

"All I want is a little justice!"

"for the transgression of my people he was stricken"

Isaiah 53:8

It has been many years now that I have been working with people in pain as a Christian minister. I have met some very wonderful individuals who have taught me much about how to live with adversity. The most rewarding aspect of what I have done through the years is not the monetary consideration but rather the honour of being alongside spiritual giants who glorify God in their sorrow and do not waste their suffering on things that do not matter in the light of eternity.

These people are often in the back waters of Christian things. These gentle people are rarely noticed as the assumed "giants" of the faith trumpet their horns for all to hear. The real giants walk quietly and wonderfully for their Lord. They are truly the strong ones and God is glorified by their quiet yet consistent witness to the sufficiency of God's grace when in torment.

When one of the more "notable" followers of Jesus suddenly finds the going rough they tend to cry out, "What have I done to deserve this? All I want is a little justice. I don't deserve this!" Sadly they have been living under the impression that they deserve the sun to be always shining and the road ahead smooth and attractive. This is certainly a defective form of theology. We cannot see anywhere in the Bible that when we start to follow the Lord our own personal millennium begins. That is not promised for

God's people in this life.

As for the idea we do not deserve trials in our lives, this could not be farther from the truth. People who say that all they want is a little justice in their lives have no idea of what they seek. Anyone who says they follow Jesus and yet want justice in their life should look at the cross. You see, in order to really become a Christian we should be extremely desirous of escaping justice. That should be the last thing we want in life.

A very important reason for coming to Jesus and asking for His salvation is in order to avoid getting what we deserve. People who truly come to faith in the Lord are exactly those who know full well that their justice would be immediate and eternal banishment from God's presence. No suffering on our part in this life can be equal to what we deserve.

This is one great reason that real Christians are able to stand up under trials in this life. They recognize that what is happening to them is not nearly what they would eternally suffer if they were not Christians. They have confidence that they will never get what they deserve.

A person who suffered greatly was the apostle Paul. Yet, he said, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Romans 8:18 (NIV) All Paul's floggings, shipwrecks,

rejection by his own people, stoning, and so on are not worth mentioning in the same breath as the indescribable wonders of his eternal estate.

Do you see in Jesus' brutal sufferings the suffering you deserve? Are you aware that no Christian has ever suffered to the degree Jesus did? If you are a follower of Jesus bow in prayer and thank God you will never, ever, receive justice at the hand of God. All you will have is grace and mercy.

If you have not seen in Jesus' suffering the suffering you deserve, look again. Read in the Gospels the agonies of the sinless One for sinners. Consider what He did, the Righteous for the unrighteous, and bow before Him and say, "My Lord and my God". Submit yourself entirely to Him and stop asking for "a little justice" but instead plead with Him for grace. Ask for what you do not deserve but what He freely offers to all.

The rod of God's justice fell on Jesus at the cross for the sins of God's people. Make sure you have an interest in that reality. Come to Jesus in prayer and ask Him to make you one of God's people for whom He was stricken.

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