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# Christian Manners of Justice

Deuteronomy 24:14-21, Ephesians 6:5-9, 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Sunday School Live – Allen Temple Baptist Church

May 17, 2026

# (Rev) Phil Bowling-Dyer (CDE)


- National Diversity Director for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (race/ethnicity/ culture, gender, age, orientation, etc)
- AB UC Berkeley;  
M.Div BST;
- Spouse to DC Leslie;  
father to Arthur (22)  
and Jeanine (17); I eat,  
sing, teach, coach  
exercise, and organize
- At Allen Temple since 1997





# Social Teaching of the Church

These lessons have been on **Relating to Others**

- Section 1: Obligation to Neighbors
  - Section 2: Obligation to Family
  - **Section 3: Obligation to God and Society (where we are)**
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# Christian Manners of Justice

- Deuteronomy 24:14-21
- Ephesians 6:5-9
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19

*[International Sunday School Lesson, Dictionary of Biblical Imagery (InterVarsity Press, 1998), InterVarsity Press Bible Background Commentary-OT (InterVarsity Press, 1994), just living in these passages for awhile]*

***Justice Alito pushes back on  
calls to sit out a major  
Supreme Court climate case***  
**[NBC NEWS, MAY 15 2026]**

The conservative justice has no financial conflict that would require him to recuse himself from the case, a court spokeswoman told NBC News...



**Pentagon quietly shut legally  
required program to prevent  
civilian deaths by military,  
watchdog finds**

**[WASHINGTON POST, MAY 15 2026]**

Trump administration  
accused of cutting military's  
civilian harm program in light  
of US strike on girls school in  
Iran...



# New shoreline park to bring nature, 'justice' to East Oakland residents

[EAST BAY TIMES, MARCH 17 2026]

“This is what justice looks like...”  
“It’s what our children and what our community members deserve in any city that is extremely wealthy. ... Why should the citizens of East Oakland get less?”



# How would you define JUSTICE?



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# Christian Manners of Justice

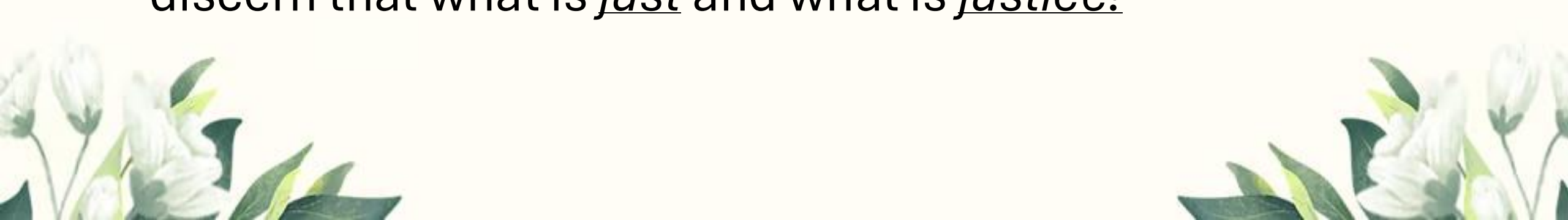
*“Aligning with God's character by doing what is morally right, fair, and equitable, often focusing on restoring broken relationships and protecting the vulnerable.”*

- There are **interpretive differences, theological traditions, cultural and political differences, and even “gospel-focus” differences**



# Christian Manners of Justice


**Our God is the embodiment of justice** – justice is what God is, how God decides and rules, and how God calls us to live with one another and in society

- All that is **fair** is not always right
  - All that is **right** is not always fair
  - We need to **connect with our God** to have the wisdom to discern that what is *just* and what is *justice!*
- 



# Deuteronomy 24

*<sup>14</sup> Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. <sup>15</sup> Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it. Otherwise they may cry to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty of sin.*

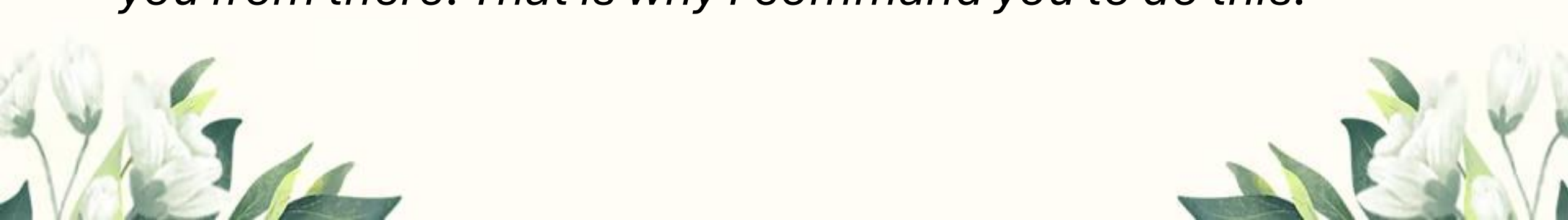




# Deuteronomy 24

*<sup>16</sup> Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their parents; each will die for their own sin.*

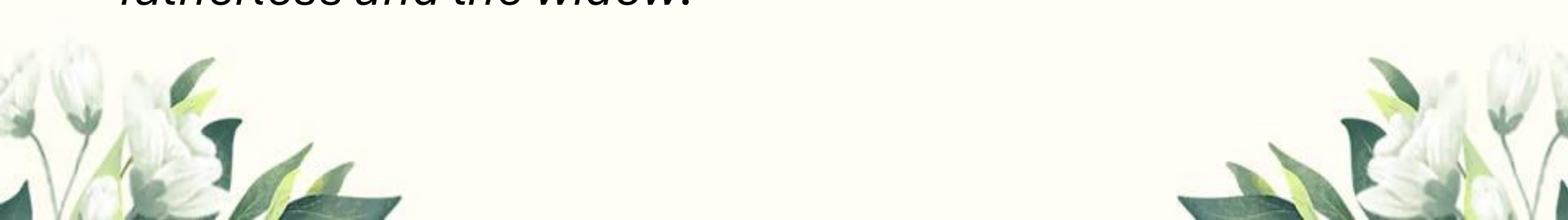
*<sup>17</sup> Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. <sup>18</sup> Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this.*





# Deuteronomy 24


*<sup>19</sup> When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. <sup>20</sup> When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow.*





# Deuteronomy 24


*21 When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow.*





# Deuteronomy 24

**Marginalized people:** individuals, communities, or groups who are pushed to the edges of society and denied full access to political, economic, or cultural power. This systemic exclusion often stems from prejudice, discrimination, or unequal power dynamics, making these populations feel invisible or powerless.





# Deuteronomy 24

## **Marginalized people:**

- hired worker (who is poor and needy)

\*\*\* the remedy - pay them at the end of the day so that they can eat that night



# Deuteronomy 24

## **Marginalized people:**

- The foreigner (who is poor and needy), the fatherless (who is poor and needy), the widow (who is poor and needy)

\*\*\* the remedy - don't make them use the clothes on their backs to cover their loans

\*\*\* the remedy - leave the harvest you forget (sheaves, olive branches) for them

# What do you think?






# Ephesians 6

*<sup>5</sup> Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.*

*<sup>6</sup> Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. <sup>7</sup> Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, <sup>8</sup> because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.*



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# Ephesians 6

*<sup>9</sup> And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.*



# Ephesians 6

***[Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ (5:21)]***

- Verses 5-8 culturally make sense:
    - slaves, obey your earthly master as you would Jesus, obey them even when they aren't around; God will reward you in heaven
  - Verse 9 is the radical one:
    - Masters, **TREAT YOUR SLAVES the SAME WAY (WHAT!?!?)**
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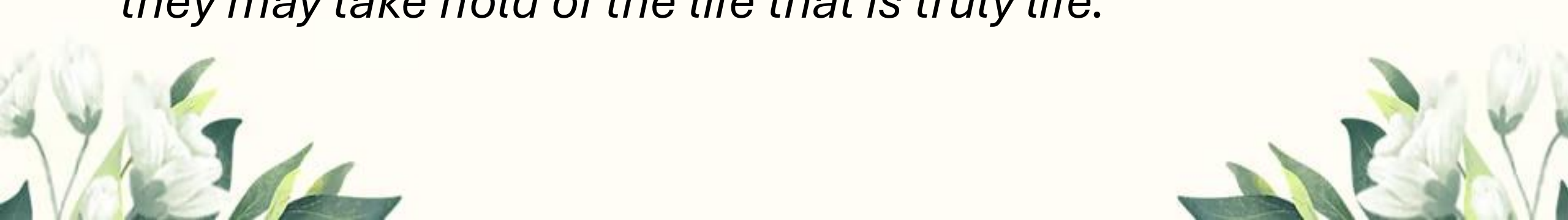
# What do you think?





# 1 Timothy 6

*<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup> In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*



# 1 Timothy 6

*If the US population could be smushed into a village of 100 people:*

- 51-ish would be women
- 49-ish would be men
- 63 as Christian
- 30 as religiously unaffiliated (*nones*),
- 2 as Jewish, 1 as Muslim, 1 as Buddhist, 1 as Hindu
- 2 are in other faiths (e.g. Sikhs, Wiccans, etc).

# 1 Timothy 6

*If the US population could be smushed into a village of 100 people:*

- 38 make < \$49K
- 44 make \$50K-149K
- 17 make \$150-399K
- one makes \$400K+
- 27 have zero emergency funds
- 7 people less than one month's salary
- 13 have 1-2 months
- 23 have 3-6 months
- 30 have 6+ months



# 1 Timothy 6

- In Paul's (1st Century Near Eastern) world, **wealthy** meant having **resources** and **cushions** and **opportunities** to live beyond the daily subsistence.



# 1 Timothy 6

- **All** of us might have something **that others** would want or envy or not be able to get for some reason...
  - Health
  - Friends and Family
  - Access and freedoms related to identity (gender, ethnicity, location, age, sexual orientation, birth, nationality, etc)

*I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no feet*  
(Saadi Shirazi, 13c)

# What do you think?





# Christian Manners of Justice

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