

Sunday, February 15, 2026

God & Governance - Session 5

Homework: Practicing Biblical Justice Where You Live

Goal: To move from ideas to action by:

Noticing needs around you (facts, not just feelings),

Connecting those needs to biblical justice, and

Taking one concrete step this week.

Part 1 – Reflect & Observe (Personal, 20–30 minutes)

Pray briefly

Ask God: “Show me where you are calling me to increase shalom this week—especially for the least of these.”

Read and reflect on these passages:

- Genesis 1:27
- Luke 6:31
- Zechariah 7:9–10

For each passage, write 2–3 sentences:

- What does this verse tell me about how God views people?
- How should that shape the way I view and treat people around me?

Use the three communication categories on yourself.

Take one issue of justice that bothers you (e.g., abortion, homelessness, foster care, immigration, poverty, mental illness, etc.) and write:

- Facts: What do I actually know (not headlines, not memes)?
- Opinions: What do I think should be done about it?
- Feelings: What emotions do I have when I think about it (anger, grief, fear, compassion, apathy, etc.)?
- Try to clearly label each (F/O/Fe). This is practice in separating facts, opinions, and feelings.

Part 2 – Map Your Current Involvement (10–15 minutes)

Take the relief / development / social reform framework and fill in where you are already engaged. Use “L, R, N, I” to mark local, regional, national, or international.

Use the attached worksheet or you can sketch a simple table like this:

Type of Help	What I’m Currently Doing	Scope (L/R/N/I)	
Relief	e.g., donate to food pantry	L	
Development	e.g., mentor, teach, foster, financial coaching	L/R	
Social Reform	e.g., contact reps, serve on a board, advocacy	L/R/N	

Questions to answer in writing:

Where am I already involved in biblical justice?

Which box is empty or very light for me right now?

Part 3 – One Concrete Action This Week (Practice, 15–30 minutes)

Choose one actionable step you will take this week that:

- Increases shalom,
- Connects to one of the four “least of these” categories (orphan/foster child, widow/single parent, poor, foreigner/immigrant), and
- Fits one of the three levels (relief, development, or social reform).

★ Examples (pick one or create your own):

➔ Relief (Local):

- Buy and fill a food pantry bag and bring it to church.
- Take a meal or gift card to a single parent, widow, or someone grieving.
- Visit or call someone who is hurting and simply be present.

➔ Development (Local/Regional):

- Contact Pregnancy Hope Center, Gospel Mission, IYS, or another local ministry and ask, “What’s one small way I could help?”
- Offer to tutor, mentor, or help someone with budgeting or job skills.

- Sign up to explore foster care or to support a foster family (meals, rides, respite, etc.).
- ➔ Social Reform (Local/State/National):
 - Using the contact list provided, email or call one representative or local official this week.
 - Briefly state:
 - A concern (connected to biblical justice),
 - A respectful, specific request, and
 - That you are praying for them.
 - Attend (or watch online) a city council or county meeting to listen and learn what issues are actually being discussed.

Spend 30 minutes researching one policy area you care about (e.g., foster care system, homelessness, immigration) from at least two different perspectives, taking notes on facts vs. opinions.

Write down:

What action you chose,

When you will do it (day/time),

Who else, if anyone, you'll involve.

Part 4 – Prepare to Share (5–10 minutes)

Before the next class, be ready to briefly share (in a sentence or two each):

- What you noticed as you separated facts, opinions, and feelings on a justice issue.
- Where you discovered you're already involved in biblical justice.
- What action you took (or attempted) this week and what you learned from it—successes, frustrations, or surprises.

Summary: Biblical Justice in Action: Moving from Conviction to Community Impact

This session challenges us to move beyond theoretical discussions of biblical justice into practical, tangible action. At the heart of the message is Genesis 1:27—the truth that every human being is created in God's image, which forms the foundation for how we treat others. We're introduced to a powerful framework for engaging in justice work: relief (direct aid like food and shelter), development (moving people toward self-sufficiency through education and mentorship), and social reform (changing the systems and policies that create dependency). What makes this particularly compelling is the recognition that biblical justice isn't just about grand national movements—it's profoundly local. The food pantry across the wall, the foster child in our community, the grieving neighbor who needs someone to sit with them—these are the frontlines of kingdom work. We're reminded of Zechariah's call to care for widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor, and challenged to contextualize these categories for today: foster children, trafficking victims, single parents, the homeless, the mentally ill, immigrants. The session invites us to audit our own involvement across different levels—local, regional, national, international—and prayerfully consider where God is calling us to invest our time, energy, and resources. The truth is, we can't do everything, but we can do something, and together our collective action creates the shalom God desires for our communities.

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Mentioned Scripture References:

Genesis 1:27 - God created humankind in his own image; in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them (backbone of biblical justice)

Luke 6:31 - The Golden Rule: "Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you"

Zechariah 7:9-10 - True judgment, showing brotherhood and compassion; not oppressing the widow, orphan, foreigner, or poor

Deuteronomy 15:14 - Supplying generously from your flock, threshing floor, and wine press when releasing bondservants

Jeremiah 29:7 - Working to see the city where God sent you as exiles enjoy peace and prosperity; praying for the city's prosperity

Alluded to but Not Specifically Cited:

Luke 10:25-37 - The Parable of the Good Samaritan (mentioned as an example of relief)

Job 2:11-13 - Job's friends sitting with him in silence (alluded to when discussing emotional relief)

Psalm 34:18 - "God is near to the brokenhearted" (paraphrased when discussing the "least of these")

Relevant Verses Aligned with Main Themes:

Micah 6:8 - "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"

James 1:27 - "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress"

Proverbs 31:8-9 - "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves... defend the rights of the poor and needy"

Matthew 25:31-46 - The sheep and goats judgment (caring for "the least of these")

Discussion Questions

- How does understanding that every human is created in God's image (Genesis 1:27) change the way you approach controversial social and political issues?
- In what ways might Christians be tempted to prioritize national-level political victories over local, relational ministry, and what are the consequences of this emphasis?
- When you consider the three levels of help—relief, development, and social reform—which one do you find yourself naturally gravitating toward, and why might God be calling you to stretch into the others?
- How can we maintain the biblical mandate to protect 'the least of these' (widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor) without allowing political partisanship to divide the church?
- What does it mean practically to 'treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you' (Luke 6:31) when engaging with people who hold opposing political or theological views?

- How do the 'four Ds' (die for, divide for, debate for, decide for) help you discern which issues warrant strong conviction versus gracious disagreement in your conversations?
- Reflecting on the sermon's discussion of abortion statistics post-Dobbs ruling, how should Christians measure 'success' in seeking biblical justice—by legal changes or by cultural transformation?
- What local ministries or needs in your community might God be calling you to engage with more deeply, and what would you need to stop doing to make room for that involvement?
- How does educating yourself on complex social issues (like poverty or immigration) enhance your ability to pursue biblical justice rather than relying on assumptions or soundbites?
- In what ways can your church or small group work together to amplify your collective voice and impact in local, regional, or national social reform efforts?

5-Day Devotional: Living Out Biblical Justice

Day 1: Created in His Image

Reading: Genesis 1:26-27; James 3:9-10

Devotional: Every human being bears the divine fingerprint of their Creator. This fundamental truth forms the backbone of biblical justice. When we recognize that all people—regardless of their circumstances, background, or beliefs—carry God's image, it transforms how we treat them. The homeless person on the corner, the immigrant seeking refuge, the unborn child, the political opponent—all bear God's likeness. This week, challenge yourself to see beyond surface differences and recognize the sacred worth in every person you encounter. Ask yourself: Does my treatment of others reflect their God-given dignity? Let this truth reshape not just your actions, but your thoughts and attitudes toward all humanity.

Day 2: The Golden Rule in Action

Reading: Luke 6:27-36; Matthew 7:12

Devotional: Jesus' command to treat others as we want to be treated sounds simple, yet proves profoundly challenging in practice. It requires us to move beyond our natural inclinations toward self-protection and retaliation. Consider the difficult conversations

you avoid, the people you've written off, the causes you've dismissed. How would you want to be treated if you were in their position? Biblical justice isn't just about grand gestures; it begins with daily choices to extend grace, listen with compassion, and act with generosity. Today, identify one relationship or situation where you can apply the Golden Rule more intentionally. Remember, this principle flows from recognizing God's image in others—treat them as you would want to be treated because they, like you, are precious to God.

Day 3: Defending the Vulnerable

Reading: Zechariah 7:8-10; Isaiah 1:17; James 1:27

Devotional: Scripture repeatedly identifies specific groups requiring our protection: widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. These aren't arbitrary categories but represent all who cannot fully advocate or provide for themselves. In our context, this includes foster children, trafficking victims, single parents, the homeless, the mentally ill, refugees, and immigrants. God's heart consistently gravitates toward the marginalized. The question isn't whether we should care, but how we will respond. Biblical justice requires more than sympathy—it demands action. Examine your life today: Who are the vulnerable people in your community? What specific, practical step could you take this week to bring relief, support development, or advocate for reform? Start small, start local, but start somewhere. God doesn't call us to do everything, but He does call us to do something.

Day 4: Pursuing Shalom

Reading: Jeremiah 29:4-7; Romans 12:17-21

Devotional: Shalom means more than absence of conflict—it represents complete peace, prosperity, and flourishing. Biblical justice actively works to increase shalom, especially for those who lack it. This requires us to move beyond relief (meeting immediate needs) to development (helping people toward self-sufficiency) and even social reform (changing systems that create dependency). Consider where God has placed you. What sphere of influence do you have—in your workplace, neighborhood, church, or community? Seeking the welfare of your city means engaging at multiple levels. Perhaps you volunteer at a food pantry (relief), mentor someone learning job skills (development), or contact local leaders about unjust policies (reform). Pray today about where God is calling you to increase shalom. Remember, lasting change often requires patient, long-term commitment rather than quick fixes.

Day 5: Working Together for Justice

Reading: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Devotional: One person can make a difference, but together we can accomplish far more. Biblical justice isn't a solo endeavor—it requires the body of Christ working in

unity. Some are called to local ministry, others to regional or national advocacy. Some provide relief, others focus on development or reform. All are necessary. Your contribution may seem small, but when combined with others' efforts, significant change happens. Don't underestimate your influence or compare your calling to others'. Instead, identify your unique role and fulfill it faithfully. Perhaps you can't change national policy, but you can serve at a local shelter. Maybe you can't lead a nonprofit, but you can support those who do. As you conclude this week, commit to one specific action that moves you from passive concern to active participation in God's justice work. Then invite others to join you.

Governance Class Schedule

Session 1: January 18
Session 2: January 25
Session 3: February 1
Session 4: February 8
Session 5: February 15

Session 6: March 1
Session 7: April 12
Session 8: April 19
Session 9: April 26
Session 10: May 3
Session 11: May 17
Session 12: May 31

TOOLS: THREE BOXES

- What the Bible Says
- What we Understand From Scripture
- Where the Scripture is silent



TOOLS: FOUR "D'S"

- Die
- Divide
- Debate
- Decide



THREE PURPOSES

- Learn how to evaluate what's happening in our world.
- Learn to Talk about difficult ideas without destroying relationships.
- Learn and Practice Christian American Civil Responsibilities.



TOOLS: THREE KINDS OF COMMUNICATION

- Facts
- Opinions
- Feelings



God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you.

Luke 6:31

“The LORD who rules over all said, ‘Exercise true judgment and show brotherhood and compassion to each other. You must not oppress the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, or the poor, nor should anyone secretly plot evil against his fellow human being.’

Zechariah 7:9-10

BIBLICAL JUSTICE

To seek justice means to proactively increase shalom; bringing peace, prosperity, and flourishing to those around you, and especially to “the least of these.”



BIBLICAL JUSTICE PROTECTS

- Orphan
- Widow
- Poor
- Resident Foreigner



How to Help

- Relief
- Development
- Social Reform



RELIEF

- Direct Aid
- Meeting Immediate Needs



He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring olive oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, “Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.”

Luke 10:34-35

DEVELOPMENT

- Moving towards self-sufficiency
- Education, job training, mentorship, financial counseling



You must supply them generously from your flock, your threshing floor, and your winepress—as the Lord your God has blessed you, you must give to them.

Deuteronomy 15:14

SOCIAL REFORM

- Addressing the social conditions that create dependency
- Changing policies, laws, and systems.



Work to see that the city where I sent you as exiles enjoys peace and prosperity. Pray to the Lord for it. For as it prospers you will prosper.

Jeremiah 29:7

SCOPE

- Local
- Regional
- National
- International



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Klamath Falls, Oregon Representatives & Public Servants

GOVERNOR TINA KOTEK

TELEPHONE: 503-378-4582

[HTTPS://WWW.OREGON.GOV/GOV/
PAGES/SHARE-YOUR-OPINION.ASPX](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/pages/share-your-opinion.aspx)

OREGON SENATE DISTRICT 28 - SENATOR DIANE LINTHICUM

PHONE: 503-986-1728

SEN.DIANELINTHICUM@OREGONLEGISLATURE.GOV

HOUSE DISTRICT 56 - REPRESENTATIVE EMILY MCINTIRE

PHONE: 503-986-1456

REP.EMILYMCINTIRE@OREGONLEGISLATURE.GOV

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2 - CLIFF BENTZ

PHONE: (202) 225-6730

[HTTPS://BENTZ.HOUSE.GOV](https://bentz.house.gov)

SENATOR JEFF MERKLEY

PHONE: (202) 224-3753

[WWW.MERKLEY.SENATE.GOV](http://www.merkley.senate.gov)

SENATOR RON WYDEN

P: (202) 224-5244

[WWW.WYDEN.SENATE.GOV](http://www.wyden.senate.gov)

COUNTY COMMISSIONER ANDY NICHOLS

PHONE: 541-883-5100

ANICHOLS@KLAMATHCOUNTYOR.GOV

COUNTY COMMISSIONER KELLEY MINTY

PHONE: 541-883-5100

KMINTY@KLAMATHCOUNTYOR.GOV

COUNTY COMMISSIONER DERRICK DEGROOT

PHONE: 541-883-5100

DDEGROOT@KLAMATHCOUNTYOR.GOV

SHERIFF SHANE MITCHELL

PHONE: [541-883-5130](tel:541-883-5130)

CIVIL@CO.KLAMATH.OR.US

MAYOR CAROL WESTFALL

CWESTFALL@KLAMATHFALLS.CITY

Local, Regional, National & International

RELIEF

DEVELOP

SOCIAL
REFORM

WHAT COULD YOU START DOING THIS WEEK?

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST STEP?

SHARE THAT STEP WITH SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU!