

When Being Right Is Wrong

Nothing has done greater damage to our Christian testimony than our trying to be right and demanding right of others. We become preoccupied with what is and what is not right. We ask ourselves, Have we been justly or unjustly treated? And we think thus to vindicate our actions. But that is not our standard.

The whole question for us is one of cross-bearing. You ask me, "Is it right for someone to strike my cheek?" I reply, "Of course not! But the question is, do you only want to be right?" As Christians, our standard of living can never be right or wrong, but the cross.

Watchman Nee: "Sit, Walk, Stand"

Recently I had a very difficult confrontation with my ex-husband.

Originally I wrote a blog post that shared what had happened, in hopes that I could "help" someone else who was dealing with an ex-spouse who says mean things. But I realized my intent was not simply to help someone, but also to vindicate myself, in a sense. I knew that I was right, and dang it, I was gonna make sure everyone else knew it too—including my ex.

This situation ... ugh.

I want my ex-husband to own it. He will not.

Maybe he can't.

Again, I have realized that it's not my job to convince him his actions were wrong. In fact, I should not try.

But what *is* my job? I mean, in these circumstances, what do I do?

I'm reminded of this verse from Micah: "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8, NASB).

I know this verse was written in response to Israel asking God what they should do. God's response is that they should already know. And in a sense, I feel that I do know, too, even though I continue to ask the question.

In this verse, God again shows Israel that He is not pleased by empty rituals or liturgy, but rather by justice, kindness (mercy) and humility.

I gotta be honest and say I'm not sure about the "do justice" part, because my idea of doing justice is probably not exactly right. Sometimes, like during that confrontation, I want my ex-husband to feel the weight of justice landing a right hook on his jaw.

That is not right.

According to Strong's concordance, another word for justice is "rightness."

Rightness. Hmm. As much as I want to say, "See, that means I need to be right!" I believe a more accurate definition would be that I need to *act* right. And acting right and being right can be two very different things.

God wants me to act in a way that brings *Him* glory, not me. I so want to vindicate myself and make things right—*my* definition of right. (It's amazing how many times that word is coming up in this post!)

Sue's definition of right: I'd write it, but it's wrong anyway.

And in beginning to attempt to write it, I realized I'm still trying to make my ex-husband's actions known and despised.

Still trying to be right.

Maybe “doing justice” for me means that I trust that God is going to deal justly with this situation. Maybe it means that I act more Christlike and less Sue-like. Maybe it means I don’t strive to be right, but I strive for peace.

I will be praying about this, because I know that God is showing me what He wants me to do, but I gotta be honest and say that I’m not feelin’ it yet.

I will pray.

And I know when I pray that God is going to reveal how often His justice in my life has been tempered by His grace and mercy. That were I to feel the left hook of justice hitting *my* jaw ... well, let’s just say it would be deserved but not appreciated.

Thankfully, He will give me the grace, the strength and the ability to do all that He has called me to do with justice, mercy and kindness.

Praise God that He will always be right ... and that His right is always best.

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