos 5 make clear all Jesus-followers should actively pursue justice?
- ▶ How would you define justice? What might it look like?
- ▶ What does justice look like in your family? What are some specific examples of how you can pursue justice in your family?
- ▶ What does justice look like in your school? How can you pursue justice this week in your school?
- ▶ What does justice look like in athletics or clubs? How can you pursue justice on your sports team or in your club?

### WRAP IT UP

- ▶ Imagine that you're on a mission trip and you meet a bully who's gotten his own way in the village since childhood. He asks you why he should be just when toughness has worked out better for him. What would you say?