REALITY
REMASTERED

Social Justice & the Way of Jesus
Mark 3:1-6
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Mark 3:1-6
Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.” Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent. He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was

completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Mark 3:2
Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath.

Exodus 20:8-11
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God…For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

Deuteronomy 5:15
Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

Mark 2:27
Then Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

“Social justice is about how systems affect us, especially adversely. It is very important that this be understood. It is not enough simply to be a good person within our own private lives. We can be morally impeccable within our private lives (churchgoing, prayerful, kind, honest, gentle, and generous in our dealings with others) and still, at

the same time, unknowingly, participate in and help sustain (through our work, our political affiliations, our economic ideology, our investments, and simply by our consumeristic lifestyle) systems which are far from charitable, gentle, prayerful, and moral. While the system gives us a good life, it is far less kind to others…To practice social justice is to examine, challenge, refuse as far as possible to participate in, and try to change those systems (economic, social, political, cultural, and religious) that unjustly penalize some even as they unjustly reward others."

- Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing*

What is the distinctly Christian version of social justice?

The motivation for followers of Jesus to move toward social justice is grounded in the Imago Dei and the Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1-2).

Mark 3:4
Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?"

Mark 3:4b
But they remained silent.

Mark 3:5
He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts…

Mark 3:5b-6
He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

“I notice in your conversations one major omission, the mention of the resurrection of Jesus. The victory of God over the forces of death is already assured and our modest task in peacemaking is simply to live in a way that reveals that fact. We do not have to triumph over the forces of death by our own inspiration, efforts, and strategy. We do not have to defeat death all over again. Psalm 58 tells us: ‘Surely there is a God who rules the earth.’ We must never forget that. Hope, and not anger, must direct our protest. Moreover that hope, belief in the power of the resurrection, is not a feeling or a mood, it is a necessary choice for survival.”

- William Stringfellow

“The fuel that fires our quest for justice must be drawn from the same source as the truth of justice itself, namely, from the person and teaching of Jesus. Only by rooting ourselves there, or in similar principles that somehow take their root in God, will we find both the right vision and the right energy to offer a new order, a just one, to the world.”

- Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing*