



Crossing the Line
Defend the Defenseless (Proverbs 31:8-9)
By Pastor David Hillis, 21 May 2017

BIG IDEA: God calls His people to be a voice for the voiceless and to come to the defense of those who cannot defend themselves.

The Wisdom of Proverbs & All of Scripture

- Being called to be a voice to the voiceless and to defend the defenseless is a theme repeated throughout Scripture: Proverbs 31:8-9; Exodus 22:21-27; Zechariah 7:10; Leviticus 19:32-34; Micah 6:8; Matthew 25:45; James 2:15-16; Isaiah 1:17

Compassion, Mercy & Justice

- The word *compassion* literally means, “to suffer with.” It is to be moved by the sufferings of others.
- *Mercy* is different. Mercy is something we show when we have some sort of power, influence or control that someone else does not have. It is not so much to suffer with them, but to take their suffering away.
- *Justice* is taking it a step further. Justice is to help stop or prevent the suffering from happening in the first place.

Proverbs 31:8-9 is one of the most important passages in all of Scripture. It calls us, as God’s people, to not only be aware of those who are suffering around us, but to do something in those moments. If we don’t know *what* to do or *how*, we are to learn – to figure it out.

NEXT STEP:

How is God calling you to be a voice to the voiceless? To defend the defenseless?

FOR MY PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD THIS WEEK:

1. Read the following passages in the Bible: Proverbs 31:8-9, Psalm 82:1-5, Leviticus 19:32-34, Exodus 22:21-27, Matthew 25:31-46, James 2:15-16. Don’t rush, but spend some time with them, while praying and asking God what He is asking of you. What burdens has God placed on your heart? Which people, or groups of people, is God asking you to defend or be a voice for?
2. Grace is part of a faith tradition known as the Evangelical Covenant Church. Take a look at some of the articles written and resources provided by them at covchurch.org/justice/immigration and consider their viewpoints from Scripture. Do they challenge or affirm some of your own views? What does God want your perspective — and response — to be to the largest refugee crisis the world has ever known?
3. Take some time to research and understand the differences in the words compassion, mercy and justice, as Pastor Dave talked about in his message. Which of these do you struggle living into the most? Why?

PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK: Graduates

Pray for those students who celebrate 2017 as a year of graduation. Allow them to retain the things they learned, to add wisdom to the knowledge they have obtained, and to remember that God is the one who created this world that they may explore. May the work of the graduates lead to a world of less oppression, more mercy, and greater hope for the future.