

Voices: Justice looks like all our responsibility

June 14, 2021

EDITOR'S NOTE: "Justice looks like ..." is a special series in the Voices column. Readers will have the opportunity to consider justice from numerous viewpoints. The series is based on each writer's understanding of Scripture and relationship with Jesus Christ. Writers present their own views independent of any institution, unless otherwise noted in their bios.

You are encouraged to listen to each writer without prejudgment. Then, engage in conversation with others around you about what justice looks like to you.

[Click here](#) for more information about the series. [Click here](#) to read the full "Justice looks like..." series.

"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you" (Psalms 89:14).

The word "[justice](#)" carries with it the concepts of fairness, respect, equity, peace, impartiality and decency (Oxford, 2020).

These concepts are implicit in the U.S. Constitution. All citizens have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness based on the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

These implicit concepts of freedom have been denied Black Americans. Consider that the slave trade began in America in 1619. The end of slavery was mandated in 1865 by the 13th Amendment to the Constitution. [From 1877 to 1964](#), Black Americans were subject to the segregationist rules of

Jim Crow laws that denied justice—fairness, respect, equity, peace, impartiality and decency—thus treating these citizens differently than other Americans.

I do believe, however, there are places to begin the process.

Where to start

There must be a restructuring of how laws are applied disproportionately to Black Americans and other people of color. The church universal must speak out on issues of injustice, not only Black and brown church leaders. Finally, individuals who profess faith in Christ must hold one another accountable for justice and righteousness.

There must be a restructuring of how laws disproportionately disadvantage Black Americans and other people of color. Over 3,000 lynchings of Black Americans occurred from 1882 to 1968. [Within this era](#), there were homes and churches burned and Blacks murdered without any judicial or legal remedy.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ended the segregationist Jim Crow laws and, in essence, gave civil liberties to Americans who had been denied those liberties. Even so, with the murder of Trayvon Martin on Feb. 26, 2012, through to May 25, 2020, the eyes of the world have been focused on [modern-day lynching](#), as seen in the televised murder of George Floyd at the knee of a public servant, a police officer.

Politicians use [redlining](#) disproportionately to leave Black Americans and other people of color without funding from banks to purchase new homes in different areas of a city or to get approval for loans to repair their homes. The vestiges of this practice remain in effect across the United States.

I suggest justice must look like something we have never seen or

experienced before as a country and people.

Task forces could be established to monitor how civil liberties are being upheld in industries and penalties applied when infractions occur.

Speaking out

The church universal must join Black and brown church leaders in speaking out on issues of injustice.

In an interview on Trinity Broadcasting Network, [Tony Evans spoke out](#) on the silence of white church leaders as it relates to the plight of Black Americans being killed in the streets over the last five years. Evans suggested the absence of equity among God's rule has been absent and silent. He further stated, "People will affirm things they believe in morally but not speak on things that involve the dignity of other people."

Evans urged the church and her leaders to adopt, not just a "nine-month life agenda, but a whole-life agenda" that agrees Black lives matter. Only then do we represent God's agenda as the church, he said.

The responsibility of speaking out, educating and teaching is not only on those being wronged; all those who believe in justice must speak out. All our leaders are needed to advocate for fairness, respect, equity, peace, impartiality and decency.

Justice involves all of us

Martin Luther King Jr. said: "[Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere](#). We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." This speaks to my final suggested action.

We the people must take responsibility if there is to be change. I can—you can—no longer afford to sit by idly as injustice continues.

It will require us to hold each other accountable to speak up and speak out when we witness or experience injustice.

God requires not only righteousness from us, but justice also. It is our responsibility as we enact the Scripture that says, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

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[Click here](#) to read the full “Justice looks like...” series.