

Righteousness and Justice

Description

Ezekiel 18:1-9

Every person in God's family is to practice justice and live righteous lives. The Common English translation renders Ezekiel 18:5 clearly: "People are declared innocent when they act justly and responsibly" (Ezekiel 18:5, ceb). This word that other versions like the NIV translate as "righteous" is a word that means both *righteous* and *just*.

A Jewish rabbi once said that the first question asked in the Bible (the Old Testament) is this: Am I my brother's keeper? The rabbi said the rest of the Bible answers that question in the affirmative; yes, we are. Seeing that we act justly through our actions and words on behalf of others is the other side of righteousness. Righteousness that only takes the self into consideration is leaving righteousness half done.

Sin works not just in personal relationships, but also in systems and structures of society that diminish life and human flourishing. Those who actively seek to love God and love others—those who act faithfully in the way of Jesus—are righteous and just.

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