

I've often heard the quote, "there can be no peace without justice"

Actually... "There can be no justice without peace and there can be no peace without justice."

Peace activist and Civil Rights leader, Dr. King chanted this statement outside a California prison, which was holding Vietnam War protesters on December 14, 1967.

Tomorrow is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

- "No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream."
- "The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood."
- "The moral arc of the universe bends at the elbow of justice."
- "Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. I am not unmindful of the fact that violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace."

In 1984, Desmond Tutu gave the Nobel Lecture—speaking 10 years before the end of apartheid

He talks about his own country, a microcosm of the world at large...

There is no peace in Southern Africa. There is no peace because there is no justice. There can be no real peace and security until there be first justice enjoyed by all the inhabitants of that beautiful land. The Bible knows nothing about peace without justice, for that would be crying "peace, peace, where there is no peace". God's Shalom, peace, involves inevitably righteousness, justice, wholeness, fullness of life, participation in decision-making, goodness, laughter, joy, compassion, sharing and reconciliation. ...when there is injustice, invariably peace becomes a casualty... Let us work to be peacemakers, those given a wonderful share in Our Lord's ministry of reconciliation. If we want peace, so we have been told, let us work for justice. Let us beat our swords into ploughshares.

Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed. Truth is sprung out of the earth: and justice hath looked down from heaven. Psalm 85:10-11 Douay-Rheims Bible

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5:24 NRSV

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 NRSV

In Micah 4:3-4 we find a picture of peace and justice...

Nations and people turn their swords into plowshares (the main cutting blade of a plow)

Spears are turned into pruning hooks

Instruments of war are recreated as agricultural tools

Not only do nations not go to war against other nations—but they don't study war

Everyone sits under their own vines and fig trees and no one is afraid of the other

True peace and justice give people the freedom to sit and enjoy their own land without fear
He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. Micah 4:3-4 NRSV

In both the Old and New Testaments, the word righteousness, can be and often should be translated justice
Some scholars discuss why particularly English translators chose the word righteousness
Especially since the Romance languages such as Spanish, translate the word as justice
One scholar suggested it may have been an attempt to spiritualize the passage
But increasingly, I'm finding it good to substitute justice for righteousness
Even in Psalm 85:10 that's true... most say "righteousness and peace kissed"
Rather, it is "*Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed.*"

Justice work is costly—a caution given to us by Jesus

Again, we need to substitute justice for righteousness in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:6, 10

6. "*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be filled.*

10. "*Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Justice is multifaceted

It speaks to the injustice of racial inequality and to economic inequality

It speaks to global issues and personal issues

It appears in places where we are able to create change and in places where change is illusive

Working for justice, means addressing the wide variety of things that cause injustice

It takes each of us doing our small part to enact justice and not waiting for grand movements

Like I've said many times before, it means following my God-given Leadings, whether small or large

Being willing to live into the Leadings as they come

A willingness to spend time with those who live with injustice and allowing it to change us

If we isolate ourselves among those who hold to my values and look like me

Then I will be blind to the injustice around me as others suffer

Sometimes, it means testing or seasoning the Leadings by exploring the possibilities

All the while asking the question... is this mine to do?

Prayer is important work in justice—asking God how it is that we can pray in any given situation

Pray as you read the newspaper, listen to the news or spend time on the internet

Hold the picture of justice as you read/listen to the news of what's happening in our world

What modern day picture do we use in place of plowshares and vine and fig trees?

One idea is MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech—black children hold hands with white children

Fin Project at Magnuson Park—using Navy submarine fins to simulate a pod of Orca whales

Matthew 6:33—this is a familiar verse...

But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. NRSV

In all but one English translation, the word "righteousness" is used

However, all Spanish translations use *justicia*, which is justice in English

Però buscad primero su reino y su justicia, y todas estas cosas os serán añadidas.

The one English translation using justice is the *Douay-Rheims Bible*

Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Let us, therefore, seek the kingdom of God and God's justice