

GOD IS JUST AND MUST PUNISH INJUSTICE

FOUNDATION: GOD IS SATISFIED - GOD GIVES A SUBSTITUTE

BIG TRUTH: GOD IS JUST AND MUST PUNISH INJUSTICE

Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 25:8; Isaiah 45:22-25; 61:8; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Amos 5:21-24

BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 14:11

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

BIG IDEAS

- God is just and holy in all that He does.
- God must oppose and fight against injustice.
- As sinners, we are unjust enemies of God.
- The punishment for sin is eternal separation from God.
- The only way for God to be just and forgiving toward sinners is through a substitute.

BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 21:33-46

Jesus tells a story of some very evil tenants who are the enemies of the master of their land. In this story we see the story of God's redemption. We are like the tenants who rob their master and murder his son. We also know that God is just and He must punish injustice.

FOUNDATION: GOD IS SATISFIED - GOD GIVES A SUBSTITUTE

God is holy and just. Everything He does is right and good. In His holiness and justice, He must punish injustice. His righteous wrath (anger against sin) must be satisfied. Sin and rebellion cannot be ignored or looked over. It must be dealt with, and we as guilty sinners deserve God's wrath to be poured out on us. Thankfully, God, in His mercy, chose to forgive us. The only way He could do this was by punishing Jesus in our place. He sent His Son to be a substitute for our sin in order to rescue us. Jesus bore the punishment that we deserve.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know:

- God is satisfied in Himself
- God does not need anything and is not dependent on anyone
- God is satisfied through Jesus who died as our substitute



Every child should feel:

- Awe that God does not need anything



Every child should be able to:

- Recognize some things that they need and remember that God does not need anything



Every child should want to:

- Have a relationship with God because He is satisfied through His substitute

FAMILY DEVOTION: JUSTICE IS SERVED

God is a just God and He must punish injustice. God's very character shows that He cannot allow injustice to go unpunished. This means that we all owe a sin debt that must be paid, but God shows mercy and provides a substitute for us.

**GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE****BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 14:11**

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

God is Lord over all.

- God is the one true God and He is like no other.
- No one is worthy to rule like God because He is the Creator of all.
- God is the only one worthy to rule over all the earth.
- God is Lord of all things---living or dead. He is the supreme ruler of all.

God is worthy of all praise and worship.

- God deserves our worship now. He deserves the worship of all things because He is the one true God.
- He is mighty and holy and worthy to be praised for all of time.
- God is the mightiest of all and He is deserving of our praise.
- Even though He is mighty and holy, He still includes man in His family. He deserves our praise.

God's justice will be satisfied and He will be praised.

- God is just and His justice will be satisfied in His time, when He sees fit.
- God will be worshipped by all when His time is come.
- All people will bow down before the Lord and worship Him because He is the most worthy.
- Every person will praise God because He is Lord of all.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE**BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 21:33-46***The Master and the Tenants*

Supporting Scripture: Psalm 25:8; Isaiah 61:8; Revelation 20:12-13

Teacher Introduction:

God is a holy and righteous God. Because God is holy and righteous in everything He does, He alone, understands true justice. He knows best how to punish injustice. It is His very character to not allow injustice to go unpunished. Jesus shares a parable, or story with His followers to illustrate God's justice. The master of a vineyard allows his tenants to work the land, but when the master requires the fruit of the vineyard, the tenants act unjustly towards him. The tenants wrong the master of the vineyard. They refuse him the harvest of the land and eventually kill the master's son.

This story reveals the heart of God. We are the tenants. We have wronged our master-God. God is a just God and He will punish injustice. We all owe a sin debt, just like the tenants owed their master the fruit of the vineyard. Unlike the tenants, however, we cannot pay our debt. God, in His great mercy, prepared a substitute for us when He sent His Son to take our place. God chose to punish our injustice by offering His Son as a sacrifice for our sins.

Teaching Guide:

The guide below is provided to help you teach the narrative: *The Master and the Tenants*. The five points are the Big Ideas that should guide your lesson as you share from Matthew 21:33-46 and teach the narrative: *The Master and the Tenants*. Footnotes are provided for further study of the text and God's interaction with His people. Throughout the lesson, questions are placed to help you guide the preschoolers to think about and process the narrative: *The Master and the Tenants*.

Opening Illustration:

Play a game of "Simon Says" with the children. Instead of allowing the children to do what Simon says stay in the game, allow the children who don't to stay in the game and sit down the children who play it correctly. When you've sat down several children who were playing the game correctly, lead the children in a discussion about right and wrong and justice and injustice.

- Is it right that the children who didn't follow Simon got to stay in the game? (No, that's not the right way to play the game.)
- What should have happened to the children who didn't follow Simon? (They should have sat down instead of the children who did follow Simon.)
- This is a great example of injustice. It wasn't right for the children who were listening to leave the game.
- God is a just God. He will punish injustice. We should oppose injustice also because God is against injustice.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE**BIG IDEA: GOD IS JUST AND HOLY IN ALL THAT HE DOES.****All that God does is just and right.**

- God is justice. It is from Him that we understand what justice is.
- God reveals to us what justice is and then we can understand it.¹
- God makes no mistakes. All that He does is right and good; therefore, He truly knows what is just and what is not.
- Our idea of what is right and wrong comes from God. Without God revealing to us what is right and wrong, we would not know.
- Our view of justice is given to us by God.
- God does all things justly.



Give each child a piece of paper. As you name a particular sin, ask the children to hold up their paper if they've ever been guilty of the sin. An example of a sin is not listening to our parents or not sharing with our friends or siblings. Help the children see that we are all guilty of sin and this is injustice against God.

God is not only just, but He is holy, also.²

- God is the only truly holy being. Everything that He does is just because only He really knows what is right and true.
- When the master of the vineyard leased his land to the tenants, only he was deserving of the fruit of the vineyard.
- God has given us life and He has given man dominion over creation. Only God is worthy of our worship. He is the master of all creation.
- God is holy and His holiness means that He is right and true in all He does.
- Because God is holy, He deserves our faithfulness. Just as the master of the vineyard deserved the tenants' faithfulness to him, God deserves our faithfulness.

Who alone is just and holy? (God is the only truly just and holy being.)

How do we learn about justice? (God teaches us what justice is.)

1. Psalm 25:8: We know what is right and wrong because God teaches us. He instructs us in what is right and wrong. We understand justice because God teaches us about justice.

2. Isaiah 61:8: God is a God of justice, yet He longs to show mercy to those who believe in Him. All that God does is just and right.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE**BIG IDEA: GOD MUST OPPOSE AND FIGHT INJUSTICE.****Because God is completely holy, He cannot tolerate injustice.**

- It is not in God's character to allow injustice to go unpunished.
- There is no one who understands injustice like God because only He is truly just.³
- God is the only holy being, so only He knows how to punish injustice correctly.
- The master of the vineyard deserved justice because his tenants acted wrongfully toward him.
- God deserves justice because we sinned against Him.
- God will not allow injustice to go unpunished. All who reject God will receive judgment in God's perfect timing.



Ask the children to create their own superhero who fights injustice. They can name their superhero and give him or her a superpower with which they fight injustice. Lead the children in a discussion about how God opposes injustice and fights against it and we should, too.

God's very nature opposes injustice.

- God will not allow injustice to prevail because it is not in His character.
- Even when Adam and Eve sinned against Him in the Garden, He did not allow them to go unpunished.
- They were cursed and sent away from the garden and death entered the world.
- Only God truly knows the right response to injustice and He acts accordingly.
- God is without sin and must punish sin because He is truly just.
- God will oppose injustice and fight against it always.
- Injustice will not prevail because God will judge those who act wrongfully.

How does God feel about injustice? (God opposes injustice.)

Does God fight against injustice? (Yes, God does not tolerate injustice.)

3. Psalm 9:7-8: God will see that justice is done in all of the world. This justice will be done in God's timing and not man's, but it will be done.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE**BIG IDEA: AS SINNERS WE ARE UNJUST ENEMIES OF GOD.****God is just and must oppose the unjust.**

- We are all sinners because we all have hearts set on sin.
- God is not sinful and is separate from us because He is holy.
- God will not allow injustice and He will punish the unjust as He sees fit.
- All those who are unjust will stand before God in judgment.⁴
- God is holy and righteous and will not allow injustice to continue.
- The master of the vineyard could not allow the tenants to go unpunished for acting so unjustly. They would have to be punished.
- God will not allow the unjust to go unpunished.



Read “He’s Here” to the children from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* the story and lead them in a discussion about how God provided a substitute for us. God is just and He punished our injustice through His Son.

Because of our sinful hearts we are God’s enemies.

- Just as the tenants were the enemies of the master of the vineyard, we are the enemies of God.
- The tenants denied the master his rights as owner just as we deny God His right place as our Lord and ruler.
- The tenants were unjust and wronged the master by not giving him the fruit of the harvest.
- They were his enemies because they even killed his son.
- We are unjust and wrong God because of our sinful hearts.
- We continue to sin against God even though He offers redemption.

Who are the enemies of God? (As sinners we are the enemies of God.)

4. Revelation 20:12-13: All those who oppose God and reject His Son will stand before Him in judgment when He returns. God will punish all injustice.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
PUNISH INJUSTICE**BIG IDEA: THE PUNISHMENT FOR SIN IS ETERNAL SEPARATION FROM GOD.⁵****Our sin separates us from God.**

- Because our hearts are sinful, we are separated from God.
- We are unjust before God.
- God is holy and righteous and does not sin.
- The tenants could not continue being the tenants because of their unjust actions.
- Their crimes separated them from the master of the vineyard.

Our punishment for sin is to be separated from God forever if we do not place a saving faith in Jesus.

- Our sin keeps us from God.
- If we do not turn away from our sin, we will be separated from God for eternity.
- The tenants were forever separated from the master because they didn't turn away from their wrong actions against him.
- We are separated from God because of our sin and we will be separated from Him forever if we do not turn away from our sin.
- We must turn to Jesus, God's Son, who was sent to be our substitute, if we want to be with God forever.

Why are we separated from God? (Our sin separates us from God.)

How can we be with God forever? (We can turn away from our sin and believe in His Son, Jesus.)

5. Isaiah 59:2: The iniquities or sins of man have caused a separation between man and God.

GOD IS JUST AND MUST
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BIG IDEA: THE ONLY WAY FOR GOD TO BE JUST AND FORGIVING TOWARD SINNERS IS THROUGH A SUBSTITUTE.

God's justice means that sinners owe a sin debt.

- God's very nature requires Him to punish injustice.
- Our sin makes us unjust before God and means we owe a sin debt.⁶
- God would not be just if He overlooked our sin and didn't require us to pay for it.
- The master of the vineyard would not be just if he overlooked the crimes of his tenants.
- The master of the vineyard must punish the tenants who robbed him and murdered his son.

God provided a substitute to pay our sin debt.

- God made a way for us to not be separated from Him by providing a substitute for us.
- Jesus came to be our substitute; He came so we wouldn't have to pay our sin debt.
- Because God provided justice by sacrificing His Son, we don't have to face justice.
- We can have our sins forgiven us because Jesus took our place.
- Jesus faced God's justice so that we don't have to face God's justice.

Why do we owe a sin debt? (We owe a sin debt because we all have sinful hearts.)

Who paid our sin debt? (Jesus, God's Son, paid our sin debt so that we don't have to pay it.)

6. Ecclesiastes 7:20: There is no righteous person on the earth. We all sin and do wrong against God. We are all unjust.

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HOOKS

**We Are All Unjust**

Bring in a bag of cotton balls. Before class dye some of the cotton balls black and allow them to dry. You should have white cotton balls and black cotton balls. Give each child a small plastic bowl. Allow them to decorate their bowls with markers or crayons. The bowls represent each child. The white cotton balls represent right actions and the black cotton balls represent wrong, or sinful actions. Ask the children a series of questions about their behavior over the past week. Some questions you can ask are “Did you help your mom or dad do something around your house?” If they answer yes, they receive a white cotton ball. Another example of a question is “Did you go to bed exactly when your parents told you to every night this week?” If they answer no, they receive a black cotton ball. Once you’ve asked enough questions for every child to have at least one black cotton ball in their bowl, lead them in a discussion about how we are all unjust.



- Every person ever born has a sinful heart. We are unjust before God.
- Just like no one has a bowl without a black cotton ball, none of us live a life without sin.

**God Provides A Way**

Bring in a bag of small rocks and a bag of candy or small toys. Lead the children in a discussion about their behavior for the week. Ask them several questions that will show that we all have sinned this week. An example question is, “Have you obeyed your parents every time this week?” Give each child a rock from the bag. The rock represents our punishment for our sin. Show the children the bag of treats. Ask them if they’d rather have the rock or the treats? Lead them in a discussion about how we all deserve punishment, but God provided a way for us to not be punished. Then exchange each child’s rock for a treat.