

1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The purpose of governments is to allow people to live together in peace with justice, equity, and fairness for all. A government legislates laws that define permissible and prohibited behaviors and authorizes enforcement of those laws through a judicial system. **Laws are formalized rules and standards of JUSTICE, defining what is just and unjust, that allow people to live in peace. Laws are enforced through a judicial system, which renders judgments with punishments and penalties.**
- b) But laws do not prevent crimes. There will always be criminals, which is why law enforcement is necessary because, at its core, laws do not change hearts and minds. **Laws can only restrain behavior, not change thinking.**
- c) **DEFINITIONS:**
 - i) **LAW OF GOD:** The Law of God consists of commandments, statutes, precepts, testimonies, and judgments that define JUSTICE—just and unjust conduct—and establish penalties for violators through a judicial system. The Law is the basis of the government of the Kingdom over which God is Ruler and Judge of all.
 - ii) **JUSTICE:** Justice is just, equitable, and fair dealings among people that is enforced through judgments that:
 - 1) Decide what is just and unjust conduct,
 - 2) Punish Lawbreakers,
 - 3) Provide legal retribution—compensation and restitution—to victims.
 - iii) **JUSTIFY:** A judgment under the Law that renders someone innocent (not guilty).
- d) The central message of the Bible is about a government—the Kingdom of God ruled by the Great King (Matt. 5:35). God began by declaring His Law. What followed is a history of the nation of Israel being first ruled by God and then through judges and finally by human monarchs and despots. Even though the Law was meant to be a blessing, the people were corrupt and the record of the ancient Israelites was failure after failure to keep the Law of God. They also did not uphold the Law; that is, they did not enforce justice. Since it was clear that people were incapable of obeying an external set of laws and enforcing justice, God had to provide the means to make His Law a part of their being. That is the purpose of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

2) HOW LAWS WORK

- a) The Law defines transgressions (violations) as sin:
 - i) ROMANS 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for **by the law is the knowledge of sin.**
 - ii) ROMANS 7:7 ... *Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, **I [Paul] would not have known sin except through the law.** ...*
- b) The Law is enforced through a justice system that renders judgments with one of two possible verdicts: guilty or not guilty. Someone is either a lawbreaker or a law-keeper. A verdict of guilty requires a violator to be sentenced to a punishment or penalty.

- c) Laws require judgments that punish people for breaking them. Laws are meaningless without penalties and judgments. The enforcement power behind the Law of God is the death penalty for sin mandated in the Law:
 - i) 1 CORINTHIANS 15:56 The sting of death *is* sin, and **the power of sin [to enact a penalty of death] is the law [because it defines sin and the penalty for it].**
- d) Traffic laws establish speed limits and exceeding them subjects a violator to the penalties in the law. Some drivers rigidly obey the speed limits while others intentionally exceed them. Then there are those who do not pay attention and drive too slow or too fast. Violators fall into two categories: intentional and unintentional. Intentionally speeding is often penalized with a fine. Those who speed unintentionally may receive a warning instead of a fine.
- e) This is similar to the Law of God. God will forgive unintentional sins called Sins of Ignorance but never forgives intentional sins called Sins of Rebellion. This is true in both the Old and New Testaments:
 - i) HEBREWS 10:28 **Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy** on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
 - ii) HEBREWS 10:26-27 For if we **sin willfully** after we have received the knowledge of the truth, **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins**, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and **fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.**

3) THE SIN PROBLEM

- a) The Law prevails over every living being, including people and angels and even God and Jesus Christ.
 - i) **NOTE:** While God perfectly keeps His Law, He is also the Lawgiver and Judge so He alone judges what is just and unjust under the Law.
- b) The sacrifice of Jesus Christ was necessary because no flesh could be saved under the Law without it. All have sinned, all have been judged guilty. As a consequence, all have been sentenced to death under the Law:
 - i) ROMANS 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and **all the world may become guilty before God.**
- c) It is important to recognize that sin is always a legal matter under the Law. The legal term for sin is INJUSTICE and the term for adhering to the Law is JUSTICE. The Law is enforced by judgments that render a guilty verdict for unjust Lawbreakers or a not guilty verdict for just Law-keepers:
 - i) ROMANS 2:12-13 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and **as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law** 13 (for not the hearers of the law are just [*G1342 = dikaiois*] in the sight of God, but the **doers of the law will be justified [G1344 = dikaioo]**);
- d) Jesus Christ said "if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments**" (Matt. 19:17). Obedience to the Law is the basis of judgments for eternal life; however, "the wages of sin *is* death" (Rom. 6:23) and no sinner will be judged to eternal life:
 - i) 1 JOHN 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law.**

- e) The problem is that everyone sins, even those with the Holy Spirit. Paul said “**all have sinned**” (Rom. 3:23). Was he referring to past sins that were forgiven at baptism? Possibly, but who has never sinned after baptism? Even Paul, who had more of the Holy Spirit than most, wrote about the “**sin that dwells in me**” (Rom. 7:17). It is absolutely impossible for anyone to maintain a state of sinlessness—everyone sins, even those who are good:
 - i) ECCLESIASTES 7:20 For **there is not a just [H6662 = tsaddiyq] [carries out justice according to the Law] man on earth who does good and does not sin.**
- f) While laws define justice, they also provide the means to enforce justice by including punishments and penalties for lawbreakers. Laws often include ways to avoid punishments. Many traffic courts allow a person who was caught speeding to take a driver safety training course instead of paying a fine. Doing so removes the record of the violation and the person is rendered innocent.

4) PROXY SACRIFICES FOR SIN

- a) The Law of God not only defines justice but it also mandates a penalty of death for all sin. In order to avoid killing all human beings, God provided a way to deal with sin; but not all sin. Under the Law of God, the death penalty cannot be vacated for Sins of Rebellion; however, it does provide a way to forgive unintentional Sins of Ignorance. Instead of something like a driver safety training course, God incorporated in the Law proxy animal sacrifices for sin. Simply put, an animal can substitute for the penalty of death that hangs over a sinner for Sins of Ignorance.
- b) How that works would be a complete mystery if it were not for the Sin Offerings in Leviticus 4. The key to sacrifices for sin is the ability to TRANSFER sin. Civil laws do not allow for a crime and a penalty to be transferred to someone else so this is completely unique to the Law of God and that is the purpose of Sin Offerings. It allows Sins of Ignorance to be confessed and transferred to another flesh and blood living being but if and only if the living being is innocent; that is, it is sinless. Animals are inherently sinless—they are not subject to the Law God and, therefore, cannot sin. After sin is transferred to the body of the innocent animal, it must then be killed (sacrificed) to fulfill the death penalty of the Law. But it must be killed by shedding its blood; it cannot be strangled, suffocated, or otherwise killed. Innocent blood covers and cleanses sin because the life of the animal is in the blood. Through the shed blood, the sinner is freed of sin and forgiven by God. Proxy sacrifices for sin are a statute in the Law:
 - i) LEVITICUS 17:11 ‘For the **life of the flesh is in the blood, and I [the LORD] have given it to you upon the altar to [cover] [H3722 = kaphar] [the sins of] your souls**; for it is the blood that **[covers] [H3722 = kaphar] [the sins of]** the soul.’
- c) Proxy sacrifices fulfill the penalty in the Law through the death of the animal that substitutes for the death of the sinner. Once the penalty has been paid, sin is covered, cleansed, removed, and forgiven. Proxy sacrifices are a necessary statute in the Law; the alternative is God would have to destroy all of mankind.

5) THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST

- a) A sacrificial animal does almost the same thing for sin as the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Both were sinless so sins could be transferred to them, both bore sin in their bodies, both were killed to pay the death penalty, and the blood of both covers, cleanses, removes, and forgives sin.

- b) Two critical differences between the sacrifice of an animal and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ are found in the ceremony of water baptism. It is through baptism that the proxy sacrifice of Jesus Christ is applied to a sinner. The process begins with repentance; sins must be confessed so they are transferred to the body of Jesus Christ. He bore the sins of the world (1 John 2:2) so He bears the sins of every repentant sinner even though He was sacrificed long ago. This is because He is alive, now and forever, as the living High Priest so His sacrifice continues to apply even today:
- i) HEBREWS 7:23-25 Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. 24 But He [Jesus Christ], because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.
- c) His death by the shedding of His blood covers, cleanses, and removes sins upon which God forgives the sinner. This occurs in the first part of baptism—immersion into a watery grave. Submerging into the watery grave UNITES a sinner into the likeness of the DEATH and SACRIFICE of Jesus Christ:
- i) [NET2.1+] ROMANS 6:5-7 For if we have become united with him in the likeness of His [Jesus Christ's] death, we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection. 6 We know that our old man was crucified [in baptism] with him so that the body of sin would no longer dominate us, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 (For someone who has died has been freed from [the penalty for] sin.)
- d) The second part of baptism—emersion out of the watery grave—UNITES a sinner into the likeness of the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ:
- i) ROMANS 6:5 ... certainly we also shall be [united] in the likeness of His resurrection,
- e) Through unification into the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the sinner is fully JUSTIFIED and INNOCENT according to the Law:
- i) ROMANS 4:25 [*Jesus Christ*] who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised [for] our justification [G1347 = dikaiosin].
- f) But dead bodies of sacrifices are filled with sin so they cannot be left lying around. If Jesus Christ had not been resurrected, His body would have remained in the grave with sin. But He was resurrected with an eternal and sinless body. His body that bore sin to the grave was freed of all sin through His death so He now has an eternal and SINLESS body and the tomb is empty. An animal is not raised back to life with a new body, so its body with sin was destroyed by burning it to ashes. The dead bodies of animals were taken outside the camp where they were destroyed after taking on the sins of the sinner. This was so that the sin was not near the Tabernacle or Temple—the dwelling place of God. This is why Jesus Christ was sacrificed outside the Temple Mount:
- i) HEBREWS 13:11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify [*cleanse*] the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.
- g) Baptismal immersion (going INTO the water) deals with sin basically the same way animal sacrifices did. Baptismal emersion (coming OUT of the water) is what animal sacrifices could not do. Uniting into the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives a sinner a

sinless body. It is not an ETERNAL body but uniting into His resurrection comes with a PROMISE of an eternal body in the form of a pledge—the Holy Spirit (also 2 Cor. 5:5):

- i) 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, 22 who also has sealed us and **given us the Spirit** in our hearts **as a [pledge]**.
- h) The main disadvantage of animal sacrifices is they do not actually “take away” sins. While their sacrifice will cover, cleanse, remove, and forgive sin, it is not entirely eliminated:
 - i) HEBREWS 10:4 For **it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins [from the sinner]**.
 - i) If the sin is transferred to the proxy animal sacrifice and the body of the sacrifice destroyed, where is the sin that remains? In the minds of people. Even though sin is eliminated by the animal sacrifice, the mind of the sinner continues in the Way of Sin. It is only a matter of time before the forgiven sinner sins again:
 - i) HEBREWS 10:1-3 For **the law [of Moses]**, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, **can never** with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, **make those who approach perfect**. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, **once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins**. 3 But **in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins** every year.
 - j) A carnal mind does not desire and seek after the JUSTICE in the Law. The human mind is motivated by selfishness, pride, and greed, which conflicts with treating others in a just, equitable, and fair manner. True justice requires a willingness to value the needs of others but a carnal mind is focused on selfish and greedy gain:
 - i) ROMANS 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but **I [Paul] am carnal, sold under sin**.
 - ii) ROMANS 8:6-7 For to be **carnally minded is death [because it cannot avoid sinning], but to be spiritually minded is life and peace [with God]**. 7 Because **the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God**, nor indeed can be.
 - k) Animal sacrifices had to be repeated for every Sin Offering because they did not cause an internal change in the THINKING of the sinner. However, the Holy Spirit is not just a pledge of eternal life—its main purpose is to impart the mind of God that changes a carnal mind into one that can truly fulfill the justice of the Law:
 - i) 1 CORINTHIANS 2:16 For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But **we have the mind of Christ**.
 - ii) 2 TIMOTHY 1:7 For God has not given us **a spirit** of fear, but **of power and of love and of a sound mind**.
 - l) Another disadvantage of animal sacrifices is they had to be sacrificed for each sin because the animal was forever dead once it was sacrificed. Jesus Christ died as a sacrifice for sin but He now lives as the High Priest so His sacrifice is once forever:
 - i) HEBREWS 10:10 By that will **we have been sanctified [cleansed] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once**.

- m) How does the Holy Spirit produce justice? It gives someone the mind of God to both obey the Law AND treat others with the justice demanded by the Law:
- i) HEBREWS 8:16 “This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: **I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,**”
 - ii) ZECHARIAH 7:9 “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘**Execute true justice /H4941 = mishpat/**, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother.
- n) **SUMMARY:** The Law of God allows proxy sacrifices for Sins of Ignorance so they are covered, cleansed, removed, and forgiven. They do not apply to Sins of Rebellion. The proxy sacrifice must be a sinless flesh and blood animal or person. The sinner repents to transfer sin to the body of the sacrifice and then kills it by shedding its blood. The death of the animal or person fulfills justice of the Law that mandates the death penalty for sinners and the blood covers, cleanses, and removes the sin. God then forgives the sinner. Jesus Christ’s sacrifice is the first part of baptism. Immersion into a watery grave UNITES a sinner into the likeness of the DEATH of Jesus Christ upon which the blood covers, cleanses, and removes the sin whereby God forgives the sinner.
- o) The second part of baptism—emersion OUT of the watery grave—is what animal sacrifices could not do. It unites a person into the resurrection of Jesus Christ whereby the sinner is JUSTIFIED of the Law and judged not guilty or innocent. People united into the resurrection of Jesus Christ are given a sinless body. That body, however, is not an ETERNAL one. Baptismal emersion comes with a PROMISE of an eternal body in the form of a pledge—the Holy Spirit. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit imparts the mind of God to change the carnal mind into one that fulfills the justice of the Law. It gives someone the mind to both obey the Law AND treat others with justice.

6) NEW LIFE OF JUSTICE

- a) Simple obedience to the Law does not fulfill the Law because someone can keep the Law but do so without love and mercy toward others as the scribes and Pharisees proved. People can be innocent under the law and still do evil:
 - i) **EXAMPLE 1:** The owner of a company hires a worker and the position includes a pension after 20 years. After 19 years of being a productive and reliable employee, the owner fires the worker. The owner is well within his rights to do so, meaning he did not violate the law but he did it to prevent the employee from retiring with a pension. He was unjust by stealing what was rightfully due the worker.
 - ii) **EXAMPLE 2:** A lonely 80 year-old man who lives in a rundown house is selling his car because he needs the money. The car is in excellent condition and the buyer knows it is worth at least \$10,000. The old man is unaware of its true value so the buyer offers \$8,000 and the old man accepts. The buyer is innocent according to the law because he did nothing illegal; however, there is no question it was unjust treatment of the old man. In fact, the buyer will likely brag that it was “steal.”
- b) Living for eternity without justice as the foundation of relationships would be an eternal punishment. The Kingdom of God is eternal life with justice for all but that Way of Life must begin now, in this physical life. God proves our commitment to His Way of Life in His eternal Kingdom according to the justice we live by in this life. This is why there is a coming judgment for everyone, including those who are justified through baptism:

- i) 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**
- c) The legal terms for doing “good or bad” are justice or injustice. Judgment is upon those with the Holy Spirit according to whether or not they live their life in a manner that is just or unjust:
 - i) [DOUAY] EPHESIANS 4:22-24 To put off, according to former conversation **[conduct], the old man, who is corrupted according to [deceitful lusts].** 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind: 24 And **put on the new man,** who according to God **is created in justice [G1343 = dikaiosune]** and holiness of truth.
- d) Having the Holy Spirit that imparts the mind of God does more than help people obey the Law. It implants the mind of God to live a Way of Life that fulfills the Law of JUSTICE for all:
 - i) [DOUAY] LEVITICUS 19:15, 35 **Thou shalt not do that which is unjust, nor judge unjustly [H4941 = mishpat].** Respect not the person of the poor, nor honour the countenance of the mighty. But **judge thy neighbour according to justice.** ... 35 **Do not any unjust thing in judgment [H6664 = tsedeq],** in rule, in weight, or in measure.
 - ii) EZEKIEL 18:5-8 But **if a man is just [H4941 = mishpat] and does what is lawful** and right; 6 If he has not eaten on the mountains, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor’s wife, nor approached a woman during her impurity; 7 if he has not oppressed anyone, *but* has restored to the debtor his pledge; has robbed no one by violence, *but* has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing; 8 if he has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, *but* has withdrawn his hand from iniquity *and* **executed true judgment between man and man; 9 if he has walked in My [the LORD’s] statutes and kept My judgments** faithfully— **he is just [H6662 = tsaddiyq];** he shall surely live!” says the Lord GOD.
 - iii) MICAH 6:8 **He [the LORD] has shown you,** O man, what *is* good; and **what does the LORD require of you but to do justice [H4941 = mishpat],** to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

7) ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

- a) A courtroom trial before a judge is the legal process for justice. The Law of God administers justice by requiring everyone to stand trial and be judged:
 - i) ROMANS 14:10 ... For **we shall all stand before the judgment seat** of Christ.
- b) Justice under the Law of God is a three-step process:
 - i) **TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES**
 - 1) MATTHEW 18:16 “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that **‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’**”
 - 2) MATTHEW 12:36-37 “But I [*Jesus Christ*] say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 “For **by your words you will be justified [G1344 = dikaioo], and by your words you will be condemned.**”
 - 3) ROMANS 14:12 So then **each of us shall give account of himself to God.**

- 4) 1 PETER 4:5 **They will give an account to Him [Jesus Christ] who is ready to judge the living and the dead.**
- ii) **JUDGMENTS**
- 1) Judgments are rendered with verdicts that are either guilty or not guilty:
 - 2) ROMANS 2:12-13 For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and **as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law** 13 (for not the hearers of the law are just [G1342 = *dikaio*] in the sight of God, but the **doers of the law will be justified [G1344 = *dikaioo*]**;
- iii) **SENTENCING**
- 1) Sentences are pronounced after a judgment. A verdict of guilty is death but a verdict of not guilty is eternal life:
 - 2) ROMANS 6:23 For **the wages of sin is death**, but **the gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- c) Even those with the Holy Spirit will be judged so it is important to understand the basis of God's judgment:
- i) MATTHEW 7:1-2 **"Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.**
 - ii) COLOSSIANS 3:25 But **he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done**, and there is no partiality.
 - iii) JAMES 2:13 For **judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy**. Mercy triumphs over judgment.
- d) God's JUDGMENT is predicated on how people judge—administer justice to—others. God's FORGIVENESS is dependent upon forgiving others. If we extend justice and forgiveness to others, God is merciful and forgiving when we are judged. If we treat others unjustly or deny them forgiveness, God condemns us.
- i) LUKE 6:37-38 **"Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."**
- e) But God is just in all cases because He renders to each one the same measure of justice in His judgment that they show to others. God is true justice, equity, and fairness:
- i) PSALM 89:14 **Justice [H6664 = *tsedeq*] and judgment [H4941 = *mishpat*] are the habitation of thy [the Lord God's] throne**: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
 - ii) DEUTERONOMY 32:4 *He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice [H4941 = *mishpat*]*, a God of truth and without [iniquity]; [just] [H6662 = *tsaddiyq*] and upright *is He*.
 - iii) [NET2.1+] PSALM 99:4 The King is strong; **He loves justice [H4941 = *mishpat*]. You ensure that legal decisions will be made fairly [equity]; You promote justice [H4941 = *mishpat*] and equity [H6666 = *tsdaqah*] in Jacob.**

- f) **SUMMARY:** Justice under the Law of God requires testimony of witnesses, judgment, and sentencing. The judgment of God is according to the measure of justice meted out to others and His forgiveness is contingent upon forgiving others.

8) KINGDOM OF JUSTICE

- a) God does not immediately give people an eternal body because everyone began their physical life living in sin (INJUSTICE) and must now prove that the desire their souls is to live according to JUSTICE, which will be the foundation of all relationships in the eternal Kingdom of God. Justice is encapsulated in the two Great Commandments to love God and love neighbors. This is why all will stand before God and be judged.
- b) The First Great Commandment to love God describes how people are to treat God. The Second Great Command to love our neighbors describes how people are to treat others. The two Great Commandments are statutes in the Law of God and that Law is the foundation of a covenant with God:
- i) LUKE 10:25-27 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him [*Jesus Christ*], saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” 26 He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” 27 So he answered and said, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”
- c) People are JUSTIFIED—made just according to the Law—through repentance and baptism. Why are they justified? So that they can be raised from the death of living in sin to LIVE in a covenant with God. A covenant relationship with God requires acting JUSTLY according to the Law. That is why love fulfills the Law—it is JUSTICE to all:
- i) ROMANS 13:8-10 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled [the justice of] the law. 9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the [justice of the] law.
- ii) GALATIANS 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- iii) JAMES 2:8-9 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.
- d) In fact, Jesus Christ was sacrificed to establish JUSTICE upon the EARTH:
- i) ISAIAH 42:3-4 A bruised reed He [*Jesus Christ*] will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice [H4941 = mishpat] for truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice [H4941 = mishpat] in the earth; and the coastlands shall wait for His law.”

9) JUSTICE IS PEACE

- a) The Law defines justice, which establishes peace among all people. How important is peace? It is the foundation of relationships in the Kingdom so it is a matter of salvation:
- i) HEBREWS 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

- ii) JAMES 3:18 And **the fruit of justice [G1343 = dikaiosune] is sown in peace**, to them that make peace.
- iii) 1 PETER 3:11-12 Let him turn away from evil [*injustice*] and do good [*justice*]; **Let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the [just] [G1342 = dikaios], and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.**
- b) The purpose of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was to justify sinners in accordance with the Law. Why? So that all may have peace:
 - i) COLOSSIANS 1:20 and by Him [*God the Father*] to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him [*Jesus Christ*], whether things on earth or things in heaven, having **made peace through the blood of His cross.**
- c) **SUMMARY:** Many think the Gospel is a message focused on eternal life but they could not be more wrong. While eternal life is a part of the message, above all, it is about the KINGDOM of God. The Gospel is a message of a Kingdom of eternal peace and joy where its citizens live the Way of Life that is justice to all!

10) SIN AFTER BAPTISM

- a) Even though a sinner is justified of the Law, obedience is still required:
 - i) [NET 2.1] ROMANS 6:1-4 What shall we say then? **Are we to [continue] in sin so that grace may increase?** 2 Absolutely not! **How can we who died to sin still live in it [sin]?** 3 Or do you not know that **as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** 4 Therefore **we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead** through the glory of the Father, so **we too may live a new life.**
- b) Those who are JUSTIFIED of the Law must now live a new life of obedience and justice according to the Law; however, people still sin—commit injustices—but those are, hopefully, unintentional sins or done out of ignorance. When they occur, those with the Holy Spirit have an Advocate before God who is the Judge of all:
 - i) [DOUAY] 1 JOHN 2:1-2 My little children, these things I [*John*] write to you, **that you may not sin. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate [Intercessor] with the Father, Jesus Christ the just [G1342 = dikaios]: 2 And He Himself is the propitiation [atonement] for our sins,** and not for ours only but also for the whole world.
- c) An advocate is like a legal counsel for the defense. Dealing with sin is always a legal matter because sin is an injustice according to the Law. Sins of Ignorance after baptism still require repentance but the person was united in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ for covering, cleansing, removal, and forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ pleads our request for forgiveness of sin before the Judge. He is our Advocate and Intercessor who knows our weaknesses:
 - i) HEBREWS 4:15-16 For we do not have a High Priest [*Jesus Christ*] who cannot **sympathize with our weaknesses,** but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. 16 **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy** and find grace to help in time of need.

11) JUSTICE VS. AGAPE LOVE

- a) If the Holy Spirit puts the Law of God in the hearts and minds of people, then why is agape love the key attribute of the children of God? Why is the ultimate purpose of the Law to produce pure hearts of agape love, not justice:
 - i) 1 TIMOTHY 1:5 Now **the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart**, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith,
- b) In all ways, agape love is justice. But agape love is vastly superior because it is not simply mutual and equal justice among people because it is also rendered to enemies:
 - i) MATTHEW 5:44 “But I [*Jesus Christ*] say to you, **love your enemies**, bless those who curse you, **do good *i.e.*, justly** to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,
- c) What makes agape love the greatest form of justice is that it does not seek compensation or restitution from enemies even though it is allowed under the Law:
 - i) 1 PETER 3:8-9 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; **love as brothers**, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 **not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling**, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this [*way of justice*], that you may inherit a blessing.
 - ii) LUKE 6:27-36 “But I [*Jesus Christ*] say to you who hear: **Love your enemies, do good *i.e.*, be just** to those who hate you, 28 “bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. 29 “To him who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. and from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. 30 “Give to everyone who asks of you. **And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back.** 31 “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. 32 “But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 “And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 “And if you lend to *those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 “**But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return**; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. **For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.** 36 “**Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.**”
- d) Enemies are not willing to reconcile with others, much less treat others justly. The Law provides legal retribution for injustices but agape love does not seek the compensation and restitution allowed in the Law against an enemy. Instead of seeking retribution, agape love surrenders that right to God who judges with perfect justice:
 - i) ROMANS 12:19 Beloved, **do not avenge yourselves**, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, **“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.**
- e) All people were enemies of God (Rom. 5:10) when He called them. He extends mercy and compassion to all who repent of sin. While the Law of God certainly entitles people to retribution, agape love turns an enemy over to the judgment of God, surrendering the legitimate personal claims of compensation and restitution allowed by Law. Agape love is a greater form of justice because it humbly and contritely (remorseful for sins) seeks justice through God for an enemy instead of pursuing it themselves. Agape love acknowledges the mercy and compassion we received as enemies by turning enemies over to God for judgment according to His perfect justice. Agape love then accepts the wrong or offense:

- i) 1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-7 Dare any of you, **having a matter against another, go to law** before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? 2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? 4 If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the *ekklesia* to judge? 5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers! 7 Now therefore, **it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?**
- f) Only God can “judge just judgment” (John 7:24), which is why perfection is not through personal justice under the Law but with selfless agape love through the justice of God:
 - i) 1 JOHN 4:12, 17 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and **His love has been perfected in us.** ... 17 **Love has been perfected** among us in this: that we may have boldness **in the day of judgment; because as He is [in love, judgment, and justice], so are we** in this world.
- g) **This is why the Bible does not define agape love but DESCRIBES it as a Way of Life that fulfills justice to others regardless of whether or not we receive justice.** While true agape love often leads to a strong emotional affection for others, loving relationships only exist by treating others with justice:
 - i) 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 Love suffers long *and* is kind; **love does not envy [covet—the 9th commandment];** love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 **does not behave rudely [selfishly], does not seek its own [justice], is not provoked [by offenses], thinks no evil [of enemies];** 6 **does not rejoice in iniquity [sin],** but rejoices in the truth; 7 **bears all things [injustices],** believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- h) Agape love is a superior form of justice that also covers all (unintentional) sins:
 - i) PROVERBS 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But **love covers all sins [transgressions].**
 - ii) 1 PETER 4:8 And above all things **have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude [lit., large number] of sins.”**
- i) How does agape love cover transgressions? By not demanding the justice allowed under the Law against enemies and surrendering their justice and judgment to God. Not exacting justice against our enemies is not judging them. Our judgment is based upon the justice we extend to others and our forgiveness to the degree we forgive others:
 - i) LUKE 6:37-38 **“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.** 38 “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. **For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”**
- j) It may be surprising but the Beatitudes describe those who are exercising agape love from a pure heart that seeks the perfect justice of God:
 - i) MATTHEW 5:3-10 “Blessed are the **poor in spirit [justice requires humility—Luke 18:4],** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who **mourn**

[for justice]^{SEE NOTE}, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek [not vengeful], for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for [justice], for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful [shows justice to others], for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart [agape love = God's justice], for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers [through justice], for they shall be called sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for [justice] sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1) NOTE: They mourn for justice: Ps. 13:2; 74:10; 94:3; Luke 18:7; Rev. 6:10.

- k) Those who seek justice will be blessed. In this life they are poor in spirit for justice (through humility), mourn for justice, are meek and not vengeful, hunger and thirst for justice, have pure hearts of agape love (the perfect justice of God), establish peace through justice, and endure being persecuted and not pursuing justice against enemies. These blessings are reserved for the Day of Judgment but that reward is beyond imagining.

12)MAY GOD'S GRACE AND PEACE BE UPON YOU!