

32. Justice

Topics encompassed by the theme of justice together form a very large proportion of what the Bible says about how to relate to other people. Following these teachings involves not only doing what is right ourselves, but also ensuring that others are treated fairly – notably the needy.

General

Act justly

No, the LORD has told us what is good. *What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God.* MICAH 6:8 GNT

Do what is right

[GOD:] *Learn to do what is right! Promote justice!* ISAIAH 1:17A NET

Do what is right and fair; that pleases the LORD more than bringing him sacrifices. PROVERBS 21:3 GNT

Do not show favoritism

[PAUL, TO TIMOTHY:] Before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, I solemnly charge you to *carry out these commands without prejudice or favoritism of any kind.* 1 TIMOTHY 5:21 NET

Honesty

Speak the truth

You must do these things: Speak the truth to each other. ZECHARIAH 8:16 GW

Act honestly

Be honest and work hard, so you will have something to give to people in need. EPHESIANS 4:28B CEV

Do not steal, lie or deceive

You must not steal, you must not tell lies, and you must not deal falsely with your fellow citizen. LEVITICUS 19:11 NET

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. EXODUS 20:16 NET

Caring For the Needy

Defend the cause of the needy

Defend weak people and orphans. Protect the rights of the oppressed and the poor. ⁴Rescue weak and needy people. Help them escape the power of wicked people. PSALMS 82:3–4 GW

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; defend the rights of all those who have nothing. ⁹Speak up and judge fairly, and defend the rights of the poor and needy.” PROVERBS 31:8–9 NCV™

Provide the needy with food and clothing

John told them, *“If you have two coats, give one to someone who doesn’t have any. If you have food, share it with someone else.”* LUKE 3:11 CEV

She [Dorcas] spent all her time doing good and helping the poor. ... ³⁹So Peter got ready and went with them. When he arrived, he was taken to the room upstairs, where all the widows crowded round him, crying and showing him all the shirts and coats that Dorcas had made while she was alive. ACTS 9:36, 39 GNT

Treat foreigners the same as your native-born

The foreigner who resides with you must be to you like a native citizen among you; so you must love him as yourself... LEVITICUS 19:34A NET

Caring for the needy is a vital part of true religion

What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering and to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world. JAMES 1:27 GNT